

ONEIDA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

JULY 2013



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This document is in final draft form

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1.1 Background

This is the first of nine elements that comprise the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan. The plan provides detailed information on the county and also includes all twenty towns and the City of Rhinelander.

Oneida County is located in northeastern Wisconsin and is bounded on the north by Vilas County, on the east by Forest County, on the south by Lincoln and Langlade counties, and on the west by Price County. The county is a predominantly rural area with a large proportion of its land in forests, wetlands, and agriculture. Residents and visitors from both near and far utilize its more than 1,100 lakes and expansive natural areas for recreational purposes. The City of Rhinelander is the county seat and largest community in the county with a population of about 8,200. See the planning context map.

A. History

Native Americans inhabited Oneida County when the first European explorers, missionaries and fur traders traveled into the county. The early inhabitants of the county were of the Lacotah (Sioux) people gradually displaced by the Ojibway. A major battle between the two groups is likely to have occurred near the confluence of the Wisconsin and Pelican Rivers (the site of the former St. Mary's Hospital in Rhinelander). White settlement began in earnest with the arrival of the Brown brothers in 1882.

Oneida County was originally established in 1885, and included all of Vilas County and parts of Forest, Langlade and Iron counties. Its current boundaries were set in 1905. The peak period for lumbering in the county was in the late 19th and early 20th century. The county population more than doubled from 5,010 in 1890 to 11,234 in 1905. Agriculture grew in the period from 1900 to 1920. The number of farms peaked in 1940 at 789, but has been significantly reduced as operations have consolidated. The bulk of agriculture is concentrated in several towns, especially Crescent, Stella and Sugar Camp.

The History of Oneida County as a visitor destination goes back to the earliest days. Such establishments as Keeler's Resort on Pelican Lake, the Northern Resort on Lake Minocqua, and Drave's Hotel at Lake Tomahawk, founded in the early 1900's, were precursors for today's tourism industry. Forestry, manufacturing, agriculture and tourism historically has played a prominent role in the county's economy. Businesses that take advantage of the county's wealth of natural amenities; timber, agricultural, lakes and minerals may continue to represent potential for growth in the future.

B. Geography

The county's total surface area is about 1,217.5 square miles or 779,235 acres. Elevations in Oneida County range from 1,460 feet above sea level near McCord, in the southwestern part of the county, to about 1,735 feet above sea level at Squirrel Hill.

The county has topography of glacial origins. Glacial features in the county include mostly moraines and outwash plains; but also include drumlins, eskers, lake plains, and bogs. Most of the county is pitted outwash plain, with the largest area of glacial till in the southeastern and southwestern parts of the county. Glacial deposits in the southern, eastern and western part of the county are covered by silty deposits, making the best suited agricultural soils. Few areas in the world have as many lakes as the northern part of the county.

C. Planning Context

1. State of Wisconsin

Planning and zoning has been a function of local units of government for over 50 years in Wisconsin. Over the years almost every city, village and county has developed various plans, from land use plans, to master plans to development plans. Existing authority for planning is provided in state statutes, including ss. 59, 60, 61 and 62. Recently, however, at the national level, there has been concern over the effects of extensive development patterns ("sprawl") that have become more prevalent in both urban and rural areas. We will continue to evaluate whether this is a concern in Oneida County. Many causes ranging from government policies, such as the construction of the interstate highway system, to trends within the economy, such as increased reliance on trucks for the transportation of goods and consumer preference for suburban housing, have been blamed for this perceived phenomenon. Whatever the causes, many of the effects – traffic congestion, loss of open space, abandonment of central cities, degradation of air and water quality, and increased reliance on the automobile as the only viable transportation alternative – have become increasingly troubling for a large segment of the public. These issues have led to a discussion on land use planning.

As early as the 1960's and early 1970's, several study committees and commissions were created to examine the need for land use reform in the state. Of particular importance were the Tarr Task Force, the Knowles Commission and the Wallace Commission. Although these efforts and their recommendations were never incorporated at the time, they were not forgotten and would influence later changes.

The "Tarr Task Force" was the first to look at the planning laws. It reviewed state statutes and problems related to municipal boundary changes, Regional planning and area wide service provision. They

developed several recommendations in the area of boundary review and annexation.

The “Knowles Commission” found the state’s land use laws to be complex and outdated. The report summarized that “a steady rise in population, a pattern of urbanization and sprawling subdivisions, an increased appetite for the outdoors, and economic expansion continue to consume our land resources”. It went on to conclude that “Land use regulation is basically a local matter”, and that only certain resources and uses were of wider significance. The model proposed was that state and Regional planning would set the framework within which local decision-making would take place.

The “Wallace Commission” was a broad study that reviewed many issues, including education and health care. It also touched on some planning issues. This report recommended changes in the area of incorporation, annexation and consolidation. It concluded that a flexible system was needed to deal with local issues.

Another major statewide discussion occurred again in the early 1990’s, when the issues of urban sprawl, redevelopment and “smart growth” were being discussed at the national level. During this same period, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources each developed independent Task Forces to study land use issues. Both agencies reports identified strategies and policies for future decision-making at the state level in relation to land use.

These reports and all the previous study efforts, as well as the national discussion related to planning, spurred Governor Thompson to create the State Interagency Land Use Council and the Wisconsin Strategic Growth Task Force in 1994. The Land Use Council was to set guidelines for state involvement in land use issues, while the Task Force was to recommend ways for coordinating state agencies, local governments, and local private groups when deciding land use issues. The Task Force presented their findings in 1995 to the Interagency Land Use Council with a report entitled “Land Use Issues Facing Wisconsin”. The report identified trends, intergovernmental relationships, public attitudes, and the strengths and weaknesses of Wisconsin’s land use policies. Wisconsin was compared to other states and a number of recommendations were given to address the land use issues at hand. The most important issue to be identified in the report was the need for a revision of the state’s planning enabling legislation.

The Interagency Land Use Council delivered its report “Planning Wisconsin: Report of the State Interagency Land Use Council” to the Governor in 1996. The report offered land use goals, ways to improve local land use planning efforts, what should be included in a comprehensive plan, and how citizen

participation in land use planning could be enhanced. It is these studies and reports and the comments and criticisms that followed that laid the foundation for the State's Comprehensive Planning Legislation.

Across the nation, over this same period, under the banner of "Smart Growth" a number of state and local governments have undertaken a unified approach to addressing these same issues. Oregon is generally acknowledged to be the leader in this area. Beginning in 1973 the State required that all cities and counties in the state adopt comprehensive land-use plans. Washington State enacted legislation in the early 1990's and later amended, requiring certain jurisdictions, based on size and growth rate, to enact comprehensive plans. These plans detail "urban growth areas" outside of which the land is classified as "rural". Mechanisms were put in place for the review and acceptance of these plans by the State. In 1997 a detailed definition of "rural character" was adopted to clarify issues that had become apparent in applying that standard to land outside of the designated growth areas. Tennessee required each county to establish a growth plan to be reviewed by county growth management hearing boards.

In the early 1990's there was increasing interest by Wisconsin State agencies in the effects of land-use on the web of government decisions that shape the built environment. The Metro 2020 Policy Board, a group focused on the southeastern part of the state, in its 1991 recommendations cited a need to coordinate land-use policies to transportation strategies, acknowledging that certain patterns of land-use increase the need for transportation investments. This led to creation of a Statewide Land Use Task Force under the direction of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) that applied these principles statewide. In its final report the Task Force identified a number of problems, among them: no State land-use policy, no requirement of consistency between adopted land-use plans and specific policy decisions, and no mechanisms for implementing land-use plans.

At about the same time, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) undertook a study of land-use practices from the perspective of their effect on environmental quality. Acknowledging that many agencies were responsible for land-use decisions, the DNR Land Use Task Force addressed many of the same questions brought up in the WisDOT report including the lack of consistency and enforcement mechanisms in land-use decision-making. The report issued in June of 1994 advocated a more "holistic" approach to land-use questions by DNR and the need to adjust certain parts of its internal policies, and increase the amount and availability of data. It also strongly recommended a coordinated interagency approach to the problem, "...there is no statewide land use policy or vision. Inconsistent interagency coordination...can lead to decisions that harm both the economy and the environment."

It was to address just this problem that Governor Thompson appointed the State Interagency Land Use Council in 1995. In its report 1996, the Council acknowledged that, "the structure of Wisconsin's current land use system...can best be characterized as a fragmented process with each level of government responsible for specific goals." Among its recommendations, the report proposes creation of a permanent interagency Land Use Council as a means of coordinating policy on the state level, and a statewide Land Information System. In the section headed "How can county and municipal planning be improved?" the report recommends requiring counties to adopt comprehensive plans, and voluntary adoption of comprehensive plans by municipalities, and a requirement that land-use ordinances "be consistent with adopted land use plans. Land uses that conflict with adopted county and/or municipal plans could not be approved unless the plan is amended". The report also recommends steps to foster cooperation among local governments, a review of the role of regional planning commissions, and the requirement for public hearings as part of any land-use planning process.

In the spring of 1999 a definition of a comprehensive plan was included in the Governor's Budget Bill. Several groups working together, including the Wisconsin Realtors Association, the Wisconsin Builders Association, the 1,000 Friends of Wisconsin, the League of Municipalities, the Wisconsin Towns Association, and the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association developed the definition. The University of Wisconsin-Madison facilitated the effort.

In October of 1999, the Governor signed into law Wisconsin Act 9, the Budget Bill, containing substantial revisions of statutes governing comprehensive planning. The law has been revised by the signing of three additional bills into law. The first is AB 872, containing "technical revisions" which was signed May 10, 2000. The second bill, signed April 13, 2004, is AB 608, which reduced the number of items that must be consistent with the plan to three, these are: official mapping, subdivision ordinances and zoning ordinances. The final law change is known as Act 372, which provides clarification in several areas. First, it provided a delay of the January 1, 2010 consistency requirement, for those communities in process, but not yet complete with the planning process. Another change was the clarification that towns do not need village powers to adopt a plan as previously determined under the law. There was also clarification that the Comprehensive Plan is not by itself a regulation; any regulation would come from other local actions, such as zoning. It went to address the question of consistency. Basically in context of the law it means "further or does not contradict the goals, objectives, and policies contained in the comprehensive plan." It provides discretion to local governments related to the interpretation of their comprehensive plan. Act 372 also clarifies that only ordinances enacted or amended after January 1, 2010, need to be consistent with a local plan.

The law (§66.1001 WI Stats.) requires all jurisdictions within the state that exercise control over land-use to prepare a comprehensive plan by 2010. It lays out the nine required Chapters of the plan and requires a public participation process. Jurisdictions that do not have a comprehensive plan in place by the deadline may not engage in actions that impact land-use. The statute outlines the requirements that must be satisfied, specifically for those that utilize the State grant program to develop their plan.

Fourteen planning goals are suggested. These goals, however, are not mandates for specific provisions that must be included in the comprehensive plan, but criteria on which the grant applications will be judged. The goals are:

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.
7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

The new comprehensive planning law is significant in many ways. The law creates for the first time a definition of a comprehensive plan; it requires that almost all local units of government have a plan; it sets requirements for public participation; and requires that the plan be consistent with local implementation tools. Most important, is that it maintains that the process be locally driven so all local units of government decide their own future. Reference: Resolution 12-2008 as amended with supporting documentation approved by the Oneida County Board on February 10, 2008.

2. Oneida County

In 1933, Oneida County adopted the first rural zoning ordinance in the United States. In the period after the “cut-over” when the timber wealth of northern Wisconsin had been removed, many counties, including Oneida, were in financial difficulty. The cost of maintaining roads and transporting school children to remote areas was seen as a burden that the County couldn’t bear. The zoning ordinance was adopted to prevent settlement in remote areas of the County. The ordinance became a model for similar ordinances throughout the country.

D. Public Participation

As part of the planning process a variety of public participation efforts were conducted to involve as many viewpoints into the planning process. A formal public participation plan was adopted outlining these efforts.

See Attachment at the end of the plan document.

1.2 Demographics

The review of the socio-economic trends throughout the county are important to understanding what has occurred and what is likely to occur in the future. Below we look at total population, age distribution, households, educational levels, employment and income levels. All of these will be examined in some detail.

A. Population

In 2010, 35,998 persons resided in Oneida County, which is down from the last Census in 2000, when the population was 36,776 - about a 2 percent decline. In fact, over the last decade ten of the County's twenty towns experienced a decline in population compared to the previous decade where only three towns had a decline. Meanwhile the state population increased by 6 percent during the last decade.

Table 1-1 displays total population for each local unit (minor civil division), as well as the county and the state. Although the county experienced substantial growth during the 1990's the last decade has been one of decline. Ten towns had a declining population over the last decade, including Crescent, Lake Tomahawk, Little Rice, Lynne, Minocqua, Monico, Pelican, Piehl, Sugar Camp, and Three Lakes.

Only two towns have lost population since 1990 and those are Lynne and Pelican. Over the last decade the population has been generally stable.

The Land Use Element further examines population, including projections.

Table 1-1: Population						
Minor Civil Divison	1990	2000	2010	1990 - 2000 % Change	2000 - 2010 % Change	1990 - 2010 Net Change
Cassian	668	962	985	44.0%	2.4%	317
Crescent	1,790	2,071	2,033	15.7%	-1.8%	243
Enterprise	271	274	315	1.1%	15.0%	44
Hazelhurst	927	1,267	1,273	36.7%	0.5%	346
Lake Tomahawk	851	1,160	1,043	36.3%	-10.1%	192
Little Rice	196	314	306	60.2%	-2.5%	110
Lynne	157	210	141	33.8%	-32.9%	(16)
Minocqua	3,486	4,859	4,385	39.4%	-9.8%	899
Monico	294	364	309	23.8%	-15.1%	15
Newbold	2,281	2,710	2,719	18.8%	0.3%	438
Nokomis	999	1,363	1,371	36.4%	0.6%	372
Pelican	3,202	2,902	2,764	-9.4%	-4.8%	(438)
Piehl	66	93	86	40.9%	-7.5%	20
Pine Lake	2,445	2,720	2,740	11.2%	0.7%	295
Schoepke	378	352	387	-6.9%	9.9%	9
Stella	525	633	650	20.6%	2.7%	125
Sugar Camp	1,375	1,781	1,694	29.5%	-4.9%	319
Three Lakes	2,004	2,339	2,131	16.7%	-8.9%	127
Woodboro	703	685	813	-2.6%	18.7%	110
Woodruff	1,634	1,982	2,055	21.3%	3.7%	421
City of Rhinelander	7,427	7,735	7,798	4.1%	0.8%	371
County	31,679	36,776	35,998	16.1%	-2.1%	4,319
State	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	4.0%	6.0%	795,217

Source: U.S. Census

B. Age Distribution

Population distribution is important to the planning process. In particular, two age groups are examined here. They are the 17 years of age and younger, and the 65 and older population groups. These are often referred to as dependent populations and have different needs. The younger group requires schools, and the older group requires other types of services.

Comparing these various age groups over time and in comparison to the county and state, highlight demographic changes. Median age in the county increased to 46.9 in 2010, from 42.4 years in 2000, and from 38.7 years in 1990.

From 2000 to 2010 the population of the 17 and younger group declined from 23.3 percent to about 18.4 percent of Oneida County's population. This age group decreased in all but one town – Woodboro. Overall, Persons 17 and younger decreased by 1,563 persons over the decade.

Minor Civil Divison	2000	2010	2000 % of Total	2010 % of Total	1990 - 2000 Net Change
Cassian	187	140	19.4%	14.2%	(47)
Crescent	531	378	25.6%	18.6%	(153)
Enterprise	48	36	17.5%	11.4%	(12)
Hazelhurst	266	243	21.0%	19.1%	(23)
Lake Tomahawk	192	109	16.6%	13.0%	(83)
Little Rice	58	32	18.5%	10.5%	(26)
Lynne	35	18	16.7%	12.8%	(17)
Minocqua	954	713	19.6%	16.3%	(241)
Monico	117	56	32.1%	18.1%	(61)
Newbold	616	525	22.7%	19.3%	(91)
Nokomis	310	253	22.7%	18.5%	(57)
Pelican	732	533	25.2%	19.3%	(199)
Piehl	19	14	20.4%	16.3%	(5)
Pine Lake	616	550	22.6%	20.1%	(66)
Schoepke	64	51	18.2%	13.4%	(13)
Stella	162	136	25.6%	20.9%	(26)
Sugar Camp	423	291	23.8%	19.7%	(132)
Three Lakes	504	341	21.5%	16.0%	(163)
Woodboro	126	145	18.4%	17.8%	19
Woodruff	432	349	21.8%	17.0%	(83)
City of Rhinelander	1,811	1,657	23.4%	21.2%	(154)
County	8,203	6,640	22.3%	18.4%	(1,563)
State	1,368,756	1,339,492	25.5%	23.6%	79,774

Source: U.S. Census

May 17, 2013

From 2000 to 2010 the population of the 65 and older group increased from 18.7 percent to about 21.7 percent of Oneida County's population. Overall, the 65 and older population increased numerically in all but five communities (Lynne, Minocqua, Schoepke, Three Lakes, and Rhinelander).

Based on increasing life expectancy and advances in medicine, the 65 and older group is expected to grow in absolute numbers and as a percentage of total population. This trend is occurring at both the state and national levels as well. The shift in population toward the older age groups will significantly impact the future labor supply, school system, and health care industry in the county.

Table 1-3: Persons 65 Years of Age and Older					
Minor Civil Divison	2000	2010	2000 % of Total	2010 % of Total	2000-2010 Net Change
Cassian	175	244	18.2%	24.8%	69
Crescent	287	372	13.9%	18.3%	85
Enterprise	56	100	20.4%	31.7%	44
Hazelhurst	224	251	17.7%	19.7%	27
Lake Tomahawk	232	271	20.0%	26.0%	39
Little Rice	55	97	17.5%	31.7%	42
Lynne	54	43	25.7%	30.5%	(11)
Minocqua	1189	1159	24.5%	26.4%	(30)
Monico	35	39	9.6%	12.6%	4
Newbold	391	555	14.4%	20.4%	164
Nokomis	234	306	17.2%	22.3%	72
Pelican	392	508	13.5%	18.4%	116
Piehl	10	19	10.8%	22.1%	9
Pine Lake	330	492	12.1%	18.0%	162
Schoepke	89	87	25.3%	22.5%	(2)
Stella	79	112	12.5%	17.2%	33
Sugar Camp	295	359	16.6%	21.2%	64
Three Lakes	584	568	25.0%	26.7%	(16)
Woodboro	111	143	16.2%	17.6%	32
Woodruff	479	585	24.2%	28.5%	106
City of Rhinelander	1583	1490	20.5%	19.1%	(93)
County	6,884	7,800	18.7%	21.7%	916
State	702,553	777,314	13.1%	13.7%	74,761

Source: U.S. Census

C. Households

The trend in households in the county reflects the national trend of fewer people living in each household. As more people decide to live alone and more couples are having fewer children or no children at all, the number of households has increased faster than the population as a whole.

Total households increased 4% in the county as compared to the state's 9% over the decade.

Table 1-4: Total Households				
Minor Civil Divison	2000	2010	2000 - 2010 % Change	2000 - 2010 Net Change
Cassian	402	445	11%	43
Crescent	797	857	8%	60
Enterprise	124	146	18%	22
Hazelhurst	528	537	2%	9
Lake Tomahawk	475	443	-7%	(32)
Little Rice	138	154	12%	16
Lynne	92	69	-25%	(23)
Minocqua	2,189	2,079	-5%	(110)
Monico	128	127	-1%	(1)
Newbold	1,114	1,176	6%	62
Nokomis	556	590	6%	34
Pelican	1,167	1,183	1%	16
Piehl	39	41	5%	2
Pine Lake	1,063	1,136	7%	73
Schoepke	156	188	21%	32
Stella	236	263	11%	27
Sugar Camp	708	729	3%	21
Three Lakes	1,031	996	-3%	(35)
Woodboro	310	351	13%	41
Woodruff	866	948	9%	82
City of Rhinelander	3,214	3,545	10%	331
County	15,333	16,003	4%	670
State	2,084,544	2,279,768	9%	195,224

Source: U.S. Census

D. Educational Levels

Educational attainment improved overall during the period. Over the period, the number of persons who graduated from high school as a percentage of those over 25 in the County, increased from 85.1 percent in 2000 to 90.9 percent in 2009. The County mirrors the state levels for High School or more.

**Table 1-5:
Persons 25 and Over Who Have Completed Four Years of High School or More**

Minor Civil Divison	2000	2009	2000 % of >25	2009 % of >25	2000 - 2009 Net Change
Cassian	638	639	86.8%	88.1%	1
Crescent	1,271	1,257	89.4%	90.1%	(14)
Enterprise	198	223	88.4%	94.1%	25
Hazelhurst	848	954	91.4%	95.0%	106
Lake Tomahawk	732	777	85.0%	93.6%	45
Little Rice	209	264	82.6%	88.9%	55
Lynne	120	125	81.6%	90.6%	5
Minocqua	3,217	3,749	87.6%	92.8%	532
Monico	184	170	78.3%	76.9%	(14)
Newbold	1,689	2,004	84.2%	88.5%	315
Nokomis	897	892	85.3%	87.9%	(5)
Pilican	1,749	1,688	87.2%	94.6%	(61)
Piehl	57	74	81.4%	90.2%	17
Pine Lake	1,666	1,706	89.4%	92.8%	40
Schoepke	196	331	79.0%	89.7%	135
Stella	347	433	82.8%	89.8%	86
Sugar Camp	1,035	1,138	83.3%	91.8%	103
Three Lakes	1,557	1,810	88.6%	92.2%	253
Woodboro	436	622	89.9%	94.8%	186
Woodruff	1,277	1,223	83.3%	93.6%	(54)
City of Rhinelander	4,175	4,281	78.9%	87.4%	106
County	22,498	24,360	85.1%	90.9%	1,862
State	2,957,461	3,557,499	85.1%	89.0%	600,038

Source: U.S.Census, ACS

The rate of persons 25 and older with four or more years of college has increased within the county, though still below the state level. Over the period, the number of persons who graduated from college or more as a percentage of those over 25 in the County, increased from 20 percent in 2000 to 21.8 percent in 2009.

Table 1-6: Persons 25 and Older Who Have Completed Four or More Years of College					
Minor Civil Division	2000	2009	2000 % of >25	2009 % of >25	2000 - 2009 Net Change
Cassian	120	155	16.3%	21.4%	35
Crescent	374	401	26.3%	28.7%	27
Enterprise	35	44	15.6%	18.6%	9
Hazelhurst	330	364	35.6%	36.3%	34
Lake Tomahawk	163	167	18.9%	20.1%	4
Little Rice	20	48	7.9%	16.2%	28
Lynne	5	5	3.4%	3.6%	-
Minocqua	1000	1,180	27.2%	29.2%	180
Monico	9	7	3.8%	3.2%	(2)
Newbold	413	516	20.6%	22.8%	103
Nokomis	103	183	9.8%	18.0%	80
Pelican	332	373	16.6%	20.9%	41
Piehl	0	5	0.0%	6.1%	5
Pine Lake	414	375	22.2%	20.4%	(39)
Schoepke	16	53	6.5%	14.4%	37
Stella	63	82	15.0%	17.0%	19
Sugar Camp	182	230	14.7%	18.5%	48
Three Lakes	334	585	19.0%	29.8%	251
Woodboro	89	108	18.4%	16.5%	19
Woodruff	222	284	14.5%	21.7%	62
City of Rhinelander	1056	681	20.0%	13.9%	(375)
					-
County	5,280	5,846	20.0%	21.8%	566
State	779,273	940,212	22.4%	25.5%	160,939

Source: U.S. Census, ACS

E. Employment

In 2009, there were over 17,704 County residents employed. This reflects about a 3% percent increase in the county's employment since 2000, compared to 5% growth at both the state level. Employment is further discussed in the Economic Development Element.

Table 1-7: Total Employed Persons				
Minor Civil Divison	2000	2009	2000 - 2009 % Change	2000 - 2009 Net Change
Cassian	468	491	4.9%	23
Crescent	1110	1,004	-9.5%	(106)
Enterprise	144	140	-2.8%	(4)
Hazelhurst	625	633	1.3%	8
Lake Tomahawk	515	449	-12.8%	(66)
Little Rice	152	159	4.6%	7
Lynne	69	55	-20.3%	(14)
Minocqua	2,206	2,108	-4.4%	(98)
Monico	169	218	29.0%	49
Newbold	1,344	1,367	1.7%	23
Nokomis	685	635	-7.3%	(50)
Pelican	1,461	1,361	-6.8%	(100)
Piehl	40	50	25.0%	10
Pine Lake	1,429	1,523	6.6%	94
Schoepke	135	245	81.5%	110
Stella	275	351	27.6%	76
Sugar Camp	832	771	-7.3%	(61)
Three Lakes	889	1,125	26.5%	236
Woodboro	337	519	54.0%	182
Woodruff	898	891	-0.8%	-7
City of Rhinelander	3,416	3,609	5.6%	193
County	17,199	17,704	2.9%	505
State	2,734,925	2,873,396	5.1%	138,471

Source: U.S. Census, ACS

F. Income levels

Per capita income and median income are the two major indicators of income. The County median household income rose 16% from 1999 to 2009, compared to the state increase of 15% over the decade. The Towns of Schoepke and Three Lakes had increases over 50%.

Table 1-8: Median Household Income				
Minor Civil Divison	1999	2009	1999 - 2009 % Change	1999 - 2009 Net Change
Cassian	\$ 39,844	\$ 45,481	14.1%	\$ 5,637
Crescent	\$ 48,875	\$ 61,761	26.4%	\$ 12,886
Enterprise	\$ 34,479	\$ 43,875	27.3%	\$ 9,396
Hazelhurst	\$ 45,461	\$ 57,500	26.5%	\$ 12,039
Lake Tomahawk	\$ 38,065	\$ 44,097	15.8%	\$ 6,032
Little Rice	\$ 40,750	\$ 55,000	35.0%	\$ 14,250
Lynne	\$ 27,344	\$ 34,167	25.0%	\$ 6,823
Minocqua	\$ 40,333	\$ 43,255	7.2%	\$ 2,922
Monico	\$ 33,281	\$ 43,125	29.6%	\$ 9,844
Newbold	\$ 40,722	\$ 48,750	19.7%	\$ 8,028
Nokomis	\$ 43,000	\$ 55,893	30.0%	\$ 12,893
Pelican	\$ 36,053	\$ 43,650	21.1%	\$ 7,597
Piehl	\$ 31,500	\$ 33,333	5.8%	\$ 1,833
Pine Lake	\$ 43,750	\$ 55,302	26.4%	\$ 11,552
Schoepke	\$ 28,929	\$ 52,750	82.3%	\$ 23,821
Stella	\$ 40,909	\$ 53,750	31.4%	\$ 12,841
Sugar Camp	\$ 37,118	\$ 45,341	22.2%	\$ 8,223
Three Lakes	\$ 32,798	\$ 51,339	56.5%	\$ 18,541
Woodboro	\$ 42,054	\$ 49,722	18.2%	\$ 7,668
Woodruff	\$ 35,335	\$ 49,625	40.4%	\$ 14,290
City of Rhinelander	\$ 29,622	\$ 33,651	13.6%	\$ 4,029
County	37,619	44,977	16.4%	\$ 7,358
State	\$ 43,791	\$ 51,569	15.1%	\$ 7,778

Source: U.S. Census (Not adjusted for inflation), ACS

Meanwhile, the County per capita income increased by 27.8%, compared to the state increase of 24.3% over the decade. The Towns of Crescent, Enterprise, Nokomis, Sugar Camp, Three Lakes, and Woodruff had increases over 50%.

Table 1-9: Per Capita Income				
Minor Civil Divison	2000	2009	2000 - 2009 % Change	2000 - 2009 Net Change
Cassian	\$ 22,794	\$ 28,312	24.2%	\$ 5,518
Crescent	\$ 20,697	\$ 34,834	68.3%	\$ 14,137
Enterprise	\$ 14,970	\$ 27,217	81.8%	\$ 12,247
Hazelhurst	\$ 28,732	\$ 35,232	22.6%	\$ 6,500
Lake Tomahawk	\$ 19,177	\$ 25,168	31.2%	\$ 5,991
Little Rice	\$ 21,659	\$ 29,686	37.1%	\$ 8,027
Lynne	\$ 16,429	\$ 20,626	25.5%	\$ 4,197
Minocqua	\$ 24,461	\$ 30,057	22.9%	\$ 5,596
Monico	\$ 12,973	\$ 19,279	48.6%	\$ 6,306
Newbold	\$ 20,392	\$ 27,874	36.7%	\$ 7,482
Nokomis	\$ 19,171	\$ 32,801	71.1%	\$ 13,630
Pelican	\$ 18,566	\$ 24,196	30.3%	\$ 5,630
Piehl	\$ 13,102	\$ 19,067	45.5%	\$ 5,965
Pine Lake	\$ 21,515	\$ 32,111	49.2%	\$ 10,596
Schoepke	\$ 20,134	\$ 25,572	27.0%	\$ 5,438
Stella	\$ 16,712	\$ 22,987	37.5%	\$ 6,275
Sugar Camp	\$ 18,135	\$ 28,586	57.6%	\$ 10,451
Three Lakes	\$ 17,758	\$ 26,730	50.5%	\$ 8,972
Woodboro	\$ 21,079	\$ 27,750	31.6%	\$ 6,671
Woodruff	\$ 20,508	\$ 32,884	60.3%	\$ 12,376
City of Rhinelander	\$ 16,047	\$ 20,664	28.8%	\$ 4,617
County	\$ 19,746	\$ 27,346	27.8%	7,600
State	\$ 21,271	\$ 26,447	24.3%	\$ 5,176

Source: U.S. Census (Not adjusted for inflation), ACS

1.3 Planning Issues and Goals, Objectives & Policies

1. Planning Issues

A variety of issues were identified throughout the planning process. Many of these were brought up during the planning meetings, others were taken from existing documents, and some were taken from public meetings.

Most important, is that it maintains that the process be locally driven so all local units of government decide their own future.

Reference: Resolution 12-2008 as amended with supporting documentation approved by the Oneida County Board of Supervisors on February 10, 2008.

The next eight elements of this plan will list the issues that relate to that element.

2. Goals, Objectives and Policies

Each of the following comprehensive plan elements will conclude with a set of goals, objectives and policies, which will be used to guide the future development of the community.

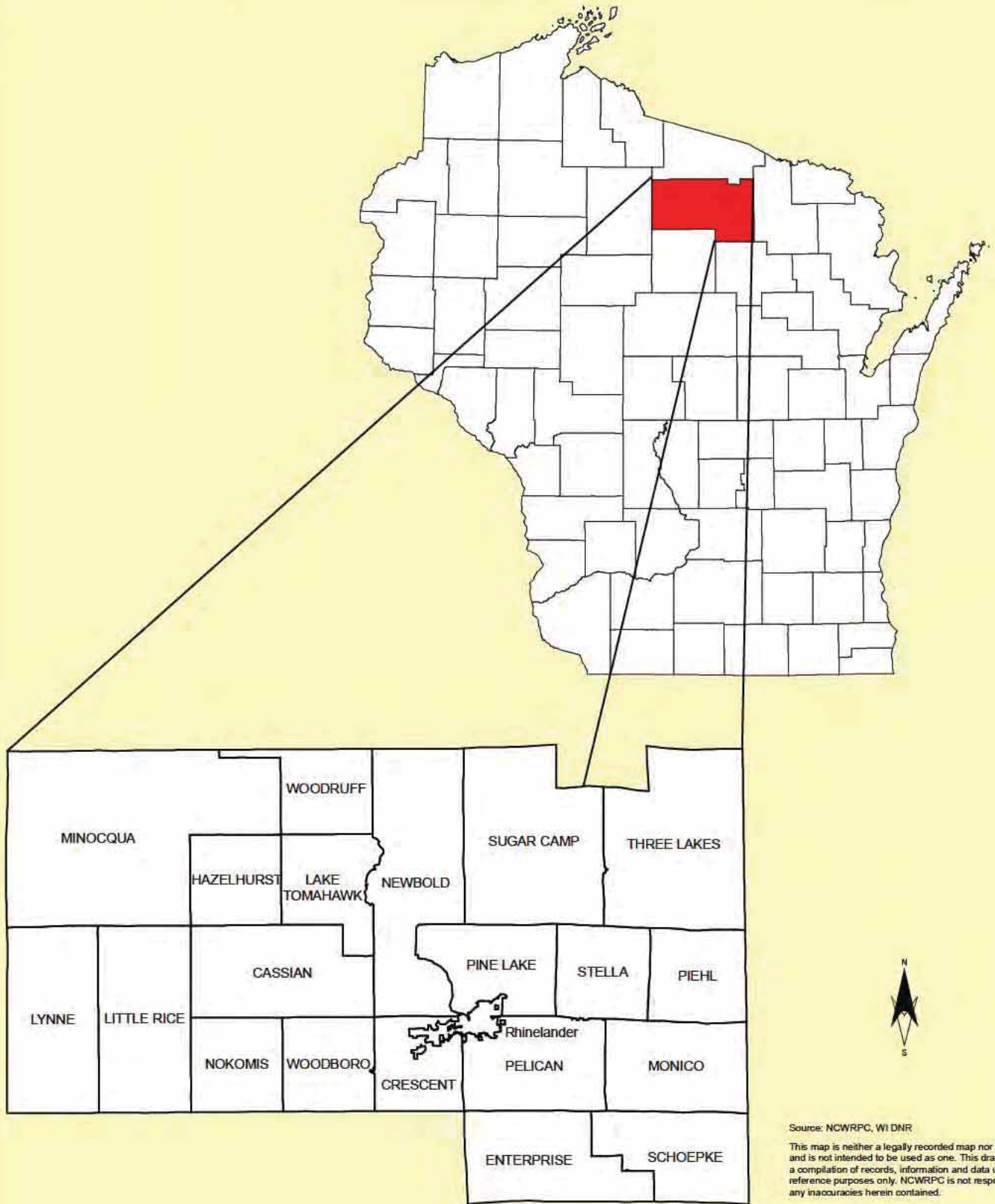
For purposes of this planning process, goals, objectives and policies are defined as follows:

Goals: Broad statements that express general public priorities about how the community should approach development issues during the next 20 years. These goals are based on key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the community.

Objectives: More specific than goals and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.

Policies: Various actions used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Policies are intended to be used by decision-makers on a regular basis.

In addition to goals, objectives, and policies a listing of various programs are added in some of the elements as well.



Source: NCWRPC, WI DNR
This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

Element 2: Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resources

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

This is the second of nine elements that comprise the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan. This element is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources, parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.”

The element is organized into three main components: natural resources, agriculture, and cultural resources. Each component is then divided into three sections:

- Background
- Inventory & Trends
- Goals, Objectives and Policies

Although these components are separated, they are all interrelated. For example, the location of agricultural uses described in the “Agriculture” component of this element is based upon the soil and water information in the “Natural Resources” component. Similarly, this element relates to the other eight elements as well. As a result, the information provided by this element will be referenced in other elements.

2.2 NATURAL RESOURCES

A. Background

Oneida County is located in northeastern Wisconsin and is bounded on the north by Vilas County, on the east by Forest County, on the south by Langlade and Lincoln Counties, and on the west by Price County.

The county’s total area is about 1,217.5 square miles or 779,235 acres, with about 68,447 acres in surface water. The county contains 1,129 lakes, and 830 miles of rivers and streams, of which 192 miles are classified as trout stream. The topography of Oneida County is of glacial origin, primarily pitted outwash plain with other areas of glacial till and glacial drift. Glacial deposits in the southern, eastern and western part of the county are covered by silty deposits, making them the best suited agricultural soils. Few areas in the world have as many lakes as the northern part of the county.

Forests cover eighty percent of the county and provide raw materials, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. About 23 percent of the county is

publicly owned land, including about 51,000 acres in the Northern Highlands – American Legion State Forest and over 17,000 acres of the Nicolet National Forest. Oneida County owns 82,000 acres of forestland in 2007. The Oneida County Forests are managed to consider economic returns of proper Silviculture while considering other benefits of multiple use, wildlife, fisheries, endangered resources, water quality, soil conservation, and recreational opportunities. Many county trails are found in the county forests for ATVing, snowmobiling, biking, and hiking.

Agriculture is present in some areas of the county, including the Towns of Crescent, Cassian, Stella and Sugar Camp. Oneida County is a producer of oats, potatoes and forage.

1. Previous Planning Efforts

A. County Efforts

Oneida County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 2006

This Plan provides a framework for local/state/federal conservation program implementation efforts. Implementation of this plan will help protect and improve the valuable water and soil natural resources in Oneida County. Some of the plan's recommendations include: protect shoreland areas and reduce non-point source pollution, promote forest productivity, protect lakes from degradation, make resource information more accessible, fight invasive species, protect wildlife habitat and water quality, and provide recreational opportunities. A copy is available in the Oneida County Forestry, Land, and Outdoor Recreation Department.

Oneida County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2006 – 2020

This plan incorporates or references all County forest policies, pertinent County ordinances, planning documents, and the needs and actions to occur from 2006 to 2020. Specific flora and fauna within the County forest are described in this plan.

The purpose of the County Forest Law as Stated in § 28.11, WI Stats., is to provide the basis for a permanent program of county forests and to enable and encourage the planned development and management of the county forests for optimum production of forest products together with recreational opportunities, wildlife, watershed protection and stabilization of stream flow, giving full recognition to the concept of multiple-use to assure maximum public benefits; to protect the public rights, interests and investments in such lands; and to compensate counties for the public uses, benefits and privileges these lands

provide; all in a manner which will provide a reasonable revenue to the town in which such lands lie.

Element 4 of the plan describes ways to acquire land to become part of the County Forest. Acquisitions may benefit the land and water resources more than cooperation alone. The following objectives will guide the determination of eligible lands:

1. To provide for the most efficient administration of the forest by consolidating and blocking lands within established County Forest boundaries through purchase or trade as provided in §28.11 (3) (c), Wis. Stats. (for full text see Chapter 905.1), and to enter lands so acquired as County Forest, pursuant to §28.11 (4) (b), Wis. Stats.
2. To provide additional public benefits through the acquisition of unique or special areas that will be entered under §28.11 (4)(c) Wis. Stats. special use classification.
3. To facilitate adequate land control on the County Forest by undertaking establishment and perpetuation of survey corners.

The County Forest blocking boundaries are established by the Committee and by subsequent approval of the Oneida County Board and the DNR. Lands within the County Forest blocking boundaries or areas possessing special or unique values shall be recommended to the County Board for acquisition as they become available.

Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2009-2013

The primary purpose of this recreation plan is to provide continued direction in meeting the current and future recreation needs of the County. This direction takes the form of an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities followed by establishing recommendations to meet identified needs. Adoption of this plan and its subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) allows for continued eligibility for financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Stewardship Fund, and many other federal and state funding programs. Some of the recommendations of this plan include: the addition of boat landings and campsites on the west side of the Willow Flowage, connecting existing motorized trail by allowing trails in the Cassian-Woodboro forest block, and review the possibility of adding paved shoulders or separate bike trail to County roads. A copy is available in the Oneida County Forestry, Land, and Outdoor Recreation Department.

Oneida County Bike Plan

At the request of the County, the NCWRPC conducted a more detailed study, and developed the Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan. That plan is incorporated into the Regional trails plan and builds around the Bearskin State Trail and the Oneida Trails Corporation's Rhinelander-Woodruff Trail. The plan combines a variety of on and off road routes that interconnect the County's main population centers.

As the NCWRPC began assisting Oneida County to develop its trail plan the City of Rhinelander requested the NCWRPC to prepare a trail plan for the City. The planned Rhinelander system, also incorporated into the Regional plan, is also comprised of a variety of on and off road routes that are integrated well with the County system. Facilities along the new STH 17 route around Rhinelander will link with other existing and proposed routes in the City to serve a number of bicyclists traveling to and from shopping areas, the new YMCA, or the new hospital.

The proposed Rhinelander – Crandon trail is a multiuse trail paralleling USH 8. The proposed trail would utilize Highway 8's wide right-of-way but be grade-separated. Another off road trail is envisioned in the USH 45 corridor, utilizing an abandoned rail right-of-way as much as possible. This route would intersect with the Highway 8 trail as it travels through the County between Langlade County's system and Eagle River/Vilas County. Also on this route is Three Lakes. An important goal of the Oneida County plan is linking Three Lakes and Rhinelander. The main route between them is CTH A, which is not well suited for bicycling and has a constricted right-of-way. However, there is an abandoned local road that has been proposed as a trail. Locals have done considerable groundwork on this proposal and prepared an enhancements grant application, which was turned down. This plan recommends implementation of this concept and encourages WisDOT to fund this application.

Both of Oneida's Rustic Roads are included routes, and some existing Town roads provide the connection to Price County. A short segment of STH 70 should be improved to better accommodate bicycles between the Rustic Roads in order to complete a "Rustic Roads loop" and facilitate access from this area to Vilas County Highway F bike route.

County Ordinances

In addition to these planning efforts there are several county ordinances in place related to natural resources. These include the Metallic and Non-Metallic Mining Ordinance, Private Onsite Waste Treatment System Ordinance, Soil and Water Conservation Standards for the Farmland Preservation Program, Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, Floodplain Ordinance, and the General Zoning Ordinance.

B. State Efforts

Waters of Wisconsin: The Future of our Aquatic Ecosystems and Resources

This report looks at a broad range of issues involving water, from storm water runoff to land-use and transportation as they affect water quality. The over-riding message of the report is the inter-relationship between all the elements of the hydrological cycle, specifically the link between groundwater and surface water quality. It suggests that policy should:

“...begin to act on recognition of the connections that characterize water – between the waters of the atmosphere, surface waters, and groundwater; between human uses and ecosystem needs; between water quality and water quantity; between Wisconsin and its neighbors; between our generation and generations to come.”

There is the discussion of the quantity of groundwater and how it should be safeguarded. Statewide, “water use for irrigation has more than doubled since 1980. Ninety percent of the water used in irrigation is consumptive use; 99 percent of irrigation water originates as groundwater.” In addition to agriculture, water use by industry in the state has increased by over 600 percent in the last half century, which could potentially have a significant affect on water table levels. A copy is available online at:
<http://www.wisconsinacademy.org/wow/downloadreport.html>
Headwaters (Upper Wisconsin) Integrated Basin Plan, 2002

The Headwaters Integrated Basin Plan (also called the "Headwaters State of the Basin Report") provides a snapshot of the current conditions of land and water resources in the basin. This effort inventoried and assessed the land and water resource conditions, identified major issues, priorities and objectives, and recommended action.

Some of the recommendations of this plan include: protection and restoration of shoreline, identification of critical habitats, wetland protection and restoration, monitor nonmetallic mining effects on water quality, and encourage wellhead protection plans. A copy is available from the NCWRPC, and in the WDNR Rhinelander Service Center.
Statewide Forest Plan, 2004

Wisconsin's latest Statewide Forest Plan identifies a common vision for the state's forest resources and a framework for achieving that vision. It incorporates the full range of trends and issues affecting Wisconsin's forests and their ecological, economic and social implications, and developed a variety of standards. In addition to forestry standards, some other areas relate to water resources, minerals and fish & wildlife. The plan also is a call to all

interested parties to address the challenges facing Wisconsin's forests both now and in the future. A copy is available from the WDNR Division of Forestry online at: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/forestry/assessment>.

State Trails Network Plan

This 2001 document clarifies the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources role and strategy in the provision of all types of trails. The plan identifies a series of potential trail corridors that would link existing trails, public lands, natural features, and communities. This statewide network of interconnected trails would be owned and maintained by municipalities, private entities, and partnerships of the two. Preserving transportation corridors, such as old rail lines, is specifically discussed as a very important strategy in the creation of recreational and alternative transportation corridors.

Segment 15—Ashland to Rhinelander

This potential trail would connect Ashland with Woodruff, Minocqua, Rhinelander, and finally to Crandon. From Woodruff/Minocqua, an old abandoned rail corridor near the route of State Highway 47 may possibly provide the opportunity to connect the City of Rhinelander. If the rail corridor is not intact, it may be feasible to use roadways and existing trails, since the northern half of the route is through the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest.

Segment 19—Langlade Co to Michigan

This abandoned rail corridor links the State of Michigan with the Mountain Bay Trail near Eland in Marathon County. It passes through a few state wildlife areas and some county forests. This corridor also links to the proposed Three Lakes to Rhinelander and Crandon to Tomahawk abandoned rail corridors in Oneida County.

Segment 68—Rhinelander to Three Lakes

This abandoned rail corridor would link these two communities by an off-road connection. At Rhinelander, links to the Washburn to Fond du Lac corridor, and at Three Lakes links to the Langlade County to Michigan corridor are possible. Significant bike trail interest has occurred in Oneida County. Strong support can be expected for this connector trail.

Segment 69—Tomahawk to Crandon

This abandoned corridor would link these two communities by an off-road connector. This corridor intersects the Langlade County to Michigan corridor at Pelican Lake and links the Argonne to Shawano corridor in the east with the Tomahawk to Wausau corridor in the west.

A copy is available from the WDNR Wisconsin State Parks online at: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/ORG/LAND/parks/reports/trails/#contents>.

Wisconsin Land Legacy Report 2006-2056

This report is a comprehensive inventory of the special places that will be critical to meet future conservation and outdoor recreation needs for the next fifty years. Some of the questions asked to guide creation of this report were: Which lands and waters remain unprotected that will be critical for conserving our plants and animals and their habitats? What gaps exist now (and will likely emerge in the future) in providing abundant and satisfying outdoor recreation? How can we most effectively build upon the state's existing investment in protected lands to fill conservation and recreation gaps? What special places will our children and grandchildren wish we had protected?

Six Legacy Areas were identified in the county, and rated in 5 criteria: size, protection initiated, protection remaining, conservation significance, and recreation potential. Legacy Areas in Oneida County include the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Northern Highlands - American Legion State Forest, Monico Forest, Squirrel and Tomahawk Rivers, Thunder Marsh, Willow Flowage, Upper Wolf River, and Upper Wisconsin River. The Land Legacy report recommends protection of these lands by using federal, state, and local funding opportunities; along with possibly creating new kinds of incentives for landowners, working to draft comprehensive plans, or offering different types of technical assistance. A copy is available at WDNR Service Centers or online at: http://dnr.wi.gov/Master_Planning/land_legacy.

C. Others Plans

2004 Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan

The Chequamegon and Nicolet National Forests were combined into one forest in 1998. This 2004 document revised inconsistent policies between the two forests and provides direction for resource management over the next 10 to 15 years.

In 2004, the Forest revised its forest management plan. The revised plan contains a consistent ATV policy for both sides of the Forest.

- No off-road or off trail use allowed (implemented on June 14, 2004).
- New trail construction allowed for up to 100 miles of trail on the Chequamegon side, and up to 85 total miles on the Nicolet side.
- All roads and trails closed to ATV use unless posted open with signs.
- All trails and Forest Service roads will be closed to ATV's every year from March 15 through April 30. Township designated roads are still open.
- No Intensive Use ("play areas") allowed in the Forest (Open 26 play area closed on June 14, 2004).

- Emergency closures can be issued locally where resources are being damaged or abused, or there are safety concerns.

At the present time, there are no Forest Service designated trails or roads on the Nicolet side of the forest. The Forest Service has started an implementation process for opening trails and roads to ATV use.

2. Issues

- Natural Resource Protection Priority

Land and water resources are a major attribute of the quality of life in Oneida County. In addition to their contribution to the areas history, environment and economy, they are valued for their natural and scenic beauty, wildlife habitat, and the recreational opportunities they provide. The planning effort needs to consider natural resources and incorporate methods to implement conservation strategies. While using those resources which contribute to the economic success of Oneida County, there needs to be a balance between the natural environment and human environment in the use of our resources.

- Protect Water Quality:

Two of Oneida County's priorities are to monitor and improve water quality. The County is involved in efforts to improve water quality through enforcement of regulations, such as shoreland and wetland zoning, permit review for septic systems, and developing watershed management plans. We need to develop a balanced approach.

- Invasive Species:

Plants and animals not native to Oneida County have been introduced to the environment through various mechanisms. Because these species evolved in other environments and may not be subject to the same competition and predation as native species, and can possibly outcompete native species. Plants such as Eurasian milfoil or crustations like the rusty crawfish can have a negative effect on water quality and native fish.

- Parcelization

In recent years large blocks of land that had been held for many years as industrial forest have changed hands and some has been subdivided into smaller parcels. This can complicate management of this land as productive forest. Because of the importance of forestry, paper and the wood products industry to the county's economy this trend could have a long term impact on

the county. Access of the public to these lands for recreational purposes can also be reduced.

- Lake Levels and Dropping Water Tables

Oneida County is subject to periodic periods of drought. This is part of a natural cycle of wet and dry years, but this drought has been particularly severe. This extended period of dry conditions has lowered lake levels, dried up wetlands, put a great deal of stress on the county's forests, and made trees vulnerable to pests and disease. Although the County can't do anything about the weather, it is important to consider how this pattern, and the possibility that it may continue longer than other similar patterns in the past, will affect the natural resources on which Oneida County is so dependent.

B. Inventory and Trends

Understanding the natural resources of Oneida County is an essential component of planning for the future. The natural resources of Oneida County are comprised of many elements such as topography, soils, mineral deposits, ground and surface waters, woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife. These elements continue to provide the stage for development and exert pressures that greatly influence the direction and form future development will take.

Achieving a balance between the economic and the environment resource use of the county's natural resources is a primary goal of comprehensive planning. Sound decisions about future development depend upon knowledge of the supply, demand and intrinsic value of the county's resources. If properly managed, the resource base will continue to be a major economic and recreational asset to its residents and visitors.

1. Climate

Oneida County has a continental climate characterized by cold, snowy winters, warm summer days and cool summer nights. The short frost-free period during the summer restricts suitable crops mainly to forage, small grain, and vegetables. Precipitation is fairly well distributed throughout the year, reaching a peak in summer. Snow covers the ground much of the time from late fall until early spring, and has an annual range from 20 to 90+ inches and an annual mean of 53 inches during the past 30 years (1971-2000). August is generally the wettest month and February is the driest. Precipitation averages 30.6 inches annually. The sun shines 65 percent of the time possible in summer, and 45 percent in winter. The prevailing wind is from the southwest. Average wind speed is highest in spring at 12 miles per hour.

2. Landscape

Oneida County's landscape is the result of several glacial advances and retreats that took place over northeastern and central Wisconsin some 12,500 to 20,000 years ago. As a result of this activity, there are numerous and inconsistent soil variations, numerous unique geologic and topographic features emerged such as extensive ground moraines in the southeastern and southwestern parts of the county, a remnant end moraine near Rhinelander, and a number of parallel ridges adjacent to drumlin fields in Forest and Langlade Counties. Oneida County's physical landscape is defined not only by forest, wetlands, streams, woodlots, hills, and other natural features, but perhaps most by the density of the lake area in the northern part of the county and in Vilas County, one of the most extensive lake districts in the world.

Elevations in Oneida County range from 1,460 feet above sea level near McCord, in the southwestern part of the county, to about 1,735 feet above sea level at Squirrel Hill. Steep slopes are defined as slopes greater than 25 percent. See the Natural Resources Map. NOTE: All maps are neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and are not intended to be used as such. The drawings are a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only per the Oneida County Zoning and Shoreland Protection Ordinance.

3. Soils

There are 46 different soil types in Oneida County identified in the County Soil Survey. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency that produced the Oneida County Soil Survey. The survey contains predictions of soil behavior for selected land uses and also highlights the limitations and hazards inherent in the county's soils. A series of detailed maps identifying the location of soil types in Oneida County accompanies the survey.

The Oneida County Soil Survey contains detailed descriptions of each soil type, and includes tables to determine suitability and limitations. See the Soils Map.

Some NRCS soil types may illustrate the possible relationship between soil types and characteristics to use. Residential, commercial, and industrial buildings may be limited by shallow depth to bedrock which may restrict foundation depth or increase construction costs. High water tables unstable soils, and steep slopes (over 25 percent or county zoning) may hamper commercial and industrial uses more than residential.

Some localized conditions may pose problems for underground utilities to serve such areas. Soils and soil conditions can affect certain types of development; examples include depth to bedrock, poor filtration capabilities, slow water percolation, wetness, ponding, susceptibility to erosion (slope), and subsidence. These types of soils are generally found in wetlands, on hillsides, and in

shallow soils overlying bedrock. Due to their fragile nature, destruction of vegetative cover on such soils can trigger damage from wind and gully erosion.

4. Metallic and Nonmetallic Resources

Oneida County contains some significant non-metallic deposits, and as such, several quarries are in operation. There are two known metallic deposits within the county: the Bend Deposit, and a sulfide deposit on County forestland in the Town of Lynne. Although there was an attempt to develop the Lynne site by Noranda Minerals in the 1990s, the project had been abandoned until recently when Tamerlane Ventures initiated the permitting process to begin mining there. The County has a mining ordinance (Section 9.61) on the books that will take effect if and when actual mining operation are undertaken. Until then any exploratory activities will have to be authorized on County land, and approved as a conditional use within the forestry district.

The County has 59 approved non-metallic mining quarries that are greater than 1 acre in size. The County has a Non-Metallic Mine Ordinance (Chapter 9.60) to assure that lands opened to mining are reclaimed to near pre-mine conditions, or to some other pre-determined final use. Any new mine would be subject to the reclamation standards under this ordinance.

5. Surface Water

Oneida County has 1,129 lakes covering 68,447 acres, and over 830 miles of streams, of which 192 miles are classified as trout streams. Overall, the general water quality is good, however, eutrophication is an issue. During the summer, shallow water areas contain algae and aquatic plants. The water is predominantly very soft in the seepage, drained, and drainage lakes, but the water is hard in many of the spring lakes and streams. See the Natural Resources Map.

The largest body of water is the Willow Flowage, an impoundment and a drainage lake, covering 6,306 acres. Most of the lakes are spring lakes or seepage lakes. Lake Tomahawk is the largest natural lake, which covers 3,627 acres. The deepest lake is Clear Lake, which is 100 feet deep. See Table 1.

The Wisconsin River flows through the center of the county in the Towns of Crescent and Newbold, and the City of Rhinelander, which along with its tributaries drain most of the county. The most prominent of these tributaries are the Pelican River in the eastern part of the county and the Tomahawk River in the west. The Wolf River flows through the far southeast corner of the county, and the Flambeau River drains the far northwest corner.

Surface water is an important resource to Oneida County, however it is threatened by both point and nonpoint source pollution. Nonpoint source pollution, often the result of stormwater runoff and erosion, is pollution that cannot be traced to a single source, and can come from roadways, parking lots, farm fields and construction sites. The more impervious surfaces in close proximity to waterways and a number of other factors can increase (e.g. roads and parking lots) the runoff that is carried into the waterways.

The Wisconsin State Legislature created the Wisconsin Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Abatement Program (NPS) in 1978 (§281.66, Wis. Stats.). The goal of the NPS Program is to improve and protect the water quality of streams, lakes, wetlands, and groundwater by reducing pollutants from agricultural and residential non-point sources. The WDNR and DATCP administer the program, which focuses on critical hydrologic units called priority watersheds. The program is implemented through the Targeted Runoff Management Program and Urban Non-point Source Water Pollution Abatement and Storm Water Management Grant Program, led by local units of government. Landowners, land renters, counties, cities, villages, towns, sewer districts, sanitary districts, lake districts, and regional planning commissions are eligible to participate.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), per requirements of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), maintains a list of water bodies that do not currently meet water quality standards under the Clean Water Act. This list is commonly known as the "303(d) list," corresponding to the applicable subsection of the Clean Water Act. The WDNR is required to update the list every two years.

Oneida County has 35 water bodies appearing on the 2006 303(d) list. Waste load allocations will be implemented through the WPDES permit program for point sources, and through Wisconsin's nonpoint source program. All the lakes are on the list because of mercury contamination from a combination of the natural element found in soils and a component in every living thing as well as atmospheric deposition. The DNR issues fish consumption advisories based upon atmospheric mercury pollution.

The WDNR also maintains a list of Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs). An outstanding resource water is defined as a lake or stream which has excellent water quality, high recreational and aesthetic value, and high quality fishing and is free from point source or nonpoint source pollution. An exceptional resource water is defined as a stream which exhibits the same high quality resource values as outstanding waters, but which may be impacted by point source pollution or have the potential for future discharge from a small sewered community. See Table 2-2.

Table 2-1: Oneida County lakes over 650 acres		
Lake Name	Acreage	Township
Big Lake	865	Three Lakes
Clear Lake	846	Woodruff
Columbus Lake	670	Sugar Camp
Dam Lake	744	Sugar Camp
Kawaguesaga Lake	670	Minocqua
Minocqua Lake	1,360	Minocqua
Pelican Lake	3,585	Schoepke
Pickerel Lake	736	Newbold
Planting Ground Lake	1,012	Three Lakes
Rainbow Flowage	2,035	Newbold
Rhinelanders Flowage	1,326	Newbold
Shishebogama Lake	716	Minocqua
Squirrel Lake	1,317	Minocqua
Thunder Lake	1,835	Three Lakes
Two Sisters Lake	719	Newbold
Tomahawk Lake	3,627	Lake Tomahawk
Willow Flowage	6,306	Little Rice

Source: WDNR, 24k Hydro, 2000; and Wisconsin Lakes book.

**Table 2-2:
Oneida County Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters**

Waterbody Name	Portion Within ORW/ERW Classification	Status
Big Carr Lake	All	ORW
Clear Lake	All	ORW
Little Tomahawk Lake	All	ORW
Noisy Creek	Jct with Camp 6 Creek upstream to S21 T35 R9	ORW
Tomahawk Lake	All	ORW
Two Sisters Lake	All	ORW
Wolf River	All	ORW
Bearskin Creek	From Tomahawk River to Little Bearskin Lake	ERW
Creek 12-8 T36N R4E	All	ERW
Creek 18-1 T36N R4E	All	ERW
Creek 18-3 T37N R4E	All	ERW
Creek 18-4 T37N R4E	All	ERW
Creek 2-13 T35N R11E	All	ERW
Creek 20-11 T38N R5E	All	ERW
Creek 21-14 T35N R9E	All	ERW
Creek 21-8 T35N R9E	All	ERW
Creek 22-16 T35N R11E	All	ERW
Creek 26-13 T37N R7E	All	ERW
Creek 26-4 T37N R7E	All	ERW
Creek 27-7 T37N R6E	All	ERW
Creek 28-1 T37N R6E	All	ERW
Creek 28-2 T37N R6E	All	ERW
Creek 28-6 T36N R4E	All	ERW
Creek 29-8 T36N R4E	All	ERW
Creek 3-7 T38N R58E	All	ERW
Creek 30-3 T37N R4E	All	ERW
Creek 31-15 T36N R8E	All	ERW
Creek 34-10 T38N R6E	All	ERW
Creek 34-14 T37N R5E	All	ERW
Creek 34-6 T36N R4E	All	ERW
Creek 7-13 T36N R4E	All	ERW
Gudegast Creek	Bridge S 16 & 17 (T37N R10E) to Jennie Webber Creek	ERW
Jennie Creek	All	ERW
Langley Creek	All	ERW
Lela Creek	All	ERW
Little Willow Creek	All	ERW
Outlet Creek	All	ERW
Palm Springs and Creek	All	ERW
Pine Creek	All	ERW
Planert Creek	All	ERW
Radtke Spring	All	ERW
Slaughterhouse Creek	All	ERW
Starks Creek	All	ERW
Stony Creek	All	ERW
Walczak Creek	All	ERW

Source: WDNR, NCWRPC

6. Wetlands

Wetlands are important for groundwater aquifer recharge, wildlife habitat, and helps to provide attributes such as open space, recreation, aesthetics, and opportunities for educational purposes. Wetlands act as water storage “sponges” in times of high water by absorbing excess water and then slowly releasing it back into the watershed. Connected wetlands that are adjoined or adjacent to floodplains and other water bodies may help minimize flooding damage. Wetlands have valuable ground and surface water purification capabilities since potentially harmful compounds and bacteria in the water are absorbed into plant tissues potentially buffering the adjacent water body. Wetlands occur in areas where the water level is usually near or above the soil surface. Through succession, wetlands fill naturally over time through these processes due to sedimentation and organic accumulation.

Swamps, bogs, marshes, potholes, wet meadows, and sloughs are all considered wetlands. The soils in these areas are usually saturated within a few inches of the surface during the growing season and need some type of artificial drainage to be made arable. In addition to their ecological value, wetlands are also an important recreational, educational, and aesthetic resource. Wetlands offer breeding and nesting grounds for waterfowl and for many other animals dependent on aquatic habitats. Maintaining these attributes, provides opportunities that improves habitat that supports activities such as hunting and wildlife observation. Sometimes a particular chain of wetlands can be home to a rare or endangered species thereby provoking interest from scientists and educators. Lastly, the visual appearance of the wetlands themselves can constitute a scenic resource.

Historically, the greatest threats to wetlands in the County have been agricultural drainage ~~and~~, urban development and natural succession. The filling of connected wetlands and drainage systems may affect the hydrological function of a wetland system. The WDNR has promulgated minimum standards for managing wetlands to help reduce the negative impacts of developing in or near wetland areas. These standards need to be reviewed periodically as science and technology processes develop or evolve to help minimize wetland system integrity while balancing the natural and human environments.

The DNR identifies general locations of wetlands by digitizing aerial photos to create Wisconsin Wetland Inventory maps and associated databases. Few of these wetlands have been physically delineated. According to this database, Oneida County has over 237,500 acres of wetlands, which may also include wooded wetlands. Significant concentrations of wetlands in Oneida County include the Munninghoff Marsh on the Rhinelander Flowage, Rainbow Wetlands State Natural Area, and the Thunder Marsh in the Three Lakes area.

Additional wetlands are associated with floodplains and smaller wetlands are scattered throughout the County.

7. Floodplains

Floodplains are a natural flood control system that provides an area where excess water can be accommodated. The extent to which a floodplain may become inundated depends upon the amount of water, the speed and distance that the water travels, and the topography of the area. Oneida County contains approximately 54,750 acres of floodplain, some of which is also wetlands. See the Natural Resources Map.

Floods are one of Wisconsin's most common types of natural disasters. Each year Wisconsin communities have the potential to suffer millions of dollars in flood damages. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates floodplain areas in the state. The floodplain determinations are based on generalized photo interpretation and overlays of predetermined contour lines with a huge variation of accuracy subject to verification by technological advances and processes. These are areas that have a calculated potential to be inundated with floodwaters in the 100-year storm event (e.g., a storm that has about a 1% chance of happening in any given year, or a 26% chance of happening over a 30-year period).

Given that these areas are prone to flooding, development in floodplains is usually discouraged. Even so, development does occur in these areas and in turn affects the ability of these areas to mitigate the effects of flooding.

Chapter NR 116 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code requires all municipalities to adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances for the purpose of protecting individuals, private property, and public investments from flood damage. Floodplain zoning regulates development in the floodway and flood fringe areas, usually by requiring structures to be built above flood levels or be otherwise flood-protected. For regulatory purposes, a floodplain is generally defined as the 100-year floodplain. Floodplain regulation can also keep communities eligible for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). FEMA offers emergency assistance to flood stricken communities provided these areas are in compliance with NFIP requirements and have also completed a Flood Insurance Study. Currently, Oneida County and the City of Rhinelander participate in the NFIP program, have completed the Flood Insurance Study, and have created a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) that delineates those areas likely to be inundated by a 100-year flood (also known as "A" Zones).

8. Watersheds

Oneida County is divided into 12 watersheds and two drainage basins. The sub-continental divide separates the Mississippi River drainage basin from the Lake Michigan drainage basin. On the eastern side of the divide, water flows into the Wolf River, which leads to Lake Michigan. On the Western side of the divide, the water flows into the Wisconsin River on its way to the Mississippi River.

The far southeastern corner of the county is within the drainage basin of the Wolf River, the far northwestern corner is in Flambeau River basin, which flows into the Chippewa River, and the rest of the county is within the drainage basin of the Wisconsin River. In Oneida County, the Wisconsin River flows generally south through the center of the county, from the Rainbow Flowage, through the City of Rhinelander and leaves the county in the Town of Crescent. Several principal tributaries of the Wisconsin River that are at least partly in the county include: Noisy Creek, Pine Creek, Sugar Camp Creek and the Pelican River, which joins the Wisconsin at Rhinelander and drains much of the eastern part of the county.

The Tomahawk River, which starts in the Minocqua chain of lakes and includes the Willow Flowage, drains much of the western part of the county before joining the Wisconsin at Tomahawk in Lincoln County. The far northwest corner of the county is drained by Squaw Creek into the Upper South Fork of the Flambeau River, which flows into the Chippewa River. The far southeastern corner of the county drains to Post Lake and the Wolf River and the Lake Michigan basin.

The WDNR issues grants for the implementation of watershed projects through a cost-share approach. The Priority Watershed Program provides financial assistance to local units of government in selected watersheds to address land management activities that contribute to urban and rural runoff. The grantees use the funds to reimburse costs to landowners for installing voluntary Best Management Practices.

9. Groundwater Resources

Groundwater supplies nearly all of the water for residential, commercial, and industrial uses in Oneida County. In general, groundwater use has increased in the county as urban areas continue to grow and development increases around the county's lakes. The increase in rural housing developments each with their own private well, also places demands on groundwater.

Groundwater is comprised of the portion of rainfall that does not run off to streams or rivers and that does not evaporate or transpire from plants. This water percolates down through the soil until it reaches the saturated zone of an aquifer. The groundwater level generally rises in spring, declines in summer, rises slightly in fall, and declines in winter. Use of groundwater for irrigation has caused a measurable decline in the level only in the immediate vicinity of

the withdrawal. The depth to groundwater ranges from over one hundred feet beneath the hills on the moraines to as little as 25 feet in lowland areas. Groundwater yields from the glacial deposits vary. Generally, the outwash yields more than the glacial till. The underlying crystalline bedrock yields little or no water.

Natural groundwater generally discharges at streams, marshes, lakes, and springs or as underflow. The continued flow of perennial streams during long dry periods is caused by the natural discharge of the groundwater reservoir. Ensuring an adequate supply of usable groundwater is an important issue in Oneida County since the water becomes more difficult to obtain for everyone when the resource is more heavily used.

The quality of the ground water is generally good. The impact of development and agriculture may cause deterioration of the ground water. The volume or productivity of the well is highly variable based on substrait. Generally, the yield of wells varies based on the depth and nature of the underlying glacial deposits. Where the glacial drift is thin, such as near Monico, wells will yield only a few gallons per minute. In other areas, such as the hilly moraine areas in the southeastern and southwestern sections of the county, wells will produce five to fifty gallons per minute, and in areas of glacial outwash or of thick deposits of saturated sand and gravel yields can range up to 2,000 gallons per minute. A well at Rhinelander yields more than 1,000 gallons per minute.

Groundwater quality can be impaired by a variety of pollutants including leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs), landfills, septic tanks, failed septic systems, sewage treatment systems, over-application of pesticides and fertilizers, and spills of hazardous chemicals. The quality can also be impaired by a variety of naturally occurring elements such as iron, sulfur, etc. The most common contaminants found in Wisconsin's groundwater are pesticides, nitrates, nitrogen, and volatile organic compounds. Other contaminants may include antibiotics, hormones and heavy metals. These contaminants come from a multitude of sources including nitrogen-based fertilizers, septic systems, animal waste storage, feedlots, municipal and industrial wastewater discharges, and sludge disposal. Bacteriological contamination can pose a significant threat to the health of those dependant on groundwater for drinking. This contamination can be the result of infiltration from a variety of external sources. Groundwater contaminants can affect the health of humans, livestock, and wildlife. Because groundwater seeps more slowly than surface runoff, pollution that occurs today may not become evident for several years. Once polluted, the groundwater is very difficult to purify and may take many years to clean itself by the dilution process.

10. Forests

At one time, much of Wisconsin was covered with highly variable stands of pine, hemlock, and hardwoods on the highlands, and cedar, spruce, and balsam on its lowlands according to survey notes. From 1860 to about 1910 (land patents from federal government to individuals), these forests provided raw material for a thriving timber industry that supplied lumber to a growing nation. During this time, a lack of sound forest management resulted in over harvest of the forests and subsequent fires which lead to many changes of the landscape. Immigrants eager to own a place to farm and build their lives purchased these lands and the lands were cleared. Over time immigrants were challenged by the poor soils and seasonability which limited agricultural subsistence and vacated the land looking for better opportunities. As a result, the lands went tax delinquent which helped to create the Oneida County Forests.

Woodlands cover approximately 575,700 acres of the county. As of 2007, there were about 207,756 acres of privately owned forestland, the most in any county, enrolled in either the Forest Crop Law (FCL) or Managed Forest Law (MFL) program, both administered by WDNR. The FCL program, enacted in 1927, allows targeting the industry and private landowners to defer tax payment until after the harvest, or when the contract is terminated. New enrollment for this program terminated in 1986. The FCL program was designed to encourage long-term investment in private forestland and promote sound forest management practices. FCL enrolled parcels must be at least 40 acres of contiguous forestland and be open to the public for hunting and fishing. Permanent houses are not allowed on these parcels.

Designed to forward the objectives of the FCL program, the MFL program was enacted in 1986. To qualify for MFL enrollment, the forestland must be at least 20 not currently non-productive contiguous acres and participating landowners must adopt a forest management plan. In exchange, their land is assessed for tax purposes at a rate below the state average.

Table 2-3 displays information on the amount of forestland and type of ownership in Oneida County.

Minor Civil Division	1983 Forest Land	1996 Forest Land	2005 Forest Land	1983-2005 % Change	1983-2005 Net Change
Oneida County	497,100	567,542	558,337	12.3%	61,237
State	15,351,300	15,964,800	15,886,555	3.5%	535,255

Source: USDA Forest Service, 1983, 1996, & 2004

The change in forest cover over time can be an important indicator of how activities are sustainable within the county. From 1983 to 2004, forested land within Oneida County has generally increased by 61,237 acres or 12.3%. This increase in forested land follows a trend throughout the state of Wisconsin. Forest cover is typically quantified (1) by a ground level forest inventory or (2) by using satellite imagery data.

Currently in Oneida County there are 17,280 acres of forestland owned by the federal government as part of the Nicolet National Forest; 225,000 acres owned by the state of Wisconsin in the Northern Highlands – American Legion State Forest in Oneida, Vilas, and Iron Counties, as well as state natural, fishery, or wildlife areas.

Under the Forest Crop Law (FCL) 12,332 acres are open to the public to hunt and fish as of 2007. There are 149,461 acres enrolled in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program in Oneida County that are open to the public for hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, sightseeing, and hiking, and 44,326 acres that are closed to public access. All MFL program participants can restrict access without penalty to the landowner to areas that are within 300 feet of any building or harvesting operation. Snowmobiles, ATVs, bicycles, and other motorized and non-motorized vehicles are prohibited on enrolled lands that are open to the public.

Wooded habitats especially managed wooded habitats play key roles in the protection of environmentally sensitive areas like steep slopes, shorelands, wetlands, and flood plains. Removal of woodland cover can be detrimental to these areas in both ecological functions and to visual enjoyment. The health of a forest is measured by its capacity for renewal, for recovery from a wide range of disturbances, and for retention of its ecological resiliency. At the same time it must meet current and future needs of people for desired levels of values, uses, products, and services. Arguably, invasive exotic species like garlic mustard and multiflora rose present a threat to the long-term health and integrity of the forests. Invasive plants present a problem for native plants as they invade natural systems, often dominating a community by competing for nutrients, sunlight and space, and by altering the food web or physical environment. Invasive species like the Gypsy moth and the Asian long-horned beetle can prey on native species.

a. Oneida County Forest

The Oneida County Forestry and Recreation Department manages 82,278 acres of county forest. This land is managed for multiple uses, and is independently certified as sustainably managed and harvested. Some of the County forest is closed to motorized vehicles. Examples of recreational activities are hunting,

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fishing, hiking, snowmobiling, camping, bough cutting (permit required), firewood collection (permit required), and wildlife observation.

b. School Forests

Four school districts have school forests that are open to the public for a variety of recreational and educational uses.

School Forests are listed for each district:

Minocqua, Hazelhurst, Lake Tomahawk (MHLT) School District

- MHLT School Forest, 40 acres, Sec. 34 T38N R6E; and
- Minocqua School Forest, 193 acres, Sec. 22, 23, & 26 T39N R6E.

School District of Rhinelander

- Rhinelander Junior High School Forest, 39 acres, Sec. 4 T36N, R8E;
- Crescent District School Forest, 53 acres, Sec. 4 & 5 T36N R8E;
- Pelican School Forest, 79 acres, Sec. 3 T36N R9E;
- Clovernook School Forest, 80 acres, Sec. 34 T37N R8E;
- Bernstein School Forest, 120 acres, Sec. 1 T37N R9E;
- Burkhart School Forest, 120 acres, Sec. 7 T37N R9E;
- Cedric A Vig Outdoor Classroom, 160 acres, Sec. 10 T36N R9E;
- Lake Creek School Forest, 160 acres, Sec. 2 & 11 T37N R9E; and
- Rhinelander High School Forest, 400 acres, Sec. 5 & 8 T37N R9E.

Three Lakes School District

- Three Lakes School Forest, 34 acres, Sec. 32 T38N R11E;
- Gagen-Piehl School Forest, 40 acres, Sec. 29 T37N R11E; and
- Sugar Camp School Forest, 40 acres, Sec. 34 T38N R9E.

Woodruff School District

- Arbor Vitae-Woodruff School Forest, 22 acres, Sec. 20 T39N R7E.

c. National Forest

The Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest covers about 661,400 acres in Florence, Forest, Langlade, Oconto, Oneida and Vilas counties. A combined 17,680 acres of the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest are located in Oneida County.

Created out of the “cut-over” lands primarily during the 1920s and 1930s the National Forests represent the underutilized economic and recreational resource. Operating under a 1986 plan and subsequent revisions, both the Chequamegon and Nicolet units of the National Forest are today dedicated to multiple use. Current trends indicate our national forests have more mortality

than growth as a result of improper forest management of a public resource increasing risks and mortality from insect/disease, fire, and invasive species. A principle that sees the forest as a source of timber and a protector of water quality and wildlife habitat, but also a recreational and visitor asset for the counties within its boundaries, including Oneida County.

Under the 1986 plan nearly 214,600 acres of land within the forest has been harvested. Overall the National Forest has produced 1.4 billion board feet of sawtimber and pulpwood valued at \$3.7 million. Management of the Forest has been consolidated, and a new plan completed in 2004 is being implemented. Designed to encompass some of the objections voiced to the 1986 plan, the plan focuses on four areas: Access and Recreational Opportunities; Biological Diversity; Special Land Acquisitions; and Timber Production.

d. Northern Highlands – American Legion State Forest

The Northern Highland-American Legion (NH-AL) State Forest occupies more than 225,000 acres in Vilas, Oneida and Iron counties, with roughly 55,000 acres in Oneida County. Outdoor recreational opportunities are diverse and abundant on the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest. Visitors are drawn to the forest's water resources. Oneida and Vilas counties are blessed with one of the highest concentrations of lakes in the world, making sport fishing a major recreational activity.

The forest has many day use areas and trails, including: picnic areas; family campgrounds; two outdoor group camping areas; interpretive nature trails; designated hiking trails totaling 18.5 miles; 32 miles of mountain bike trails; 70 miles of cross-country ski trails; and about 400 miles of snowmobile trails. Hundreds of miles of logging roads and non-designated trails are open to all types of non-motorized uses, like hiking, skiing, horseback riding and mountain biking. Some unimproved roads are open and accessible to licensed motor vehicles, as well.

In addition to these recreational facilities the NH-AL provides "wild land" for those seeking a pristine and quiet backcountry experience in areas with few support facilities, motorized vehicles or signs of management activities. The Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area is described as "almost Canada," because of its wild flavor. The area has more than 17,000 acres, 73 miles of shoreline, 106 islands, and seven boat landings. Rustic campsites around the shoreline and on the islands offer scenery and solitude. There are abundant walleye and panfish; northern pike, muskellunge, and bass; hunting and hiking opportunities; deer, bear, ruffed grouse, ducks, loons, and wolves.

The NH-AL has timber production goals similar to those of the National Forest.

11. Wildlife, Fish, & Natural Areas

The State of Wisconsin, primarily through the Department of Natural Resources, holds several tracts of land within Oneida County. This land is open to the public for a variety of uses. Boundary signs posted near parking lots and along borders explain the uses on that parcel.

State Wildlife Areas (SWA):

SWA were acquired to preserve habitat for wildlife. Two State wildlife areas exist in Oneida County:

Thunder Lake Wildlife Area located 1 mile north of Three Lakes is a public hunting area that consists of 3,000 acres.

Woodboro Wildlife Area located about 10 miles west of Rhinelander is a public hunting area that consists of 3,000 acres.

State Natural Areas (SNA):

SNA were acquired to protect the state's natural diversity, provide sites for research and environmental education, and serve as benchmarks for assessing and guiding use of other lands in the state. Natural areas are defined as tracts of land or water, which have native biotic communities, unique natural features, or significant geological or archeological sites. Generally, natural areas are remnant areas that largely have escaped disturbances since settlement or which exhibit little recent disturbance so that recovery has occurred and presettlement conditions are approached.

Natural areas provide an important reservoir of our state's genetic or biologic diversity. They act as important reserves for native biotic communities and provide habitat for endangered, threatened, or critical species or other species of special concern to scientists. They often include areas with highly significant geological or archaeological features. They tend not to have much facility development, though there may be a designated trail or two on site. Some properties allow limited hunting.

Oneida County has eighteen state natural areas. They are:

1. ***Finnerud Pine Forest SNA (No. 31)*** is a UW-Madison Arboretum holding of old growth red pine. Contact the Arboretum at 608-263-7344 for access permission.
2. ***Rice Lake SNA (No. 40)*** is 1,030 acres located in the Thunder Lake Wildlife Area.
3. ***Holmboe Conifer Forest SNA (No. 79)*** is 32 acres located in the Town of Pelican.

4. **Gobler Lake SNA (No. 115)** is 470 acres located in the Town of Little Rice.
5. **Stone Lake Pines SNA (No. 185)** is 65 acres located within the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest in the Town of Sugar Camp.
6. **Wind Pudding Lake SNA (No. 188)** is 340 acres located within the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest in the Town of Lake Tomahawk.
7. **Patterson Hemlocks SNA (No. 216)** is 304 acres located in the Town of Minocqua.
8. **Atkins Lake SNA (No. 238)** is 2,644 acres partially located in the Town of Piehl.
9. **Tomahawk River Pines SNA (No. 239)** is 1,040 acres located in the Town of Minocqua.
10. **Squirrel River Pines SNA (No. 244)** is 643 acres located in the Town of Minocqua.
11. **Germain Hemlocks SNA (No. 355)** is 88 acres located in the Town of Cassian.
12. **Pat Shay Lake SNA (No. 446)** is 736 acres partially located within the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest in the Town of Three Lakes.
13. **Tomahawk Lake Hemlocks SNA (No. 510)** is 244 acres located within the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest in the Town of Lake Tomahawk.
14. **Two Lakes Pine-Oak Forest SNA (No. 511)** is 112 acres located within the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest in the Town of Lake Tomahawk.
15. **Big Swamp SNA (No. 512)** is 2,914 acres located within the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest in the Town of Sugar Camp.
16. **Rainbow Wetlands SNA (No. 513)** is 2,357 acres located within the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest in the Town of Newbold.
17. **Shallow Lake SNA (No. 514)** is 103 acres located within the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest in the Town of Newbold.
18. **Spur Lake SNA (No. 537)** is 71 acres located in the Town of Piehl.

12. Threatened and Endangered Species

Oneida County contains a wide range of plant and wildlife habitats. These natural habitats have been greatly affected by rural development and agricultural practices. In most cases, these influences are directly responsible for the endangerment or threatening of certain species. The Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires all federal agencies to conserve endangered and threatened species. The State of Wisconsin has similar statutes.

Wisconsin law prohibits the "taking" of any plant or animal listed as endangered or threatened. Taking is defined as the act of killing, harming,

collecting, capturing, or harassing a member of a protected species. The WDNR-Bureau of Endangered species operates the Wisconsin's Natural Heritage Inventory, which maintains data on the location and status of rare species, natural communities, and natural features in Wisconsin.

WDNR's Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) program maintains data on the general location and status of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species in the state. This data is obtained through field inventory. According to that inventory, Oneida County has 595 land sections with occurrences of aquatic and terrestrial plants, animals, and/or natural communities of endangered status as identified in the Wisconsin NHI. Each section identified may have several different species or just one species. Oneida County has more rare species occurrences than some other surrounding counties. See Rare Species & Natural Areas Map.

Oneida County has with Vilas County (and Sawyer and Washburn Counties) an environment uniquely defined by lakes and forests. In or near these lakes there are a number of species that are threatened or endangered, including: Osprey, Spruce Grouse, Wood Turtle, Blanding's Turtle, Pygmy Snaketail (dragonfly), American Marten, Greater Redhorse (fish), Fairy Slipper (plant), Cerulean Warbler, Algae-like Pondweed (plant), Red-shouldered Hawk, Large Water-starwort (plant), and Yellow Rail (bird).

Lakes

Oneida County has a dense concentration of lakes. Because of this abundance of lakes Oneida County has a regionally significant population of bald eagles, osprey, common loons, river otter, mallard ducks, and beaver. Significant beds of wild rice occur on some of the county's lakes and streams including Spur Lake in the Town of Stella and the Thoroughfare in the Town of Three Lakes. Wild rice is a regionally important resource for waterfowl and Native Americans.

Wetlands

Oneida County has about 30 percent of its land base in wetlands. The county's wetlands are mostly forested wetlands with tamarack and black spruce. The timber on the forested wetlands was heavily harvested in the past but the wetlands were never drained for agriculture. In the upland forest areas there are no significant instances of endangered species, but in the forested wetlands, there are a number of threatened and endangered plant species, especially rare orchids. Most of the original wetlands remain intact. Several very large wetlands occur in the county and these wetlands are of regional significance. Besides the existing State Natural Areas, wetlands of regional

significance include the extensive Thunder Marsh near the village of Three Lakes and the large Bootjack Bog in the western side of the county.

Sandy Soils

The county's sandy soils once supported a regionally significant mixed forest of white pine, red pine, white birch, and aspen. Today young aspen forests are most common. White birch is rapidly declining. White and red pine are slowly increasing. The county contains a regionally significant component of red oak in its forests.

Wild Country

Large parts of the county have limited residential or commercial development and, except for timber harvest, remain relatively wild. This generally wild character enables populations of gray wolf, black bear, and bobcat to occur. Without management populations of gray wolf, black bear, and bobcat would significantly decrease.

Industrial Forest

About 20% of the county is owned by the forest industry. The forest industry actively manages its land for industrial production of forest products. Partially because of this industrial ownership Oneida County has more forests in the seedling and sapling age class than any other Wisconsin county.

Public Land

In Oneida County, the DNR's American Legion State Forest (55,000 acres), the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest (11,000 acres), and the Oneida County Forest (82,000 acres) manage the timberlands within their boundaries with a general multiple-use philosophy that includes timber harvest, wildlife management, recreation, watershed, and some protected areas. The DNR's Thunder Marsh Wildlife Area (3,100 acres) protects a large wetland near the village of Three Lakes. The DNR's Willow Flowage Resources Area (16,000 acres) protects most of the shoreline and surrounding backlands of the Willow Flowage. The DNR's Woodboro Wildlife Area (3,000 acres) protects seven small, shallow lakes and surrounding upland and wetland habitat.

There is, however, another side to the endangered species story in Oneida County. The numbers of such large predatory species such as the gray wolf have recovered to the degree that there has been recent discussion of delisting them as endangered. And because of the predominance of lakes in the county (and in Vilas County) the area boasts the largest breeding population of certain threatened species in the state. The breeding population of osprey is number

one, while both bald eagles and common loon populations are number two in the state. The bald eagle is no longer listed, but is now protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Several other species of plants and animals are listed as rare species, but there are no laws in place to protect them.

13. Environmentally Sensitive Areas/Ecological Landscapes

The presence of surface water, floodways, wetlands, and steep slopes creates situations where some locations are less suitable for development than others. These less suitable areas are often referred to as "environmentally sensitive areas."

Ecological Landscapes were created as a WDNR handbook for resource managers to assist with their ecological assessment of an area, and to help determine sustainable uses. The northern half of the County lies in the ecological landscape known as the North Central Forest, while the southern area lies in the Forest Transition landscape.

14. Invasive Species

Invasive species are plants, animals and pathogens that are "out of place." A species is regarded as invasive if it has been introduced by human action to a location, area, or region where it did not previously occur naturally (i.e., is not native), becomes capable of establishing a breeding population in the new location without further intervention by humans, and spreads widely throughout the new location.

Aquatic invasive species often leave their predators and competitors behind in their native ecosystems. Without these natural checks and balances they are able to reproduce rapidly and out-compete native species. Once established they can alter ecological relationships among native species and can affect ecosystem function, economic value of ecosystems, and human health.

Invasive shrubs such as buckthorn and honeysuckle prevent the regeneration of young trees, if left unregulated causing a long term but very serious impacts on forestry. However, both have the potential to be managed. In woodlands, garlic mustard can completely cover the ground with first- and second-year plants in a matter of years. This European garden herb not only steals most light and nutrient resources from native wildflowers, it is also believed to secrete a chemical into the soil that inhibits growth of other plants.

In close cooperation with UW-Extension education efforts focus on working with citizens to teach boaters, anglers, and other water users the steps to take to prevent transporting of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species. Efforts also involve addressing other potential mechanisms of introduction, including aquarium pet release and water gardening. Many educational tools are used to

reach the public. The main way aquatic invasive species like zebra mussels and Eurasian water milfoil spread to new waters is often by hitching a ride on the boats and trailers. Areas of introduction have been exacerbated by the expansion of public access on public waters. Similarly, other aquatic invasive plants and animals are introduced into lakes and streams through accidental, and sometimes, intentional releases.

15. Air Resources

Air quality in Oneida County meets National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for the six principal pollutants monitored: carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), ozone (O₃), particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), and sulfur dioxide (SO₂). Even so, there are sources of localized air pollution that are cause for concern, such as carbon monoxide from vehicle exhausts in attached garages, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) found in paints and solvents that dry quickly, and wood burning. Monitoring should be encouraged as we seek improvements that balance natural air quality.

C. Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goal: 1:

Look for opportunities to improve (incremental improvement) as science and technology develops to conserve and enhance the County's natural features, including lakes, rivers and streams, open space, wetlands, wildlife habitat, woodlands, and unique physical areas. This must be done in an approach that balances economic and environmental concerns between the natural and human environments.

Objectives:

1. Promote development that considers and takes reasonable economic measures to reduce the impact of natural resources balancing the human and natural environment.
2. Promote opportunities that consider both natural resource protection and economic development allowing for economic decisions in which the risk to the environment is calculated, minimized and controlled to benefit the economic decision.
3. Balance resource protection efforts, with the requirements of human life and economics and identify and enhance the resources to provide economic returns to the County.

Policies:

May 17, 2013

1. Conserve and enhance shoreland areas by minimizing impacts from land disturbing activities.
2. Slow the spread of invasive species.
3. Examine the impacts of metallic mining on the County's natural resources.

Goal 2:

Conserve and enhance large tract woodlands and County Forests.

Objective:

1. Minimize the conversion of woodlands into other uses.

Policy:

1. Improve forestry management to promote productivity of forest products, protect wildlife habitat, water quality, and provide recreational opportunities.

Goal 3:

Reduce contamination of surface and groundwater resources in the County.

Objectives:

1. Promote development that minimizes surface and groundwater impacts from on-site septic systems and other sources.
2. Conserve and enhance surface water, groundwater, and shoreline quality.

Policies:

1. Promote groundwater protection efforts to maintain and lower nitrate, pesticide, and volatile organic compound pollution.
2. Identify and assess the current drainage system in the County.
3. Support dam/drainage way repair and removal where appropriate to minimize flooding in the County.

Goal 4:

Encourage and support the conservation of natural areas that minimize flooding, such as grasslands, wetlands and woodlands.

Objective:

1. Increase and improve wildlife habitat.

Policy:

1. Encourage the development of a natural area network connecting open areas, wetlands, and woodlands.

Goal 5:

Allow for needed non-metallic mining while balancing the interests of adjacent landowners and the County.

Objective:

1. Minimize impacts to the County's natural resources from non-metallic mineral mining.

Policy:

1. Promote proper reclamation techniques in the County.

Goal 6.

Encourage the USDA Forest Service to obtain their Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ).

2.3 AGRICULTURE

A. Background

In the early 1870's the first European traders established posts in the Northwoods. Soon after the areas vast forests provided lumber for the developing cities of the Midwest. Farming began as an auxiliary use to forestry, but with the arrival of rail in the 1880's new markets for commodities opened. Oats, potatoes, and wheat were and remain important commodities for the County along with forestry (Soil Survey).

According to the 2002 Census of Agriculture produced by USDA, there are approximately 51,000 acres of agricultural land in Oneida County, or 6.5 percent of the land area. In 2002, there were 183 farms – 14 farms had over

1,000 acres, 14 farms had over 500 acres, and the average farm had 279 acres. Land in farms as of 2002 was about 43 percent woodland, 38 percent cropland, with the remaining 19 percent in other uses. Most agricultural production in the County consists of mink, deer, cattle and calves, horses and ponies, layer hens 20 weeks old and older, forage crops, potatoes, oats, all berries, and cut Christmas trees. A short growing season limits cropping.

In the 2007 Census of Agriculture land in farms was down 23 percent to 39,172, and the average farm size was down to 219 acres, a 22 percent drop from 2002. At the same time the market value of products sold was up by 38 percent for a per farm average of \$97,892, a 41 percent increase. Of this 83 percent was from sale of crops and 17 percent was from the sale of livestock. The division of land use remained fairly constant with 35 percent in cropland and 46 percent in woodlands.

1. Previous Planning Efforts

NRCS Soil Survey for Oneida County, 1993

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency that prepared the Oneida County, Wisconsin Soil Survey. The survey contains predictions of soil behavior for selected land uses and also highlights the limitations and hazards inherent in the county's soil. A series of detailed maps identifying the location of soil types in Oneida County accompanies the survey. A copy is available in the Oneida County Land Conservation Department.

County Ordinances

Some related County ordinances include Soil and Water Conservation Standards for the Farmland Preservation Program, and the General Zoning Ordinance.

2. Issues

- Protecting Farmland

There is a strong desire to protect farmland in the county. Maintaining a critical mass of farming is essential for the continued agricultural economy in the county.

- Minimizing conflicts between farm and non-farm uses

As more and more non-farm development occurs in the rural area conflicts arise. Some of these relate to odors, noise or uses. These conflicts need to be minimized.

B. Inventory and Trends

1. Farm Size

Agriculture continues to be a major part of the county. Table 2-4A provides census data regarding the total amount of farmland and the size of farms in the county and state. Between 1997 and 2007, the amount of land in farms remained almost constant, gaining only 136 acres, but in the intervening years increasing by 11,970 acres in 2002 and then going back down. The most consistent pattern is reduction in the average size of farms by 34 percent.

Minor Civil Division	Farmlands (acres)			Average Size of Farm (acres)		
	1997	2002	2007	1997	2002	2007
Oneida County	39,036	51,006	39,172	334	279	219
State	14,900,205	15,741,552	15,190,804	227	204	194

Source: Census of Agriculture, 1992, 1997, & 2002

Table 2-4B shows the number of farms by size in the county. Between 1997 and 2009, census data indicated that the total number of farms increased from 117 to 172, an increase of 55 (47%).

Year	Acres					Total Farms
	1 to 49	50-179	180-499	500-999	1000 plus	
1997	30	38	32	9	8	117
2002	45	70	41	13	14	183
2007	59	69	32	4	8	172
1997-2007 % Change	96.7%	81.6%	0.0%	-55.6%	0.0%	47.0%
1997-2007 Net Chg	29	31	0	-5	0	55

Source: Census of Agriculture, 1992, 1997, & 2002

The most apparent trend in the number and size of farms was a marked increase in larger farms in 2002, followed by a sharp decrease, so that in 2007 there were exactly the same number of farms over 1,000 acres and half as many over 500 acres as there were in 1997. Meanwhile there were consistent increases in smaller farms.

2. Row Crops

Forage was the crop with the largest acreage, which increased by 17.7 percent over the period, while potatoes decreased by 29 percent. The acreage in oats remained steady, but by 2007 there were only four producers, leading USDA to withhold acreage numbers for privacy reasons. There was significant growth in berry production, but it was in Christmas trees that the most stunning increase occurred. From 1997 to 2007 cut Christmas tree acreage increased by over 500 percent, after increasing almost tenfold in 2002. Table 2-5 provides historical data on crop production in Oneida County.

Crop	1997	2002	2007	1997-2007 % Change	1997-2007 Net Change
Forage	3,999	3,801	4,705	17.7%	706
Potatoes	1,976	1,985	1,400	-29.1%	-576
Oats	1,584	1,658	D	N/A	N/A
Berries	597	890	835	39.9%	238
Cut Christmas trees	42	408	255	507.1%	213
TOTAL	8,198	8,742	7,195		

Source: USDA-NASS, 1997, 2002, & 2007

D - Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.

3. Cranberries

Cranberries are well suited to the climate and short growing season of Oneida County. In recent years demand for cranberries has increased, because of proven health benefits. As noted in Table 2-5, production has increased nearly forty percent over the last decade, and may be expected to continue its increase in the future.

4. Livestock

In 1997 there was only a single dairy farm in Oneida County. At that time livestock sales accounted 14 percent of the market value of agricultural and were 17 percent in 2007. A number of beef herds exist in the County, and there is a market animal program for 4-H youth. At this time the County has no ordinance governing the establishment of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) although Federal and State standards govern CAFOs at certain levels.

5. Productive Agricultural Areas

Agriculture in Oneida County is primarily limited to a few areas with expanses of sandy loam soil, primarily in the Towns of Crescent, Cassian, Stella and Sugar Camp.

6. Agricultural Land Values

Agricultural land values throughout Wisconsin have changed since use-value assessment of farmland was implemented between 2000-2002. Use values for most farmland are grouped into four categories based on relative soil productivity within the county. The Department of Revenue (DOR) determines actual values assigned to farmland in these categories each year for every municipality in the state. Land associated with the farmstead, road rights-of-way, ungrazed woodland and swampland, etc. is excluded from use value assessment.

Table 2-6: Oneida County Agricultural Land Sales (Land Without Buildings & Improvements)						
Year	Agricultural land continuing in agricultural use			Agricultural land diverted to other uses		
	Number of transactions	Acres sold	\$ per acre	Number of transactions	Acres sold	\$ per acre
1997	2	26	247	1	4	300
2002	2	27	589	2	51	1,106
2007	3	86	1,780	---	---	---

Source: USDA-NASS, 1997, 2002, & 2007

Land and buildings in the farmstead area are assessed at full market value, as are woodlands, swamp, and any fields or pasture areas not actually used for cropland or pasture. If agricultural land is converted to another use, the County where the land is located will administer a penalty on the property tax. The DOR will determine the penalty within each county based on the difference between the average per-acre fair market value of agricultural land sold in the county in the previous year and the average per-acre equalized value of agricultural land in the county in the previous year.

The number of agricultural land sale transactions per year has increased slightly from 1997 to 2007. Table 2-6 shows how much land was converting to other uses. Generally, of all the farmland sold, 86 percent remained agricultural in 1997, while in 2002, 65 percent of agricultural land sold was converted to other uses. Values of land remaining in agriculture rose by 138 percent between 1997 and 2002 and by 202% from 2002 to 2007

C. Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goal 1:

Conserve and enhance economically productive farmlands.

Objectives:

1. Work to preserve farming as a viable occupation within the County.
2. Limit the number of non-farm uses in agricultural areas.

Policy:

1. Existing agricultural uses and buildings should be taken into consideration when locating new development to avoid conflict.
2. Update the Farmland Preservation Plan, under the new Working Lands Initiative, and other related ordinances.

2.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

A. Background

The county is located in the northern section of Wisconsin where the last glacier deposited terminal moraines, eskers, erratic boulders, silt loam, lakes, rivers and deep forests – a unique geology.

Native Americans inhabited Oneida County when the first European explorers, missionaries and fur traders, traveled into the county. The first identifiable tribe of Wisconsin Indians that lived in Oneida County was the Santee Sioux. They were well-established in northern Wisconsin and may have been descended from the Mound Builders whose artifacts and burial customs were similar. Gradually they were displaced by the Ojibway Chippewa Indians.

In 1836 Congress passed a bill, which created the Wisconsin Territory out of Michigan. The new territory embraced not only the present Badger State, but a large area of the trans-Mississippi country west to the Missouri River, including the forthcoming states of Minnesota, Iowa and much of the Dakotas. The area contained a total population of 22,218. In 1838 all of Wisconsin Territory west of the Mississippi was detached to form Iowa Territory. Portage County, including the future Marathon, Lincoln, Oneida and Vilas counties, was organized in 1844.

White settlement began in earnest with the arrival of the Brown brothers in 1882. Chapter 411 of the state laws of 1885 formed Oneida County from part of Lincoln; its first boundaries were officially organized on April 11, 1885. The new county, comprising of 1,137 miles, included all the territory north of the present Lincoln-Oneida boundary line clear to the Michigan border, along with

much of the present day Iron County. At that time Oneida County encompassed only two towns, Pelican and Eagle River.

The boundary lines of Oneida County enjoyed a long and confusing history before their present outline was fixed. By a legislative enactment of April 12, 1893, Vilas County was organized from the upper part of Oneida, while a smaller portion of Oneida was attached to Iron County. As Minocqua was then lobbying to become the county seat of Vilas, that area of Oneida, which included the villages of Minocqua and Woodruff, was awarded to Vilas County. In 1897 the north half of a township which comprised the town of Three Lakes was attached to the town of Eagle River (which did become the county seat of Vilas County) and five townships along the west boundary of Forest County became part of Oneida, including an eastern portion of the town of Three Lakes, the town of Piehl, the east half of Monico and the east half of the town of Schoepke. The shape of Oneida County was finalized in 1905 when the territory incorporating Minocqua and Woodruff was added.

Today Oneida County is 48 miles long and has an average width of 21 miles. It encompasses a total area of 1,137 about square miles. The 20 towns that comprise the county, and the dates they were organized, are: Pelican, 1885; Minocqua, established in Oneida in 1889, surrendered to Vilas in 1893, re-attached to Oneida in 1905; Hazelhurst, 1890; Woodboro, 1893; Three Lakes (called Gagen until 1909), 1897; Schoepke, 1897; Newbold, 1898; Sugar Camp, 1898; Monico, 1901; Lynne, 1902; Crescent, 1903; Cassian, 1903; Pine Lake, 1903; Enterprise, 1905; Woodruff, 1905; Piehl, 1908; Little Rice, 1910; Lake Tomahawk (called Tomahawk Lake until 1923), 1914; Stella, 1921; Nokomis (separated from Cassian), 1948.

The county population more than doubled from 5,010 in 1890 to 11,234 in 1905. Agriculture grew in the period from 1900 to 1920, and the number of farms peaked in 1940 at 789. Although forestry, manufacturing and agriculture continue to play a prominent role in the county's economy, businesses that take advantage of the county's wealth of lakes and natural amenities represent potential for growth in the future.

1. Previous Planning Efforts

Wisconsin Historic Preservation Plan 2006-2015

The Wisconsin's Historic Preservation Plan for 2006-2015 presents achievable goals and objectives to protect and enhance the state's cultural resources. This plan is the product of collaboration between the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and a number of governmental and non-governmental agencies. It seeks to describe a vision for historic and cultural preservation efforts throughout the state. The plan identifies five goals that should be addressed over the next several years:

1. Wisconsin must build a strong network of parties interested in historic preservation.
2. Wisconsin must have a strong educational structure for historic preservation.
3. Preservation must become a core value for Wisconsinites.
4. Wisconsin needs financial stability for preservation activities, ranging from the State Historic Preservation Office to property owners.
5. Citizens and local governments need tools to preserve the state's most threatened cultural resources.

A copy is available from the Wisconsin Historical Society online at: <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/hp/plan.asp>

2. Issues

- Disappearance of Historic Resorts

As the nature of tourism and the way that visitors enjoy their time in the Northwoods has changed, so too has the business of providing them with accommodations changed. Starting in the days when the railroad was the best way to get to Oneida County from Chicago or Milwaukee resorts grew up on the county's lakes to provide a place for extended stays. Over time individual lake houses and Up-North "cabins" became more prominent, and weeks-long vacations were replaced by long weekends, these resorts have become less economic. Most of these facilities are located on extremely valuable land and it is not reasonable to preserve buildings beyond the point where they are economically viable, but efforts should be made to acknowledge the important role they have played in the county's history, and where feasible adaptive re-use of these structures should be encouraged.

- Protection of Native American Archeological Sites

The first inhabitants of Oneida County left behind a number of sites that show evidence of habitation in the period before white settlement of the county. Six of the twenty National Register of Historic Places are Native-American archeological sites. Because of the delicacy of these locations and their vulnerability to disturbance and looting the location of the sites is not made public. Care should be taken in the future that these and other similar sites in the county are protected.

B. Inventory and Trends

1. Historical Structures

The practice of preserving historic sites and structures recognizes the architectural, engineering, archaeological, cultural, or historic importance of

these assets to a community. In 1994, the Wisconsin Legislature enacted statutes requiring cities and villages with property listed in the National Register of Historic Places or the State Register of Historic Places to enact an ordinance to preserve these places. The City of Rhinelander has a preservation ordinance.

There are 20 historic sites and structures in Oneida County including: the Boesal and Hagge boathouses in Minocqua, First National Bank in Rhinelander, the Indianapolis Outing Club and Jollywood in Three Lakes, Mecikalski General Store in Schoepke, the Tomahawk Lake Camp Historic District, and six native archeological sites, as well as the Oneida County Courthouse. There are 583 sites and structures on the Architectural History Inventory (AHI).

The City of Rhinelander has more structures listed onto the AHI than other municipalities, likely due to its county seat status, and growth as the largest community in the county. The City currently has 138 architecturally significant buildings on the state AHI, most of which are homes and commercial buildings.

2. Century Farms

In celebration of Wisconsin's agricultural heritage, long time farm and homeowners are encouraged to register for Century Farm status. To qualify as a century farm the property must be proven to have been in continuous family ownership for the past 100 years. One Century Farms exists in Oneida County:

- Dale and Susan Stefonek in T38N R9E Section 9, settled in 1896

3. Registers of Architectural, Historical, and Archaeological Places

The State and National Registers of Historic Places lists properties, historic districts, individual buildings, parks, bridges, locomotives, and archaeological sites. There are 20 buildings and sites listed on either or both registers in Oneida County.

Similar to the State Register of Historic Places, the Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) also provides historical and architectural information. This database contains information on approximately 120,000 properties in Wisconsin and is maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society. The AHI contains data on structures that illustrate Wisconsin's unique history and cultural landscape. Inclusion in this inventory affords no special protection to structures nor does it convey special status, rights, or benefits to owners. The

largest percentage of the structures in the inventory are located in the City of Rhinelander. In all, there are 583 buildings listed in this inventory.

The Archaeological Site Inventory (ASI) is the most comprehensive list of the archaeological sites, mounds, marked and unmarked cemeteries, and cultural sites in the state. However, it includes only those sites that have been reported to the Wisconsin Historical Society and therefore does not include all possible sites and cemeteries of archeological significance in the state. This inventory has been developed over a period of 150 years, therefore, each entry in the database varies widely and the information has not been verified in all cases.

4. Community Design and Retaining Community Character

The shape and appearance of a community changes over time. Styles of buildings and development patterns react to changing economic conditions and technologies, and to changing tastes. Each community becomes an expression of the conditions that have prevailed throughout its history.

The design of a community must be primarily focused on serving the needs of residents today. In the process of adapting community design to changing needs care must be taken not to discard the remnants of the past that have made the community what it is today. At the same time a community is not a museum and must change with the times. Community design is a balancing act: balancing the past and the future; the needs of business with those of families; the modern and the traditional; and, most importantly, the diverse needs and aspirations of the people who call that community home.

C. Goal, Objectives & Policies

Goal 1:

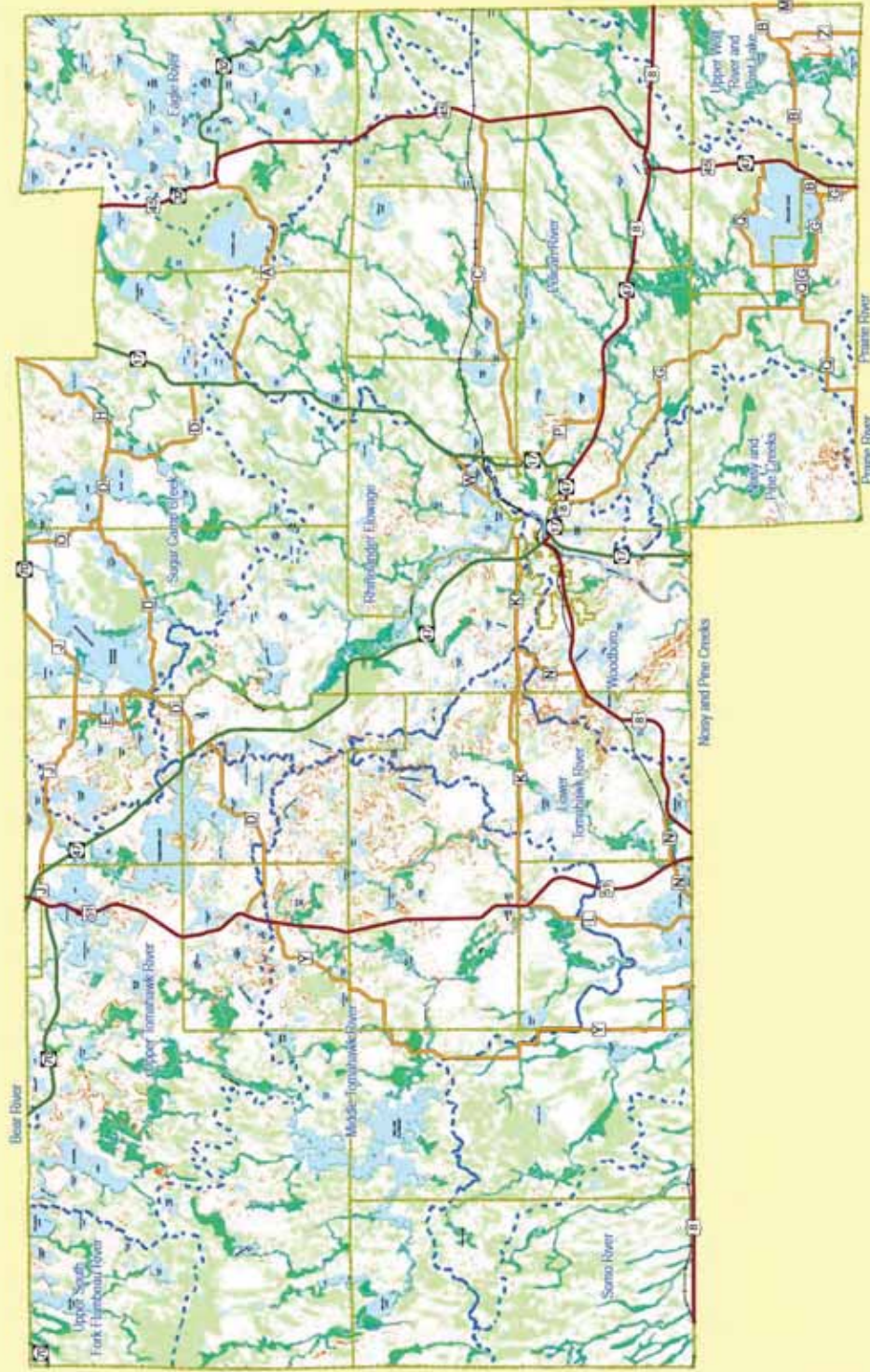
Preserve and enhance cultural, historic, and archeological resources.

Objectives:

1. Continue identification and protection of key cultural, historic and archeological sites.
2. Encourage nomination of sites to the State Historical Society.

Policy:

1. Development proposals should be reviewed relative to the potential impacts to the cultural resources of the county.



Legend

- Civil Division Boundaries
- Federal Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Railroad
- Wetlands
- Steep Slopes
- Flood Plain
- Watershed
- Boundaries
- Water



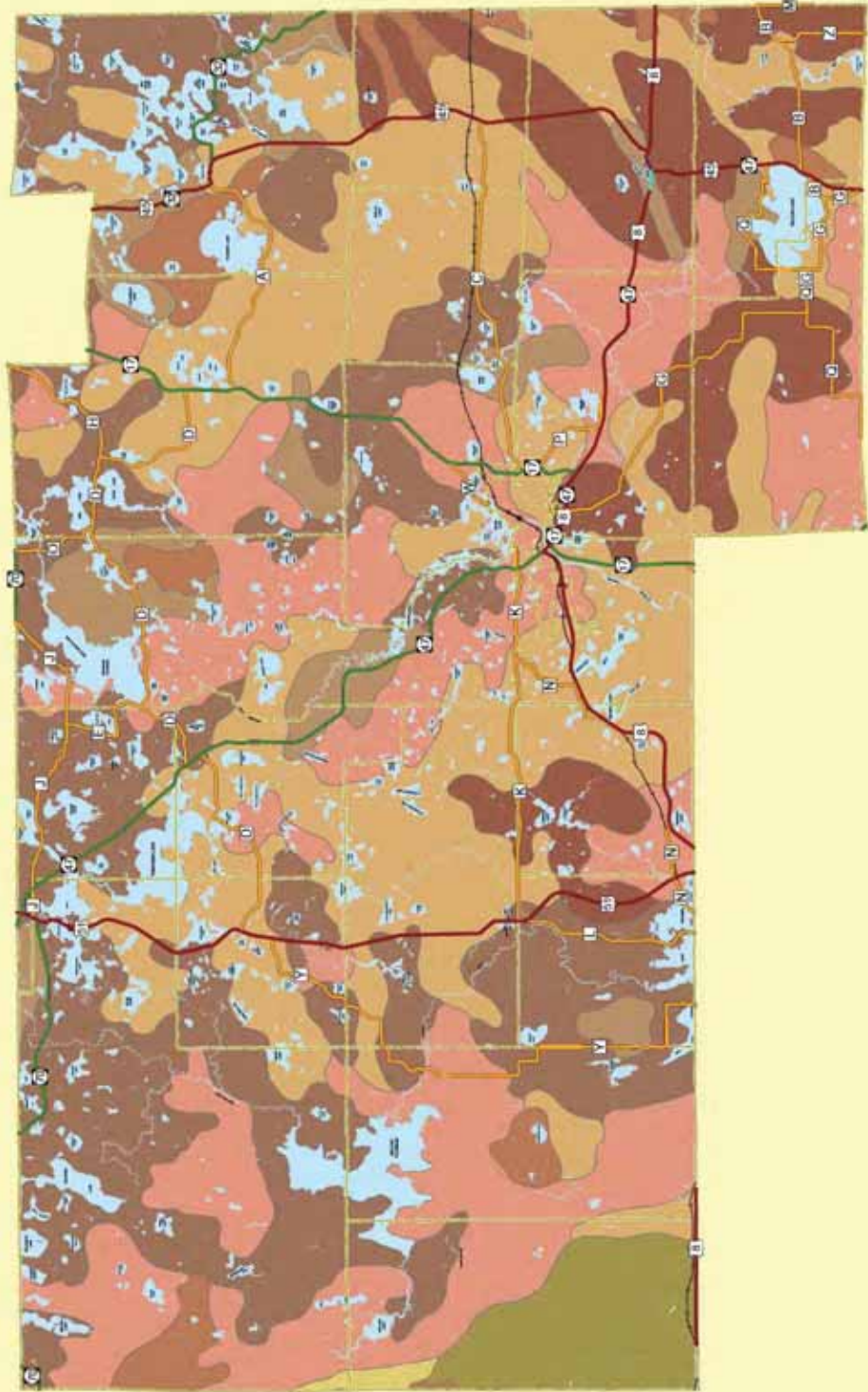
Source: WDNR, NCRWRC, FEMA, NRCS

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Legend

- Civil Division Boundaries
- Federal Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Railroad
- Water
- Au Gres-Crosswell-Karroos
- Champion-Pence-Souleyville
- Champion-Wiberna-Monico
- Keweenaw-Sarona-Karin
- Magnor-Cable-Auburnville
- Pedis-Pence-Greenwood
- Ribe-Lodley-Cathro
- Seyner-Ruticon-Omega



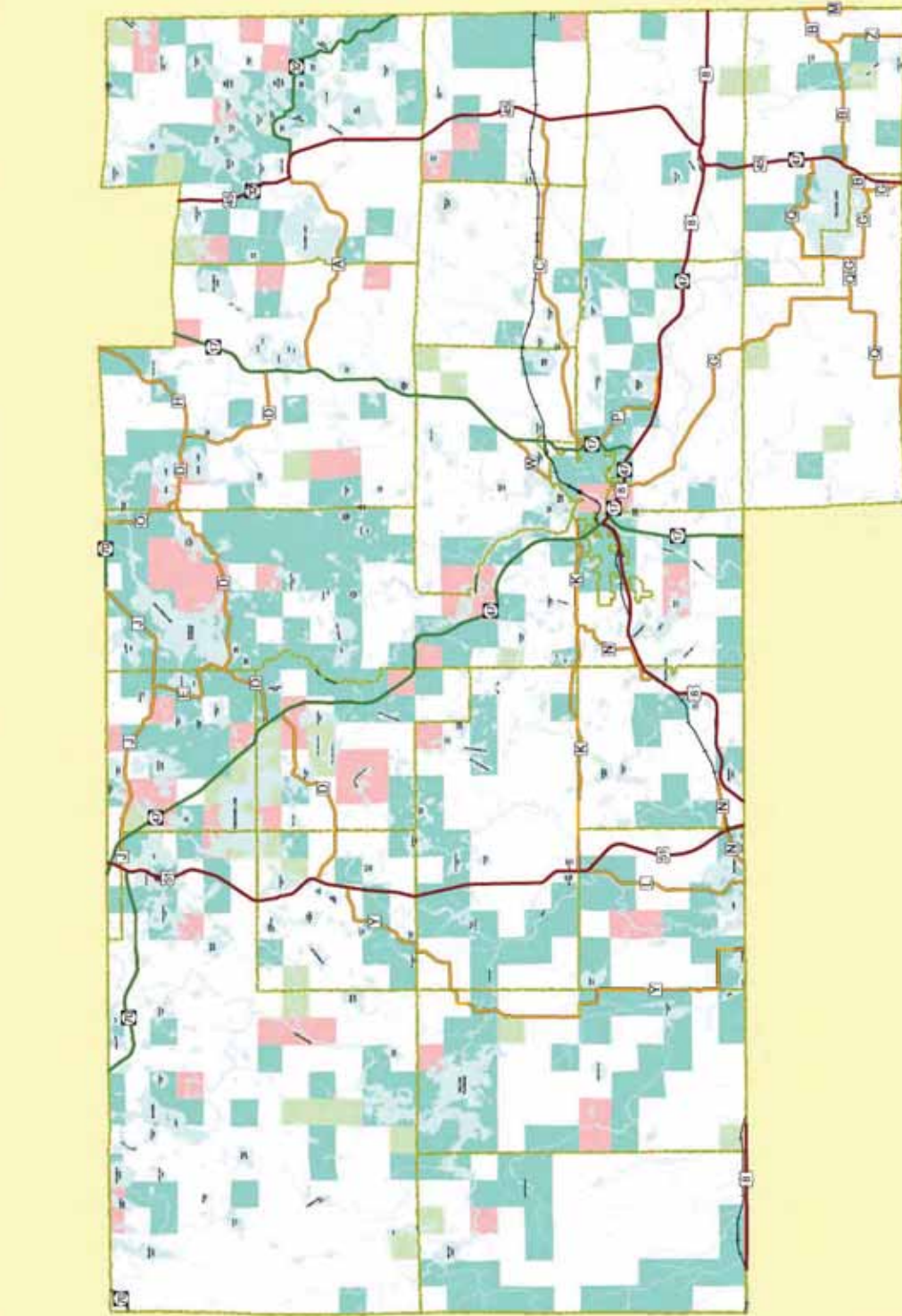
Source: WDNR, NCRWPC, NRCS

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Legend

- Civil Division Boundaries
- Federal Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Railroad
- Water
- Endangered Species - Aquatic
- Endangered Species - Terrestrial
- Endangered Species - Both



Source: WI DNR, NCRWSPC, WI Nat. Heritage Inventory

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Element 3: Housing

3.1 Background: Page 2

- A. Previous Planning Efforts
- B. Issues

3.2 Inventory & Trends Page 10

- A. Existing Housing Stock
- B. Value Characteristics
- C. Occupancy Characteristics
- D. Demand Characteristics
- E. Government Housing Programs

3.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies Page 29

Tables:

- Table 3-1: Housing Units
- Table 3-2: Building Permits
- Table 3-3: Housing Type
- Table 3-4: Housing Units, Year Built
- Table 3-5: Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
- Table 3-6: Median Sale Price
- Table 3-7: Monthly Housing Costs >30% of Income, 1999
- Table 3-8: Median Gross Rent
- Table 3-9: Median Gross Rent, Surrounding Counties
- Table 3-10: Owner Occupancy
- Table 3-11: Vacancy Rates
- Table 3-12: Seasonal Housing Units
- Table 3-13: Median Age
- Table 3-14: Persons Per Household

3.1 Background

This is the third of nine elements that comprise the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan. This element is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs of the local governmental unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the age, structural, value and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental unit’s housing stock. The element shall also identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and all age groups and persons with special needs, policies and programs that promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing, and policies and programs to maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit’s existing housing stock.”

The element is organized into three sections:

- 1) Background
- 2) Inventory & Trends
- 3) Goals, Objectives and Policies.

This element relates to the other eight elements since housing is a central need of an organized society. As a result, the information provided by this element will be referenced in other parts of the overall Plan.

Housing is a basic need for everyone. The availability of good housing is a central concern of any comprehensive planning effort. Planning for the future of the county requires a comprehensive approach to assuring that the housing needs of all segments of the population are addressed. For low-income and special-needs populations, the disabled, homeless, and victims of domestic abuse, this can involve programs that make housing available at below market rates. But there is more to affordable housing than meeting the needs of particular segments of society. Moderately priced housing available to middle-income, working families is as important to the county as meeting the needs of the poor, elderly, or disabled. The availability of housing for workers can be an important factor in economic development.

A. Previous Planning Efforts

Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the State in accessing formula program funds of Small Cities Community Development

Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS. "The Consolidated Plan provides the framework for a planning process used by States and localities to identify housing, homeless, community and economic development needs and resources and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs." This is how the Department of Housing and Urban Development website (www.HUD.gov) describes the Consolidated Plan, which consists of a 5-year strategic plan, annual action plans, and annual performance reports. The Plan must be updated annually.

The Consolidated Plan has five parts: (1) an overview of the process; (2) a description of public participation; (3) a housing, homeless, community and economic development needs assessment; (4) long-term strategies to meet priority needs; and (5) an action plan. The Bureau of Housing prepares the Consolidated Housing Plan, which is focused on low-income and special needs populations.

The Consolidated Plan, in assessing housing needs, looks at a number of different factors that are significant components of the housing picture. Housing affordability is a primary consideration. According to federal guidelines a family should not have to spend more than thirty percent of its income on housing. Using this standard "an individual in Wisconsin would need to earn \$12.22 per hour to afford the fair market rent of a unit at 30% of income. Households in the low-income range have great difficulty finding adequate housing within their means and that accommodates their needs." This presents a particular problem for the working poor, many of whom earn little more than the current federal minimum wage.

Other factors than the construction of new housing units affect the quality and availability of housing as well. Just as the difficulty of providing affordable housing to low-income families can be stated in terms of an hourly wage, there is more involved in a well-housed community than the number of housing units.

"The connection between community housing, public facilities and economic development is important. Without adequate infrastructure, housing quantity and quality suffers. Without adequate infrastructure, economic development is limited. Without adequate housing, infrastructure and economic investment, a community's downtown deteriorates and results in disinvestments, a dwindling labor force due to out migration, and declining tax base make it difficult for localities to thrive."

The State Consolidated Housing Plan (CHP) is primarily focused on how government action can address special needs. "With limited staff and shrinking budgets, knowing how these numerous programs can work together more

efficiently and effectively would greatly benefit local governments and organizations”

Regional Comprehensive Plan: A Framework for the Future, 2002-2020

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) titled “A Framework for the Future”, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in December of 2003, is an update of a plan adopted by NCWRPC in 1981. The RCP looks at housing in all ten counties that make up the North Central Region, including Oneida. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local government can address their housing issues.

Subsidized housing units are one focus of the RCP. Of the 5,389 such units in the Region, 370 are in Oneida County. Seventy-two percent (266 units) of these are housing for the elderly, and just over twenty-eight percent (104 units) are for families. This translates into one subsidized housing unit per 93.5 persons in Oneida County, the fifth highest ratio for the ten counties. This is higher than Lincoln or Langlade Counties (67.1 and 60.1, respectively), but considerably lower than Vilas County (126.7).

The RCP looks at a number of programs available to help low-income residents with their housing needs. The USDA-RD’s Section 515 provides low-interest loans for low-income rental units in rural areas and cities with populations under 10,000. This was the financing mechanism for forty percent of the subsidized units in the county. Section 8 is the largest federal housing program, which take two forms: project-based and tenant-based. There are 183 project-based Section 8 units in Oneida County.

The tenant-based Section 8, also known as housing vouchers, is not tied to particular housing units but instead allows clients to arrange with any landlord who agrees to participate in the program to rent an apartment at market rates. The tenant is required to pay a portion of the rent, usually conforming to thirty percent of gross income, and present a voucher for the remainder that is subsidized. There are 161 Section 8 vouchers in Oneida County administered in the city by the Rhinelander Housing Authority and in the county by New Cap. There is a waiting list in the city of 104 and 158 in the county.

There are currently 187 housing units in seven projects that take advantage of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), including 99 units for the elderly and 88 for low-income families. This is privately owned housing that receives a tax credit in exchange for pledging to offer rental units at affordable prices to low- and moderate-income families. In addition to directly subsidized housing units and indirect subsidies, such as tenant-based Section 8 or LIHTC meant to reduce the cost of rental housing to low-income residents, there are also a

number of programs focused on rehabilitation and reducing the cost of homeownership.

The RCP addresses a number of housing issues including the location of subsidized housing units, homelessness, and Smart Growth. The issue of most relevance to Oneida County is affordability. Affordability is a primary consideration in housing policy, but as the RCP points out:

“Affordable housing in the context of Smart Growth can mean different things in different areas. An ‘adequate supply’ for ‘all income levels’ means that affordability is more than subsidized housing units for low-income families, the disabled, or elderly. It means that working families, single people, retirees, and the more well-to-do should all be able to find housing that meets their needs in a suitable location.”

A number of factors affect affordability, including the availability and cost of developable land, market demand, and the type and quality of housing. Using the federal standard of thirty percent of income, affordability is an issue in Oneida County and trends within the economy, especially the appreciation of lakefront property, could lead to it becoming worse in the future.

B. Issues

- Affordability

According to the 2000 Census nearly 33.7 percent of housing units in the county were built before 1960, a much lower share than the 43.7 percent of units in the state as a whole. But these older housing units tend to be located in or near the City of Rhineland. These units are reaching (or have passed) the half-century mark, and as such, require a higher level of maintenance in order to meet the standards of safe and sanitary housing.

At the same time throughout the Northwoods there has been a significant increase in the value of rural and especially lakefront property. This has had the effect of making real estate and property taxes difficult for long-time residents and people on fixed income to afford. It is expected that over coming years prices will continue to increase.

In 2000 over 16.2 percent of Oneida County households reported incomes below \$15,000 per year, and 31.5 percent of county residents had incomes below \$25,000. For many of these people this poses a difficulty in paying for housing. For 31.8 percent of renters and 19.4 percent of homeowners in the county this means that they must spend more than thirty percent of their income on housing. This fits a pattern throughout rural America.

“...even though many low-income rural homeowners work full time, they may still spend a high percentage of their monthly income on housing and be unable to afford to bring their residences up to code...25 percent of all rural households were ‘cost-burdened,’ meaning they spent more than 30 percent of their income on housing.”

The National Low Income Housing Coalition assembles a yearly list of estimates of the income required to afford housing using this “cost-burden” standard for localities across the country. This report focuses on rental housing, but can be broadly applied to owner-occupied housing as well. The report calculates that for the state as a whole a full-time worker must earn \$12.80 an hour in order to be able to afford a two-bedroom apartment. In Oneida County a full time worker must earn \$11.92 per hour to afford the two-bedroom apartment. For a worker earning minimum wage this means working 73 hours every week to afford that apartment.

Although, housing prices rose across the country, they rose faster in non-metropolitan than in urban areas – 59 percent compared to 39 percent. The Median home value nearly doubled (98.87%) in Oneida County during the 1990’s. Generally low wage rates and the increase in housing values both combine to make housing less affordable for rural, low-income residents.

Generally the highest property values are in the towns with established lake home development such as Minocqua, Three Lakes, Nokomis, and Lake Tomahawk, or a mix of lake and suburban development like Crescent, Newbold and Woodboro. High levels of value increase are seen in towns with lake development close to the city or more established development like Hazelhurst (130%) and Pine Lake (147%), but most striking are the increases in towns that were previously only sparsely developed such as Monico (174%), Peihl (147%), or Little Rice (130%). Overall the increase in property values is spread across the county.

This increase in housing value across the county creates a very real problem for people with low or fixed incomes. As property values rise so do rents, mortgage payments and property taxes making it hard to afford housing. There are steps that can be taken to address this problem. One is manufactured housing, which offers a less costly alternative to traditional site-built houses; another is a concentrated effort to maintain the quality of the older housing stock that exists in the Rhinelander area. This is why housing rehabilitation programs that allow homeowners to improve the condition of their older housing is important to keeping housing affordable in Oneida County.

- Growth in Seasonal Dwellings

The most notable change in the housing stock in Oneida County over the last twenty years has been the increase in the number of seasonal and recreational housing units in the county. Several towns have seen increases of ten-fold or more. During the 1990's growth in seasonal dwellings slowed, and some towns saw an actual decrease. This likely is the result of conversion of seasonal to year-round dwellings as residents retire to what had been recreational properties. By the time of the 2000 Census most of the prime lakefront property in the county had been developed. Most of the increase in the number of seasonal dwellings took place during the 1980's.

These trends speak to more fundamental changes that have taken place in the county over that period. The growth in seasonal dwellings during the 1980's was part of a change from an economy primarily based on natural resources to an orientation toward tourism and outdoor recreation. The subsequent conversion of seasonal to year-round and retirement housing, reflects the aging of the Oneida County population. Although forestry and manufacturing are still crucial to the county's economy, the influx of visitors and retirees to the county offers both challenges and opportunities for how Oneida County may change in the future.

An example of how this change has manifested itself is the trend in recent years for historic resort properties to be converted to residential subdivisions. Where visitors in the past may have planned a family vacation at a resort today's visitors are more likely to seek a weekend retreat that will someday serve as a retirement home. Several resorts have been converted to condominium ownership.

The proliferation of seasonal dwellings and the subsequent conversion to retirement homes both exemplify important trends in the county: the aging of the population and a gradual shift away the exploitation of natural resources as raw materials to nature-based tourism. Forestry will remain an important economic activity, but more and more the county's forests and lakes will be important as amenities that will provide a basis for the Oneida County economy in the future.

- Elderly/Retiree Housing Needs

Oneida County is aging, and not just as a result of residents getting older. The county is getting many older people who move there to retire. Oneida and Vilas Counties have been identified as two of a number of counties around the country that are particularly attractive to residents looking for a place to retire. This influx of seniors has a number of results: it obviously has increased the population and led to the construction of new housing units; it has raised the median age; and it has brought many new residents into the county from a

number of different backgrounds, and with personal assets that have expanded the local economy. In one way though, it has introduced a different dynamic into the county. This change creates a special set of housing issues.

Around the country a number of local governments have made a conscious decision to make it part of their economic development strategy to attract retirees. These new residents bring new resources to the community; they can provide growth to what had been stagnant rural economies; and have led to job growth in other sectors that capitalize on the same amenities that draw people to the county looking for a retirement home. The coming retirement of the baby boom generation will bring a new influx of retirees to the places that seek to serve this growing market.

There are indications that this new generation of seniors will have different needs and desires in housing than previous retirees.

“And, many developers now realize that retirees want more than just shuffleboard...(they offer) top-of-the-line fitness equipment, a spa, and restaurant-style dining room... concierges, and assortment of classes, and walking trails... (he) compares it to living on a cruise ship.”

If the County is to consider marketing itself as an attractive alternative for retiring boomers then it needs to look at an integrated approach to the kind of public services that go along with an increase in the aging population. As people age they have more need for specialized services. The most obvious of these is for health care, but there is a more subtle relationship between an aging population and their housing needs.

As our physical capacities diminish it can become more of a challenge to perform the basic tasks of maintaining a household. “Aging in place” is the phrase used to describe how a person is able to remain in their home as they age. Sometimes the support a person needs to remain in her home can be as simple as someone to help with the yard work, cleaning, or shopping. Sometimes it can mean having a home health-care worker visit a few times a week to assist with medications or physical therapy. Almost always such services are cheaper than moving that person to a more structured living situation. Whether and how these services, that permit seniors to age in place, are provided is thus a housing issue.

The predominance of seasonal and recreational housing units in Oneida County presents a special challenge. The dispersed nature of this type of housing and the “Northwoods” character of the county itself make providing these services to residents problematic.

What is required is an integrated view of senior housing. It involves more than just a place to live; it involves a way to live in the place where you are. This is

the message that comes from the Commission on Affordable Housing and Health Facility Needs for seniors in the 21st Century, which was appointed by Congress to look at issues surrounding the coming retirement of the baby boom generation. They identify this need to age in place as a central problem to be addressed.

“The Senior Commission believes that all older Americans should have an opportunity to live as independently as possible in safe and affordable housing and in their communities of choice. No older person should have to sacrifice his or her home or an opportunity for independence to secure necessary health care and supportive services.”

Among the Commission’s strongest recommendations is the need to look at housing and health care needs of seniors in a holistic manner. “The most striking characteristic of seniors’ housing and health care in this country is the disconnection between the two fields.” Creating a linkage between housing policy and the kinds of supportive services that can keep seniors in their homes longer can go a long way to making Oneida County an attractive alternative for people looking for a place to retire. And it’s not just a matter of subsidies to low-income individuals. “A senior with financial resources may navigate these passages more easily than one without, but in many instances, particularly in rural areas, the shelter and care options may simply not exist at any price.” (p.28) The availability of health care and the kind of supportive services that will help them stay in their retirement “dream home” can be the deciding factor in these choices. So in implementing policies directed at serving the county’s retirement population, care must be taken to ensure that the full range of considerations – housing, health care, supportive services and amenities – that will serve these residents be integrated into a suggested coherent whole.

- Subsidized/Special-needs Housing

There are 370 subsidized housing units in Oneida County. This is one unit for every ninety-three people. By contrast in Lincoln County there is one unit for every sixty-seven people. Nearly seventy-two percent of these units are designated for the elderly. Over a quarter are for families and thirty-three are designed for the disabled. Whether this is sufficient is a matter of judgment for the community to decide. What is not open to question is that disabled and low-income citizens often require special housing accommodations. How best to meet these needs should be a focus of any planning process that the County engages in.

The other major housing subsidy program is the housing choice voucher program, commonly known as Section 8. Administered locally by the

Rhineland Housing Authority in the city and NewCap in the rest of the county, eligible families are issued vouchers that they can use to secure housing in the private market. Having found a suitable housing unit, which meets minimum health and safety standards, where the owner has agreed to rent under the program, the eligible family uses its voucher to cover the part of the rent beyond the portion it pays, usually 30 percent of its income. The landlord receives a subsidy directly for the portion of the Fair Market Rent not paid by the tenant. The voucher-holder signs a lease for a term of, at least, one year and the landlord signs a contract with the Housing Authority, running concurrently with the lease. Eligibility for the program is generally limited to families with incomes below 50% of the median for the county in which they reside. The program is open to any housing unit where the owner agrees to participate and where the unit satisfies the standards.

Beyond the need for subsidized units a number of program alternatives are available to meet the needs of a range of citizens. USDA-RD is focused on rural areas, and thus may be the most promising source of housing-related funding. Under the Government Housing Programs heading in this element are many of the programs available to localities.

- Waterfront Development

A considerable portion of the new development that has taken place in the county over the last twenty years has been associated with property able to access the water bodies in the county. Though this development has brought new wealth, it has put new demands for service on local governments. Much of the new development within the county has taken place within close proximity of water, which fits a national pattern. Waterfront property has become attractive everywhere.

What distinguishes waterfront development from other similar developments elsewhere is the unique potential for environmental degradation. Shoreland zoning has the goal of protecting water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, and natural beauty. The concentration of on-site sewage disposal systems in close proximity to surface water presents two challenges. First, adequate land is necessary to contain a septic system away from all drinking wells. The second challenge is to keep septic effluent contained in a drainage field long enough to break down nitrates and phosphates, so they don't combine with surface water. High nitrate and phosphate levels in surface waters produce algae blooms. The developing awareness of the linkage between surface and groundwater contamination from lakeside development has led to a DNR rule revision process for shoreland zoning (NR 115), which is in the final stages of adoption.

3.2 Inventory & Trends

Planning for housing considers if the housing needs of all Oneida County residents are being met. Only Oneida County housing was evaluated, not neighboring counties. The most striking fact about housing is the growth in the number of housing units over the last twenty years, led by the overwhelming increase in seasonal dwellings since 1980. Housing units have more than doubled in more than half the towns and increased by double-digit percentages in all the towns. This speaks to the change in the character of the county from a focus on manufacturing and resource exploitation to a greater emphasis on the natural beauty and recreational potential of the county's environment.

Oneida County has a high level of owner occupancy, eleven percentage points higher than the state. Homeownership levels are lowest in the City of Rhinelander. Nearly forty percent of all housing units in the county are seasonal. Every town but one saw at least a doubling of seasonal dwellings over the twenty-year period, but all except five experienced a decline in seasonal dwellings during the 1990's. At least part of this reduction indicates the conversion of seasonal to year-round dwellings as owners retired. Related to this, the median age in Oneida County is higher than the state, and in seven towns it's over 45.

The combined total of both renters and owners who report spending more than thirty percent on housing was highest in the Town of Minocqua, followed by Three Lakes, the City of Rhinelander, Sugar Camp, and Woodruff.

A. Existing Housing Stock

1. Housing Units

The total number of housing units in Oneida County (26,627 in 2000) rose by 5.8 percent during 1990s, while the number of housing units in the state grew by nearly 13 percent. During the 1980's total housing units in Oneida County grew by 8.7 percent, while the state grew by 10.3 percent. According to the American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates for 2005-2007 there were 28,692 housing units in the county, which reflects an increase of about eight percent.

The rate of growth in housing units slowed during the 1990's. Only three towns (Minocqua, Monico and Woodruff) grew by more than fifteen percent. Of the ten towns that increased the number of housing units by over ten percent during the 1980's, four (Piehl, Stella, Sugar Camp, and Three Lakes) increased the number of units by more than twenty percent. The decline in the increase in housing units may be a reflection of the fact that much of the prime lakefront property in the county has been developed.

Minor Civil Division	1980	1990	2000	1980-1990 % change	1990-2000 % change
Cassian	828	941	1,011	13.6%	7.4%
Crescent	895	1,014	1,034	13.3%	2.0%
Enterprise	369	414	386	12.2%	-6.8%
Hazelhurst	928	1,013	1,113	9.2%	9.9%
Lake Tomahawk	874	942	1,052	7.8%	11.7%
Little Rice	396	423	435	6.8%	2.8%
Lynne	260	264	298	1.5%	12.9%
Minocqua	3,642	3,716	4,284	2.0%	15.3%
Monico	167	185	216	10.8%	16.8%
Newbold	1,774	2,006	2,074	13.1%	3.4%
Nokomis	862	920	1,013	6.7%	10.1%
Pelican	1,766	1,679	1,532	-4.9%	-8.8%
Piehl	60	77	85	28.3%	10.4%
Pine Lake	1,262	1,287	1,381	2.0%	7.3%
Schoepke	622	577	626	-7.2%	8.5%
Stella	258	316	316	22.5%	0.0%
Sugar Camp	920	1,269	1,326	37.9%	4.5%
Three Lakes	2,388	2,935	2,908	22.9%	-0.9%
Woodboro	602	592	592	-1.7%	0.0%
Woodruff	1,100	1,310	1,515	19.1%	15.6%
City of Rhinelander	3,184	3,293	3,430	3.4%	4.2%
County	23,157	25,173	26,627	8.7%	5.8%
State	1,863,897	2,055,774	2,321,144	10.3%	12.9%

Source: U.S. Census, Wistat

2. Building Permits

Building permit records offer a snapshot of how trends in housing units reflected in the Census have continued in the years since 2000. Table 2-2 shows permits for new dwellings, listed by year and by town.

Building activity peaked in 2002 and has declined since then, so that the number of permits issued in 2008 was less than half the number in 2002. Building permits for new dwelling units dropped off by a quarter between 2007 and 2008, and although figures for 2009 are not included here permits have continued to fall as a result of the general slowdown in real estate.

Table 3-2: Building Permits										
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
Cassian	16	27	28	27	24	26	20	11	11	190
Crescent	11	15	11	11	12	16	10	11	12	109
Enterprise	3	3	2	2	0	5	2	2	2	21
Hazelhurst	17	26	18	25	25	26	15	9	7	168
Lake Tomahawk	11	17	23	12	13	21	13	13	7	130
Little Rice	7	11	10	6	6	8	7	8	6	69
Lynne	3	11	5	5	5	7	3	4	3	46
Minocqua	27	21	91	95	76	86	72	64	40	572
Monico	1	3	2	1	6	0	0	0	0	13
Newbold	44	44	50	36	34	26	29	19	19	301
Nokomis	12	20	23	25	19	15	16	13	13	156
Pelican	33	24	32	30	16	18	23	23	23	222
Piehl	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3
Pine Lake	24	36	27	23	27	16	12	16	8	189
Schoepke	5	3	1	5	13	3	1	6	1	38
Stella	10	12	13	9	25	3	6	5	4	87
Sugar Camp	17	15	20	20	26	18	14	19	9	158
Three Lakes	30	30	38	49	30	52	44	42	33	348
Woodboro	9	17	36	24	13	11	10	4	4	128
Woodruff	28	29	30	19	35	33	19	21	14	228
Oneida County	308	364	461	425	405	391	316	290	216	3176

Source: Oneida County P & Z

Of the top ten towns in terms of permits issued, three are adjacent to Rhinelander (Newbold, Pelican and Pine Lake). All five towns along the county's northern border, and all five in the Highway 51 corridor (Minocqua, Woodruff, Cassian, Hazelhurst, and Nokomis) are in the top ten. Of these ten towns all increased the number of housing units by more than fifteen percent during the 1980-2000 period, except for two of the towns adjacent to Rhinelander.¹ Though the strongest development is clearly along Highway 51 and in the northern lake-district, the strong building activity in towns around Rhinelander (Crescent was 13th and the number of housing units increased by 15.5% from 1980 to 2000) indicates demand in the suburban fringe of the city.

3. Building Age

¹ Housing units in Pelican decreased by 13.2% (because of annexation) and increased in Pine Lake by 9.4%. Newbold increased between 1980 and 2000 by 16.9%, but because of its size Newbold is both a suburban and a northern town with considerable lake development, especially in its central section.

Oneida County has a housing stock that is newer than the state. For the state 43.7 percent of the housing was built before 1960, in Oneida County only 33.7 percent are that old. Table 3-3 shows the number of housing units built during twenty-year periods.

Minor Civil Division	<1940	1940-59	1960-79	1980-1999	Total Units
Cassian	50	156	325	368	899
Crescent	111	159	424	345	1,039
Enterprise	95	134	95	109	433
Hazelhurst	124	210	442	352	1,128
Lake Tomahawk	91	179	419	407	1,096
Little Rice	11	45	162	208	426
Lynne	34	89	101	107	331
Minocqua	396	611	1,675	1,613	4,295
Monico	36	40	50	59	185
Newbold	73	452	693	883	2,101
Nokomis	49	131	372	443	995
Pelican	164	464	542	348	1,518
Piehl	11	19	16	46	92
Pine Lake	121	329	483	477	1,410
Schoepke	36	71	296	201	604
Stella	26	37	96	154	313
Sugar Camp	217	265	528	483	1,493
Three Lakes	646	448	1,005	805	2,904
Woodboro	87	129	199	226	641
Woodruff	102	268	441	702	1,513
City of Rhinelander	1,326	940	750	361	3,377
Oneida County	3,806	5,176	9,114	8,531	26,627
State	543,164	470,862	667,537	639,581	2,321,144

Source: U.S. Census

While only 27.5 percent of housing in the state, reported in the 2000 Census, was built in the previous twenty years, 32 percent of housing in Oneida County was built after 1980. Here again the patterns vary from town to town, with the Town of Little Rice being the extreme example of new housing: nearly 49 percent built since 1980 and only 13.2 percent built before 1960. At the other end is the Town of Enterprise, where 52.8 percent of housing units were built before 1960 and 25 percent have been built since 1980.

4. Housing Type

The most significant fact about housing types in Oneida County is the predominance of single-family housing 82.3 percent for the county as against 69.3 percent for the state as a whole. This is not unusual for a rural area. Also notable is the number of manufactured and mobile homes², which account for 8.2 percent of housing units, nearly double the percentage for the state. Table 4 shows the number and percentage of housing units of each type.

Single-family residences are the largest class of housing type, ranging from two-thirds of total housing units in the City of Rhinelander to over ninety percent in two towns (Hazelhurst and Three Lakes). In Little Rice 38 percent of housing units are mobile homes and in the Towns of Lynne, Pelican and Stella more than fifteen percent of all housing units are mobile homes. All together, there are eleven towns (those mentioned above, plus Lake Tomahawk, Newbold, Nokomis, Piehl, Pine Lake, Schoepke, and Sugar Camp) where mobile homes make up more than ten percent of the housing stock. Table 3-4 shows the number of housing units of each type.

Minor Civil Division	Single Family	Duplex	3 to 19 units Units	Over 20 Units	Mobile Homes	Other
Cassian	787	0	5	0	104	3
Crescent	900	19	43	0	77	0
Enterprise	372	3	9	0	37	12
Hazelhurst	1,087	10	4	0	25	2
Lake Tomahawk	915	11	28	0	137	5
Little Rice	259	0	3	0	164	0
Lynne	267	0	0	0	56	8
Minocqua	3,603	77	248	105	238	24
Monico	166	0	5	0	14	0
Newbold	1,684	8	21	0	222	0
Nokomis	888	0	0	0	107	0
Pelican	1,229	16	25	0	248	0
Piehl	82	0	0	0	10	0
Pine Lake	1,210	16	29	5	150	0
Schoepke	521	0	0	0	83	0
Stella	264	0	0	0	47	2
Sugar Camp	1,309	16	5	0	151	12
Three Lakes	2,699	27	50	0	121	7
Woodboro	567	2	30	0	35	7
Woodruff	1,071	38	94	46	115	149
City of Rhinelander	2,276	417	414	232	38	0
Oneida County	22,156	660	1,013	388	2,179	231
State	1,609,407	190,889	273,183	143,497	101,465	2,703

Source: U.S. Census

² The Census lumps the two together under the definition of "a housing unit that was originally constructed to be towed on its own chassis."

B. Value Characteristics

1. Median Home Value

There are eight towns in Oneida County above the median home value for the state. The highest median value is in the Town of Minocqua: 130.3 percent of the state median. Seven towns (Crescent, Enterprise, Schoepke, Sugar Camp, Woodboro, Woodruff) and the City of Rhineland did not see median values double during the 1990's, while all the other towns saw their median home value increase by more than 100 percent, with values in the Town of Monico increasing by 174 percent.

The lowest median value was in the City of Rhineland (64.7% of the state median), followed by Lynne and Monico (both 69.7% of the state median). Enterprise had the smallest increase in median value as a percentage of value and in dollar terms, and Monico had the largest increase. Table 3-5 shows the median value of owner-occupied housing and how it has changed.

Although the median home value in Oneida was roughly eighty-five percent of the state median in 1990, by 2000 it was nearly ninety-five percent. Of the top ten towns in terms of median value, three (Crescent, Newbold and Pine Lake) are located near the City of Rhineland, and three are in the Highway 51 corridor (Hazelhurst, Minocqua and Nokomis).

Table 3-5: Median Home Value of Owner Occupied Housing				
Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990 - 2000 % Change	1990 - 2000 Net Change
Cassian	\$50,400	\$107,400	113.1%	\$57,000
Crescent	\$60,200	\$119,100	97.8%	\$58,900
Enterprise	\$57,000	\$85,400	49.8%	\$28,400
Hazelhurst	\$63,600	\$146,300	130.0%	\$82,700
Lake Tomahawk	\$51,300	\$112,100	118.5%	\$60,800
Little Rice	\$41,300	\$92,800	124.7%	\$51,500
Lynne	\$36,000	\$78,300	117.5%	\$42,300
Minocqua	\$67,500	\$148,300	119.7%	\$80,800
Monico	\$28,500	\$78,300	174.7%	\$49,800
Newbold	\$56,500	\$122,600	117.0%	\$66,100
Nokomis	\$58,400	\$123,600	111.6%	\$65,200
Pelican	\$49,400	\$101,900	106.3%	\$52,500
Piehl	\$34,400	\$85,000	147.1%	\$50,600
Pine Lake	\$46,300	\$114,400	147.1%	\$68,100
Schoepke	\$49,000	\$89,400	82.4%	\$40,400
Stella	\$50,300	\$107,400	113.5%	\$57,100
Sugar Camp	\$59,000	\$111,200	88.5%	\$52,200
Three Lakes	\$59,200	\$121,200	104.7%	\$62,000
Woodboro	\$60,800	\$117,600	93.4%	\$56,800
Woodruff	\$54,100	\$101,800	88.2%	\$47,700
City of Rhinelander	\$41,600	\$72,700	74.8%	\$31,100
Oneida County	\$53,400	\$106,200	98.9%	\$52,800
State	\$62,500	\$112,200	79.5%	\$49,700

Source: U.S. Census

More recent data provided by the Northwoods Assoc. of Realtors reflects trends in sales. Because of the nature of the sample size there are in many cases extreme swings in the median value represented by these sales from year to year, but a general trend emerges. In thirteen of the twenty towns the highest median price was reached in 2007, and in only three towns did the median price go up between 2007 and 2009. Real estate activity generally peaked in the mid-decade with the number of sales (also provided by the Realtors) reaching its high point in 2005 in nine of the towns and dropping by more than a quarter in ten towns, and by over half in three, between 2007 and 2009.

	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009
Cassian	154,000	144,450	157,000	220,000	98,250
Crescent	162,950	142,000	158,750	168,750	235,000
Enterprise	34,500	108,000	165,000	130,500	144,250
Hazelhurst	150,750	199,900	255,000	218,000	270,000
Lake Tomahawk	111,000	184,500	129,900	190,000	180,000
Little Rice	68,000	155,750	179,900	181,000	102,000
Lynne	77,125	43,000	175,000	69,750	83,000
Minocqua	156,500	189,000	225,450	252,500	185,000
Monico	97,500	20,000	81,250	120,000	45,000
Newbold	142,000	145,750	176,000	180,000	160,000
Nokomis	121,000	151,500	173,500	210,000	118,500
Pelican	87,750	113,450	116,000	186,875	141,500
Piehl	65,000	95,000	177,500	119,000	92,500
Pine Lake	124,500	160,000	175,000	164,900	120,000
Schoepke	173,250	164,000	245,000	291,250	235,000
Stella	122,750	143,000	105,000	169,000	115,000
Sugar Camp	142,000	170,000	181,000	224,900	164,000
Three Lakes	127,550	172,000	247,500	308,000	180,000
Woodboro	161,750	150,000	132,000	169,600	125,000
Woodruff	105,000	137,875	150,950	188,250	146,900
Rhineland City	70,000	80,000	85,500	85,000	83,250
Oneida County					\$133,000

Source: Northwoods Association of Realtors

The long-term increase in property values reflected in Census data continued during the 2001 to 2009 period. The average increase in median sale price for housing units during this period was 35 percent. After 2007 both sales and prices generally dropped off. This certainly reflects troubles in the national real estate market and a general downturn in the economy. The question is whether economic recovery will bring a continuation in the trend of the previous decade, which saw median values double in three-quarters of the towns in Oneida County.

2. Monthly Owner Costs

There is a general consensus that a family should not have to spend more than thirty percent of its income on housing – this is the accepted definition of housing affordability. The highest owner costs are in the Towns of Three Lakes and Sugar Camp, followed by the Towns of Pine Lake and Hazelhurst, all are also in the top ten in terms of median home value. The lowest percentages are in the Towns of Piehl (0.0%), Monico (10.1%), and Schoepke (10.7%), among the towns with the lowest median value. Overall, nineteen percent of Oneida County homeowners reported spending over 30 percent of their income on housing, more than double the rate for the entire state. Table 3-7 shows the percentage of homeowners and renters who spend more than thirty percent of their income on housing.

There seems to be a fairly strong connection between the dollar value of housing units and affordability as expressed as a percentage of income. The Town of Hazelhurst, with the second highest home prices is fourth in terms of affordability, while the Town of Monico with the lowest median value is the second lowest in affordability.

Most significantly, recent data from the American Community Survey³ shows that affordability is more of an issue in the county. Eight percent of homeowner without a mortgage, 21 percent of those with a mortgage, and 37.5 percent of renters report spending over 30 percent of their income on housing.

Minor Civil Division	Owner	Renter
Cassian	19.6%	7.7%
Crescent	12.4%	18.6%
Enterprise	17.6%	22.2%
Hazelhurst	20.3%	23.1%
Lake Tomahawk	16.1%	14.9%
Little Rice	18.2%	0.0%
Lynne	13.2%	0.0%
Minocqua	19.2%	52.3%
Monico	10.1%	0.0%
Newbold	19.6%	20.6%
Nokomis	19.4%	10.6%
Pelican	13.1%	20.4%
Piehl	0.0%	0.0%
Pine Lake	21.2%	11.4%
Schoepke	10.7%	0.0%
Stella	18.4%	0.0%
Sugar Camp	24.8%	29.0%
Three Lakes	28.2%	29.3%
Woodboro	20.3%	20.8%
Woodruff	20.0%	29.9%
City of Rhinelander	19.1%	35.9%
Oneida County	19.4%	31.8%
State	7.0%	32.3%

Source: U.S. Census

³ The long-form Census, that has been the source of much of the socio-economic data used in this Plan, will be replaced in the 2010 Census with this on-going survey. Because of the need to reach a threshold of sample size before the survey is statistically significant, at this time information is only available at the county level. Town level information will not be available until 2012.

3. Median Rent

Rents increased in Oneida County slightly faster than in the state as a whole. Gross rent increased by fifty percent or more during the 1990's in all of the twenty-one municipalities in Oneida County, except Monico (where median rents increased 47.7%). In four towns (Little Rice, Minocqua, Newbold, and Nokomis) median rents doubled, and in four other towns (Three Lakes, Stella, Sugar Camp, and Lake Tomahawk) it increased by over 85 percent⁴. Overall the affordable housing situation appears to be about average for a rural county. According to NLIHC, 33 percent of renters spend more than 30 percent of their income on a two-bedroom apartment. Table 3-8 shows median gross rents.

Table 3-8: Median Gross Rent				
Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990 - 2000 % Change	1990 - 2000 Net Change
Cassian	\$269	\$416	54.6%	\$147
Crescent	\$305	\$475	55.7%	\$170
Enterprise	\$275	\$500	81.8%	\$225
Hazelhurst	\$263	\$466	77.2%	\$203
Lake Tomahawk	\$275	\$522	89.8%	\$247
Little Rice	\$275	\$675	145.5%	\$400
Lynne	\$167	N/A		
Minocqua	\$277	\$558	101.4%	\$281
Monico	\$258	\$381	47.7%	\$123
Newbold	\$272	\$550	102.2%	\$278
Nokomis	\$233	\$517	121.9%	\$284
Pelican	\$267	\$460	72.3%	\$193
Piehl	\$275	N/A		
Pine Lake	\$258	\$485	88.0%	\$227
Schoepke	\$260	\$419	61.2%	\$159
Stella	\$214	\$425	98.6%	\$211
Sugar Camp	\$239	\$469	96.2%	\$230
Three Lakes	\$215	\$429	99.5%	\$214
Woodboro	\$285	\$445	56.1%	\$160
Woodruff	\$255	\$412	61.6%	\$157
City of Rhinelander	\$254	\$434	70.9%	\$180
Oneida County	\$332	\$460	38.6%	\$128
State	\$399	\$540	35.3%	\$141

Source: U.S. Census

⁴ Two of the towns (Lynne and Piehl) had such a small number of renters in 2000 that a median could not be calculated.

The average for non-metro counties in Wisconsin is 34 percent. For all non-metro counties nearly a quarter of households rent, in Oneida County twenty percent of households rent. According to the 2000 Census, affordability problems were not evenly distributed through the county. In ten of twenty-one municipalities (Enterprise Hazelhurst, Minocqua, Newbold, Pelican, Sugar Camp, Three Lakes, Woodboro, and Rhinelander) more than twenty percent of renters spend over thirty percent of income on housing. Overall Oneida County has the highest rents in surrounding counties and they seem to be increasing at the high end of the range, as shown in Table 3-9.

**Table 3-9:
Median Gross Rent, Surrounding Counties**

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990 - 2000 % Change	1990 - 2000 Net Change
Oneida	\$332	\$460	38.6%	\$128
Forest	\$272	\$325	19.5%	\$53
Lincoln	\$297	\$433	45.8%	\$136
Langlade	\$284	\$405	42.60%	\$121
Vilas	\$302	\$370	22.5%	\$68
Price	\$286	\$336	17.5%	\$50
State	\$399	\$540	35.3%	\$141

Source: U.S. Census

C. Occupancy Characteristics

1. Owner Occupied

Homeownership is more than ten percent higher in Oneida County than in the state as a whole. At nearly eighty percent in 2000 this rate has remained relatively stable going as far back as 1980. This is fairly typical of rural areas, where there are few rental units. The Towns of Little Rice, Lynne and Nokomis, with over 90 percent owner-occupancy, had the highest level. Every town has a homeownership rate over 80 percent in 2000, except for Minocqua and Woodruff, which had the lowest rate at 75.2 percent. The levels of owner-occupancy are lowest in the City of Rhinelander, where homeownership levels have remained steady, well below the state levels, after declining by six percent during the 1980s. Table 3-10 shows the percentage of owner occupied units and how it has changed.

Table 3-10: Owner Occupancy				
Minor Civil Division	1980	1990	2000	1980 - 2000 % Change
Cassian	91.0%	83.9%	93.0%	2.0%
Crescent	86.5%	84.4%	86.4%	-0.1%
Enterprise	80.5%	86.8%	84.7%	4.2%
Hazelhurst	85.9%	83.4%	89.0%	3.1%
Lake Tomahawk	83.3%	82.2%	84.4%	1.1%
Little Rice	78.7%	94.4%	97.1%	18.4%
Lynne	85.7%	91.7%	93.5%	7.8%
Minocqua	76.9%	80.7%	78.9%	2.0%
Monico	76.7%	81.1%	90.6%	13.9%
Newbold	87.7%	87.7%	90.3%	2.6%
Nokomis	90.3%	90.2%	91.7%	1.4%
Pelican	82.9%	82.0%	84.4%	1.5%
Piehl	93.7%	89.3%	97.4%	3.7%
Pine Lake	84.6%	84.0%	83.4%	-1.2%
Schoepke	83.3%	83.8%	89.1%	5.8%
Stella	88.5%	87.3%	94.1%	5.6%
Sugar Camp	86.0%	85.6%	87.9%	1.9%
Three Lakes	84.1%	82.1%	85.5%	1.4%
Woodboro	81.3%	83.3%	84.2%	2.9%
Woodruff	77.2%	71.3%	75.2%	-2.0%
City of Rhinelander	65.2%	59.3%	59.3%	-5.9%
Oneida County	78.5%	77.4%	79.7%	1.2%
State	64.3%	66.7%	68.4%	4.1%

Source: U.S. Census

2. Vacancy

The vacancy rate in Oneida County provides an insight into the dynamics of the housing market. In addition to housing units that are unoccupied between residents, for rent or sale, the Census considers units that are “for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use” to be vacant. The most striking thing about vacancy in Oneida County is the much higher level than in the state as a whole. This shows the high level of seasonal housing in the county. Table 3-11 displays the vacancy rates for 1990 and 2000, and the change over that time period.

Table 11: Vacancy Rates			
Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990 - 2000 % Change
Cassian	72.1%	60.2%	-11.9%
Crescent	34.0%	22.9%	-11.1%
Enterprise	72.5%	67.9%	-4.6%
Hazelhurst	64.4%	52.6%	-11.8%
Lake Tomahawk	66.0%	54.8%	-11.2%
Little Rice	78.9%	68.3%	-10.6%
Lynne	72.7%	69.1%	-3.6%
Minocqua	51.6%	48.9%	-2.7%
Monico	42.7%	40.7%	-2.0%
Newbold	56.6%	46.3%	-10.3%
Nokomis	55.6%	45.1%	-10.5%
Pelican	26.8%	23.8%	-3.0%
Piehl	63.6%	54.1%	-9.5%
Pine Lake	26.9%	23.0%	-3.9%
Schoepke	72.1%	75.1%	3.0%
Stella	39.9%	25.3%	-14.6%
Sugar Camp	58.8%	46.6%	-12.2%
Three Lakes	71.0%	64.5%	-6.5%
Woodboro	54.5%	47.6%	-6.9%
Woodruff	49.5%	42.8%	-6.7%
City of Rhinelander	7.8%	6.3%	-1.5%
Oneida County	49.7%	42.4%	-7.3%
State	11.4%	10.2%	-1.2%

Source: U.S. Census

The vacancy rate is down in every municipality but one (Schoepke). Only in the City of Rhinelander, which has very few seasonal dwellings, is the vacancy rate comparable to the state. Where some of the change in vacancy is undoubtedly attributed to improvement in the real-estate market between 1990 and 2000, much of this decrease is likely due to conversion of seasonal to year-round housing units. In nearly half of the towns vacancy is down by more than ten percent. According to the American Community Survey, the county vacancy rate for 2005-2007 decreased to 39 percent.

3. Seasonal Housing

Seasonal dwellings are a significant part of the housing stock in the county (39.2%) more than six-times the level for the state (6.1%). Only in four towns

(Crescent, Pelican, Pine Lake, and Stella), three of which are adjacent to Rhineland, are seasonal dwellings less than a third of the housing stock. In five towns (Enterprise, Little Rice, Lynne, Schoepke, and Three Lake) seasonal dwellings are more than sixty percent of all housing units, and in only two (Monico 34.3% and Woodruff 39.6%) of the remaining towns are they less than forty percent of the total.

Since 1980 the number of seasonal dwellings has gone down in seven towns, and during the 1990s the number declined in all but five towns (Lynne, Monico, Piehl, Schoepke, and Woodruff).

Minor Civil Division	1980	1990	2000	1980-2000 % Change	Net Change
Cassian	586	659	582	-0.7%	-4
Crescent	250	312	223	-10.8%	-27
Enterprise	188	286	250	33.0%	62
Hazelhurst	581	613	559	-3.8%	-22
Lake Tomahawk	482	579	548	13.7%	66
Little Rice	104	322	284	173.1%	180
Lynne	170	190	201	18.2%	31
Minocqua	1,816	2,066	1,964	8.1%	148
Monico	29	66	74	155.2%	45
Newbold	698	1,075	889	27.4%	191
Nokomis	512	479	427	-16.6%	-85
Pelican	376	363	302	-19.7%	-74
Piehl	23	39	39	69.6%	16
Pine Lake	298	281	276	-7.4%	-22
Schoepke	425	393	460	8.2%	35
Stella	64	106	71	10.9%	7
Sugar Camp	430	685	568	32.1%	138
Three Lakes	1,353	1,839	1,813	34.0%	460
Woodboro	299	305	263	-12.0%	-36
Woodruff	381	582	600	57.5%	219
City of Rhineland	2	23	36	1700.0%	34
Oneida County	8,987	11,263	10,429	16.0%	1,442
State	110,928	150,280	142,313	28.3%	31,385

Source: U.S. Census, Wistat

During the 1980's the number of seasonal dwellings declined in four towns (Nokomis, Pelican, Pine Lake, and Schoepke), while the number more than doubled in two towns (Little Rice and Monico). In six of the towns (Enterprise,

Newbold, Piehl, Stella, Sugar Camp, and Woodruff) the number of seasonal dwellings increased by over fifty percent. The number of seasonal dwellings peaked in the 1990 Census suggesting that since then conversion of seasonal to year-round use accounts for the decline in their numbers.

D. Demand Characteristics

1. Median Age of Population

Table 3-13: Median Age				
Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990 - 2000 % Change	Net Change
Cassian	37.9	45.2	19.3%	7.3
Crescent	36.5	40.4	10.7%	3.9
Enterprise	46.1	44.5	-3.5%	-1.6
Hazelhurst	39.1	45.7	16.9%	6.6
Lake Tomahawk	38.3	42.8	11.7%	4.5
Little Rice	47.8	43.9	-8.2%	-3.9
Lynne	51.0	46.4	-9.0%	-4.6
Minocqua	43.1	47.1	9.3%	4.0
Monico	32.6	37.2	14.1%	4.6
Newbold	35.5	42.8	20.6%	7.3
Nokomis	41.6	42.4	1.9%	0.8
Pelican	36.8	40.1	9.0%	3.3
Piehl	32.9	42.2	28.3%	9.3
Pine Lake	37.3	40.2	7.8%	2.9
Schoepke	46.6	46.6	0.0%	0.0
Stella	35.0	39.3	12.3%	4.3
Sugar Camp	37.7	41.9	11.1%	4.2
Three Lakes	42.8	46.6	8.9%	3.8
Woodboro	35.9	44.1	22.8%	8.2
Woodruff	43.0	45.1	4.9%	2.1
City of Rhinelander	36.7	38.9	6.0%	2.2
Oneida County	38.6	42.4	9.8%	3.8
State	32.9	36.0	9.4%	3.1

Source: U.S. Census

Oneida County is aging, but all the municipalities are not aging at the same rate. In fact, three towns (Enterprise, Little Rice and Lynne) had the median age drop during the 1990s, and Schoepke saw its median age remain unchanged. Table 13 shows how the median age has changed.

All municipalities in the county had a median age above the state level (36 years). Three towns (Newbold, Piehl, Woodboro) had their median age increase by more than 20 percent. Only two towns (Monico and Stella) have a median age below 40. Of the seven towns with a median age over 45 (Cassian, Hazelhurst, Lynne, Minocqua, Schoepke, Three Lakes, and Woodruff) only Woodruff is less than 50 percent seasonal dwellings. This may indicate a correlation between the median age of residents and the predominance of seasonal housing units, perhaps another indicator of the trend toward conversion of seasonal units to year-round retirement homes. During this period the median age for the county increased slightly more than the state. According to the American Community Survey 2005-2007 estimate the county median age increased to 45.

2. Persons per Household

Household size grew in five towns (Little Rice, Lynne, Monico, Peihl, and Nokomis) during the 1990s. In three towns (Lake Tomahawk, Woodboro and Woodruff) it declined by over ten percent, and in four other towns (Cassian, Hazelhurst, Newbold, and Pine Lake) and the City of Rhinelander by over five percent.

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990 - 2000 % Change	Net Change
Cassian	2.55	2.39	-6.3%	-0.2
Crescent	2.67	2.59	-3.0%	-0.1
Enterprise	2.38	2.21	-7.1%	-0.2
Hazelhurst	2.57	2.40	-6.6%	-0.2
Lake Tomahawk	2.66	2.18	-18.0%	-0.5
Little Rice	2.20	2.28	3.6%	0.1
Lynne	2.18	2.28	4.6%	0.1
Minocqua	2.31	2.22	-3.9%	-0.1
Monico	2.77	2.84	2.5%	0.1
Newbold	2.63	2.43	-7.6%	-0.2
Nokomis	2.45	2.45	0.0%	0.0
Pelican	2.60	2.49	-4.2%	-0.1
Piehl	2.36	2.38	0.8%	0.0
Pine Lake	2.60	2.45	-5.8%	-0.2
Schoepke	2.35	2.26	-3.8%	-0.1
Stella	2.76	2.65	-4.0%	-0.1
Sugar Camp	2.63	2.52	-4.2%	-0.1
Three Lakes	2.35	2.24	-4.7%	-0.1
Woodboro	2.61	2.21	-15.3%	-0.4
Woodruff	2.47	2.22	-10.1%	-0.3
City of Rhinelander	2.45	2.23	-9.0%	-0.2
Oneida County	2.50	2.34	-6.4%	-0.2
State	2.6	2.5	-3.8%	-0.1

Source: U.S. Census

The average household size is less than the state average in every town but four (Crescent, Monico, Stella, and Sugar Camp). Declining household size is a nationwide trend arising from a number of factors. Table 14 shows the average number of persons per household.

E. Government Housing Programs

The Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) is administered by Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority. Investors who allocate a number of units as affordable to low-income families for a certain period (usually 15 years) are allowed to take a credit on their income tax. There are 187 housing units that utilize the LIHTC in the county. It provides an incentive for private entities to develop affordable housing. The credit reduces the federal taxes owed by an individual or corporation for an investment made in low-income rental housing. The amount of the tax deduction is tied to the proportion of low-income residents in the housing produced. The credit is paid out over 15 years to investors in the housing project. LIHTC provides funding for the construction of new buildings or the rehabilitation or conversion of existing structures. To qualify, a property must set aside a certain share of its units for low-income households. Currently there are five projects – Westview Village, Cedar Pointe I & II, Historic West Elementary all in Rhinelander, Old Orchard apartments in Three Lakes, and One Penny Place in Woodruff – that receive the LIHTC.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers are administered locally by the Rhinelander Housing Authority in the city and NewCap in the rest of the county. Eligible families are issued vouchers that they can use to secure housing in the private market. Having found a suitable housing unit, which meets minimum health and safety standards and where the owner has agreed to rent under the program, the eligible family uses its voucher to cover the part of the rent beyond the portion it pays, usually 30 percent of its income. The landlord receives a subsidy directly for the portion of the Fair Market Rent not paid by the tenant. The voucher-holder signs a lease for a term of, at least, one year and the landlord signs a contract with the Housing Authority, running concurrently with the lease. Eligibility for the program is generally limited to families with incomes below 50% of the median for the county in which they reside. The program is open to any housing unit where the owner agrees to participate and where the unit satisfies the standards.

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD) is focused on rural areas, and thus may be the most promising source of housing-related funding. Below is a partial listing of programs available to localities:

- *Section 502 Homeownership Direct Loan* program of the Rural Housing Service (RHS) provides loans to help low-income households purchase and prepare sites or purchase, build, repair, renovate, or relocate homes.
- *Section 502 Mutual Self-Help Housing Loans* are designed to help very-low-income households construct their own homes. Targeted families

include those who cannot buy affordable housing through conventional means. Participating families perform approximately 65 percent of the construction under qualified supervision.

- *Section 504 Very-Low-Income Housing Repair* program, provides loans and grants to low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes. Improvements must make the homes more safe and sanitary or remove health or safety hazards.
- *Section 515 Multi-Family Housing Loan* program supports the construction of multi-family housing for low-income residents. Under the program, which has been in operation in Wisconsin since 1969, USDA underwrites fifty-year mortgages at a one percent interest rate in exchange for an agreement to provide housing for low and very low-income residents.
- *Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance* program provides an additional subsidy for households with incomes too low to pay RHS-subsidized rents.
- *Section 533 Rural Housing Preservation Grants* are designed to assist sponsoring organizations in the repair or rehabilitation of low-income or very-low-income housing. Assistance is available for landlords or members of a cooperative.

The above programs are all available through USDA-RD to those who meet the income requirements. There are also programs through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

- The HUD Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program finances land acquisition and site development associated with self-help housing for low-income families. Loans are made to the nonprofit sponsors of development projects and are interest-free. Portions of the loans are forgiven if promised units of housing are completed within a given period. These forgiven "grant conversion" funds may be used to subsidize future development projects.
- The HOME Investment Partnership Program aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. HOME funds may be used for rental assistance, assistance to homebuyers, new construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of rental housing.
- The Small Cities Development Block Grant program is the rural component of HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which is administered by state agencies. The state CDBG

program provides assistance for the development of affordable housing and economic development efforts targeted to low- and moderate-income people.

3.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goal 1:

Encourage adequate supply of affordable housing for all individuals of all income levels consistent with the rural character of the county.

Objectives:

1. Encourage local land use controls and permitting procedures that allow affordable housing opportunities.
2. Encourage appropriate public & private sector development of senior and special needs housing within the County.

Policies:

1. Consider use of manufactured housing as an affordable, and well regulated, source of housing.
2. Encourage that adequate opportunities for multi-family housing that can meet the needs of moderate-income families are available, especially in areas where service jobs are prevalent.
3. Examine creation and county support of a county-wide housing authority.

Goal 2:

Encourage residential development in suitable areas.

Objectives:

1. Encourage residential development away from existing forestry and agricultural uses to avoid conflicts.
2. Encourage multi-family dwellings and subdivision facilities to be located to coincide with major throughway and other public facilities.

Policies:

May 17, 2013

1. Discourage the location of new development in areas that are shown to be unsuitable for specific uses due to flood hazard, groundwater pollution, highway access problems, etc.
2. Encourage more intensive residential development to areas served by the Lakeland, Lake Tomahawk, or Three Lakes Sanitary Districts, or the City of Rhinelander where the utilities and services exist to accommodate the development.

Goal 3:

Encourage the use, maintenance and renovation of existing housing as a source of affordable housing.

Objectives:

1. Prepare for the transition of many seasonal to year-round residences by fostering the level of service required by full-time residents.
2. Maintain enforcement of existing building codes and examine offering financial incentives to property owners to maintain their property.

Policies:

1. Encourage the development of a revolving loan program to help homeowners and rental property owners improve their properties.
2. Examine services that will help elderly residents remain in their homes, to the extent possible.

Element 4: Transportation

4.1 Background

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4.1 Background

This element—the fourth of nine elements of the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan is based on the statutory requirement [§66.1001(2)(c) Wis. Stats.] for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation.

This element compares the County's objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element also identifies highways within the County by function and incorporates state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in Oneida County.

The Comprehensive Planning legislation also establishes 14 state comprehensive planning goals. Of these 14 goals, two relate directly to transportation planning:

- 1) Encouraging neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- 2) Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

Three of the state goals refer to the provision of public infrastructure, of which transportation facilities are a major component. These three goals are:

- Promoting the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
- Encouraging land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Of course, the state planning goals are sufficiently broad enough that one could arguably make the case that the other remaining goals also have some relationship to transportation. For example, the goal of preserving cultural, historic, and archaeological sites has the obvious connection to transportation in that planned transportation facilities should be programmed to avoid negative impacts on such sites. Similarly, transportation networks typically extend beyond individual community boundaries, necessitating coordination and cooperation among adjacent units of government, another of the state's 14 planning goals.

A. Previous Federal, State and Regional Transportation Studies

1. FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) is the current federal level transportation policy and spending program due for reauthorization at the time of this writing. Other federal legislation that frames transportation planning includes the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA); the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and the Clean Air Act. Environmental Justice is an applicable executive order that attempts to ensure that transportation planning and programming includes underrepresented groups such as minority and low-income populations.

2. STATE TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Corridors 2020

Corridors 2020 was designed to enhance economic development and meet Wisconsin's mobility needs well into the future. The 3,200-mile state highway network is comprised of two main elements: a multilane backbone system and a two-lane connector system. All communities over 5,000 in population are to be connected to the backbone system via the connector network. Within Oneida County, U.S. Highways (USH) 8, 45 and 51 are designated as part of the Corridors 2020 system. USH 8 is a connector route that runs east and west through Rhinelander while both USH 45 and 51 are connectors running north and south through Three Lakes and Minocqua/Woodruff, respectively.

This focus on highways was altered in 1991 with the passage of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which mandated that states take a multi-modal approach to transportation planning. Now, bicycle, transit, rail, air, and other modes of travel would make up the multi-modal plan. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) response to ISTEA was the two-year planning process that created TransLinks 21 in 1994.

TransLinks 21

WisDOT incorporated Corridors 2020 into TransLinks 21, and discussed the impacts of transportation policy decisions on land use. TransLinks 21 is a 25-year statewide multi-modal transportation plan that WisDOT completed in 1994. Within this needs-based plan are the following modal plans:

- Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020
- Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020
- Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020
- Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020
- Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report

Connections 2030

Connections 2030 is Wisconsin's latest long-range, statewide multi-modal transportation plan. This recently adopted plan is policy based and incorporates the previous Corridors 2020 and Translinks 21 plans. Like Corridors 2020, Connections 2030 identifies a series of system-level priority corridors that are critical to Wisconsin's travel patterns and the state's economy. Within Oneida County, U.S. Highway (USH) 8 is designated as part of the North Country (Minnesota to Michigan) Corridor; USH 45 is part of the Northwoods Connection (Oshkosh to Rhinelander); and USH 51 is part of the Wisconsin River (Madison to Ironwood, Michigan) Corridor.

For more information on Connections 2030 go online at <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/connections2030.htm>.

3. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Regional Comprehensive Plan

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) titled "A Framework for the Future", adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in December of 2003, is an update of a plan adopted by NCWRPC in 1981. The RCP looks at transportation in all ten counties of the North Central Wisconsin Region. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local government can address transportation issues.

One trend identified in the RCP is the increase in drivers age 65 and over. Wisconsin's older population age 65 and over, is expected to constitute about 20% of the state's population in 2020. In Oneida County, the percentage already exceeded 18 percent by the year 2000. The aging of the baby boom generation will mean an increasing number of elderly drivers. This is the first

generation to have been highly mobile throughout adulthood, and its members may continue to travel more as long as they are physically able to do so. Aging takes a toll on the physical and cognitive skills needed for driving. Older drivers are more likely to misjudge oncoming traffic speeds and distances or fail to see other drivers near them. The special needs of this population group will have to be addressed.

The RCP recommends a variety of strategies that might aid in dealing with these and other identified issues. Two such strategies include corridor planning and rural intelligent transportation systems. Corridor planning is one way to relieve some of the need for additional direct capacity expansion by comprehensively managing critical traffic corridors. Rural ITS applications have the potential to make major improvements in safety, mobility, and tourist information services. For more information on the Regional Comprehensive Plan go online at: <http://www.ncwrpc.org>.

Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan

In 2004, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission created this Plan to guide the development of an interconnected bikeway system for the North Central Wisconsin Region. Potential routes and trails are identified and an improvement description was created for each county.

Oneida County trails and routes within this regional plan primarily come from the 2002 Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan and the 2003 Rhinelander Area Pathways Plan. These two plans propose a network of on-road routes and off-road trails throughout Oneida County and the City of Rhinelander.

Locally Developed, Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan

This plan was prepared as a joint planning effort between Oneida, Forest and Vilas counties. These counties have been slowly working together to coordinate and expand transportation services for elderly, disabled and low income residents. SAFETEA-LU requires the preparation of coordination plans for entities that will access certain FTA (Federal Transit Authority) funds. SAFETEA-LU states that projects funded must be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. The stated goal is to maximize the three programs' coverage by minimizing the duplication of similar, overlapping services. SAFETEA-LU also stipulates that the plan be developed through a process that includes representation of public, private and non-profit transportation and human services providers, and participation by the public.

B. Issues

Part of the planning process is the identification of issues. These are the things that need to be addressed in the plan.

- Roadway Use Conflicts / Capacity

Although an important component of the County's economy, tourism can have consequences on the transportation system. Recreational vehicles and vehicles pulling various trailers (campers, boats, ATV carriers, etc.) often compete with regular daily traffic for use of many public highways in the County, particularly in areas of access to recreational sites and facilities. A related roadway conflict issue is recreational vehicle (i.e. ATV, snowmobile, etc.) crossings of public roadways.

- Impact of Development on Roads

There is concern about growth in towns that have no money to maintain the roads. Some towns have driveway ordinances, which offer some controls. Development occurring on private roads often leads to access concerns, particularly for emergency vehicles, and pressures to convert the road to public ownership, particularly when not constructed to standards.

- Transportation Costs

There is some concern regarding transportation costs taking a larger share of disposable income. With gas prices approaching/exceeding \$4 per gallon, it is easy to see a correlation. The average purchase price of new vehicles seems to have grown significantly, and inflation certainly is a factor. Though vehicle registration fees and taxes may be low in Wisconsin ongoing dealer incentives and low financing rates make purchasing a new vehicle more attractive. Wisconsin ranks 42nd in the nation with respect to average auto insurance expenditures.

One way to address the issue of transportation affordability is the development of public transit and other alternative means of travel. This is of particular importance for people with restricted resources such as the disabled, seniors, youth or low-income individuals.

- Upgrade / Improvement of Road System

A top transportation concern is often the need to upgrade or improve the current road system. The primary commuter routes into developed areas of the County, such as Rhinelander or Minocqua, can get congested such that

passing is not possible. A study of improvements such as widening and/or adding lanes or passing lanes to relieve these bottlenecks is needed.

- Road Maintenance / Brushing / Plowing

Regular road maintenance including roadside brushing and mowing and winter road maintenance is a common issue. Some local units do their own maintenance while others contract for services. Lack of adequate funding for maintenance is a major concern.

- Weight Restrictions

With logging and other heavy load activities throughout the County, there are issues/concerns regarding weight limits on roads and the potential for damage vs the potential for lost economic opportunity caused by excessive regulation. The recent change by the State allowing an extra axle and increasing allowable weight to 98,000 lbs. has raised concern, particularly on town roads. As road aids to Towns declines, the County, Towns and City may need to consider a fee/permit system for higher weight haulers.

- Parking Needs

As growth in population, commerce and tourism continues to grow, parking needs in the developed areas of the County need to be contemplated.

- Comprehensive Plan - Transportation Workshop

On February 18, 2010, the County Comprehensive Planning Oversight Committee held a workshop/forum on transportation. A panel of five local practitioners discussed transportation issues affecting the County.

A central theme emerged from each panelist's presentation. Examples of cooperation exist across the spectrum of transportation modes serving Oneida County, and ultimately cooperation is needed for a good transportation system. The various state, county and local government, non-profit and private entities must all work together for viable solutions to transportation issues and needs.

Other issues identified during the workshop include:

- Transit needs extend beyond the elderly and disabled to the general public particularly for employment.
- Bike route and trail development supports transportation, recreation and tourism.

- Air and rail service are vital to existing businesses and economic development.
- Loss of rail service.
- Continued cooperation among many various entities is needed for good transportation.
- Need to plan for emerging vehicle technologies (e.g. NEVs).
- Financing for transportation a looming issue.

4.2 Inventory & Trends

The transportation system in Oneida County is comprised of a roadway network used by automobiles, trucks, taxis, buses, bicycles, ATV's/UTV's, motorcycles and pedestrians where no sidewalks exist, a public airport, and several private landing areas. In this section the transportation system is described along with trends in usage and development. Specialized transit is also discussed.

A. Roadways

The Oneida County Highway Department is responsible for maintenance and snow plowing on all US, state and county highways. Other Towns in the county and the City of Rhineland either maintain and plow their own roads or contract for those services. The Department also contracts out construction and maintenance services to towns and the DNR. The County's main shop in Rhineland is supplemented by 3 outlying shop and salt storage sites such as the Town of Nokomis town hall location. The Highway Department is sensitive to the needs of bikes on the County system, however, the availability of funding is an issue.

Oneida County's roadway network is comprised of over 1,681 (2009 inventory) miles of highways and streets connecting communities and their citizens to businesses and recreational activities throughout the County, as well as to major urban centers in relatively close proximity.

1. Classifications

These roads are classified in two ways: 1) by jurisdiction and 2) by function. The jurisdictional classification indicates who owns or is responsible for the roadway. The functional classification identifies the role or function the roadway plays in moving traffic.

In addition to these main classifications, a road or segment of road may hold a variety of other designations including county forest road, rustic road, emergency route, or truck route. For example, there are two designated Rustic

Roads within Oneida County, both located in the Town of Minocqua. Mercer Lake Rd. & Blue Lake Rd. together, are Rustic Rd. #58, and Sutton Rd. is Rustic Rd. #59. Truck routes are discussed below under Trucking.

Jurisdictional Classification

Within a jurisdictional framework, the roads within Oneida County fall into three major classifications: state (state trunk highways - "STH" and United States highways - "USH"), county (county trunk highways - "CTH") and city or town streets/roads (local roads). The Transportation System Map illustrates the jurisdictional classification of roadways within Oneida County. Towns maintain jurisdiction over the greatest mileage of the County's road system with over 76 percent of the total mileage. County trunk highways make up about 10 percent of the system for 171.19 miles. Table 4-1 gives the mileage breakdown for the jurisdictional classification of roads within Oneida County.

There are three U.S. highways in the County: USHs 8, 45 and 51. The County also contains portions of four state trunk highways: 17, 32, 47, and 70.

Table 4-1 Road Mileage By Jurisdiction And Functional Class in Oneida County, 2009				
Jurisdiction	Functional Classification			Totals
	Arterial	Collector	Local	
U.S. and State*	153.79	9.33	---	163.12
County	6.51	163.26	1.42	171.19
All Towns	1.73	255.51	1,033.16	1290.40
City of Rhinelander	12.49	6.63	37.39	56.51
Totals	174.52	434.73	1,071.97	1,681.22

Source: WisDOT & NCWRPC *WisDOT has jurisdiction over interstate and federal highways.

Functional Classification

A functional classification system groups streets and highways into classes according to the character of service they provide. This character of service ranges from providing a high degree of travel mobility to providing land access functions.

The current functional classification system used in Wisconsin consists of five classifications that are divided into urban and rural categories. Functional classifications are used to determine eligibility for federal aid. For purposes of functional classification, federal regulations define urban as places of 5,000 or more in population, so the rural classifications apply throughout Oneida County except within the City of Rhinelander and portions of towns adjacent to the city. Table 4-2 summarizes the rural functional classification system.

The Transportation System Map illustrates the functional classification of roadways within Oneida County. Within the County, the US Highways (8, 45

and 51) are principal arterials. Minor arterials include state highways 17, 47, and 70. STH 32 is classified as a collector. Most of the County system is comprised of major collectors. The town road system combined also has significant collector mileage, but the vast majority is designated as local road for functional class.

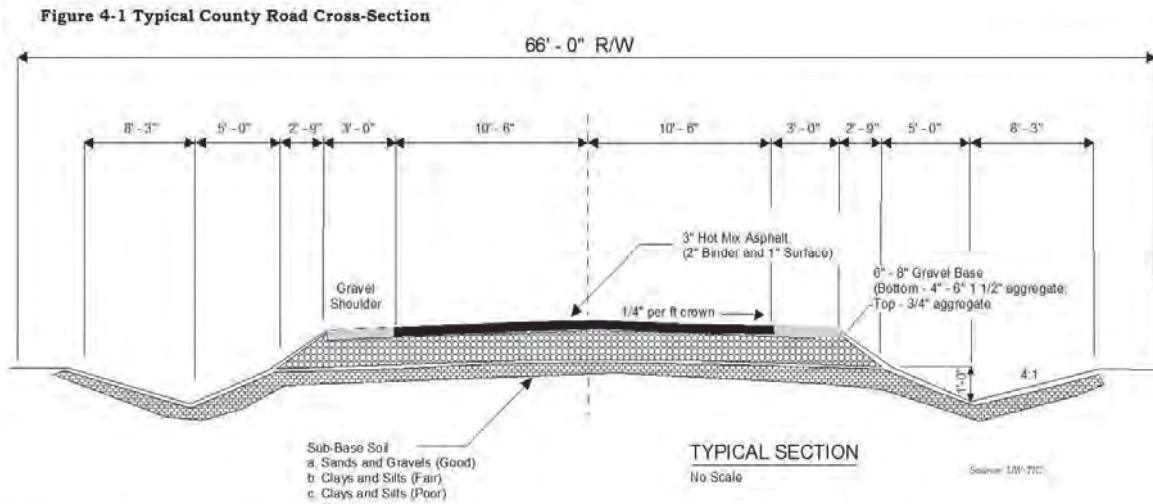
Table 4-1 also breaks down the mileage for the functional classification of roads within Oneida County.

Table 4-2 Rural Highway Functional Classification System	
Principal Arterials	Serve interstate and interregional trips. These routes generally serve all urban areas greater than 5,000 population. The rural principal arterials are further subdivided into 1) Interstate highways and 2) other principal arterials.
Minor Arterials	In conjunction with the principal arterials, they serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter-area traffic movements.
Major Collectors	Provide service to moderate sized communities and other inter-area traffic generators and link those generators to nearby larger population centers or higher function routes.
Minor Collectors	Collect traffic from local roads and provide links to all remaining smaller communities, locally important traffic generators, and higher function roads. All developed areas should be within a reasonable distance of a collector road.
Local Roads	Provide access to adjacent land and provide for travel over relatively short distances. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local function roads.

Source: WisDOT

2. Road Design Standards

Roads should be designed for the function they serve. Lightly traveled rural town roads may remain graveled to reduce speed levels and maintain a rural "country" character in the landscape. Where higher traffic volumes are expected, roads should be paved. Communities should consider the current and potential future usage of a road to determine if minimum design standards will be adequate or if more is needed. An understanding of road design can be taken from a typical cross-section of a county highway found in Wisconsin, as shown in Figure 4-1.



WisDOT administrative code establishes minimum standards for construction or improvement of county and town roads. For rural county highways, the code provides for use of *alternative to the minimum standards* known as "3R" or Design Criteria for Resurfacing, Restoration, and Rehabilitation Projects. For county trunk highways, design standards are set by rural functional classifications as shown in Tables 4-3 A, B, & C. For town roads, minimum standards by improvement level, i.e. reconstruction or resurfacing and reconditioning, are shown in Tables 4-4 A & B.

Table 4-3A County Highway Standards "3R" - Arterials					
TRAFFIC VOLUME			ROADWAY WIDTH DIMENSIONS IN FEET		
Design Class	Design ADT	Design Speed MPH	Traveled Way	Shoulder	Road-way
3RA1	Under 750	55	22	3	28
3RA2	750-2000	55	24	4	32
3RA3	Over 2000	55	24	6	36

Source: WisDOT

Table 4-3B County Highway Standards "3R" - Collectors & Locals					
TRAFFIC VOLUME			ROADWAY WIDTH DIMENSIONS IN FEET		
Design Class	Design ADT	Design Speed MPH	Traveled Way	Shoulder	Road-way
3RC1	Under 750	55	20	3	26
3RC2	750-2000	55	22	4	30
3RC3	Over 2000	55	22	6	34

Source: WisDOT

Table 4-3C County Highway Standards "3R" - Bridges	
DESIGN ADT	USABLE BRIDGE WIDTH IN FEET
0-750	Traveled way
751-2000	Traveled way plus 2 feet
2001-4000	Traveled way plus 4 feet
Over 4000	Traveled way plus 6 feet

Source: WisDOT

Construction of new or reconstruction of existing town roads are required to meet a higher level of design standards than resurfacing or reconditioning. Examples of resurfacing and reconditioning which may be appropriate for existing town roads include pavement rehabilitation; widening of lanes and shoulders; replacing bridge elements to correct structural deficiencies; bridge deck overlays, bridge and culvert replacement; and other related improvements such as minor grading, sub-grade work and correction of drainage problems.

Table 4-4A Town Road Standards - Reconstruction					
TRAFFIC VOLUME			ROADWAY WIDTH DIMENSIONS IN FEET		
Design Class	Current ADT	Design Speed MPH	Traveled Way	Shoulder	Roadway
T1	Under 250	40	20	3	26
T2	250-750	50	22	4	30
T3	Over 750	55	24	6	36

Source: WisDOT

Table 4-4B Town Road Standards-Resurfacing/Reconditioning					
TRAFFIC VOLUME			ROADWAY WIDTH DIMENSIONS IN FEET		
Design Class	Current ADT	Design Speed MPH	Traveled Way	Shoulder	Roadway
TR1	Under 250	--	18	2	22
TR2	250-400	40	20	2	24
TR3	401-750	50	22	2	26
TR4	Over 750	55	22	4	30

Source: WisDOT

3. Surface Conditions

Oneida County and many of the local units within the County utilize the PASER system for measuring the condition of their roadways. PASER stands for Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating System. Although there are different scales for concrete, asphalt, sealcoated, gravel and unimproved roads, they are generally based on a scale ranging between "1" (very poor condition) to "10" (excellent condition).

WisDOT now requires all local units of government to submit road condition rating data every two years as part of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). PASER and WISLR are tools that local governments can use to manage pavements for improved decision making in budgeting and maintenance. The Oneida County Highway Department uses this information

in the development of its long-range highway improvement program, which is shown below.

4. Proposed Highway Improvements

The WisDOT prepares a six-year improvement program that identifies improvement projects for state trunk and federal highways within Oneida County. The County Highway Department prepares its own roadway management plan identifying needed improvements on county highways. It is important to remember that continually changing needs, funding availability, and political climate affect the ultimate implementation of these improvement plans on a year-to-year basis.

Proposed improvements on the County highway system are shown in Table 4-5. The most recent state six-year improvement program for the 2008-2013 period identifies three remaining projects for the time period. These include expansion of Highway 51 between Jackson Heights Road and County Highway D, reconstruction of Highway 51 between Minocqua and Woodruff with curb, gutter, on-street bicycle accommodations, sidewalks and storm sewer, and repaving with sign replacement on STH 70 from Minocqua to the County Line.

Table 4-5					
Oneida County's Highway Improvement Program					
2010-2014*					
Year	Highway	From	To	Mileage	Type of Improvement
2010	CTH D	Swamp Creek Rd	CTH E	2	Pulverize, shape and pave
2010	CTH D	McGrath Lk Rd	STH 47	3.75	Pulverize, shape, pave & shoulder
2011	CTH B	Meister Stockley	CTH Z	2.8	Pulverize, shape and pave
2011	CTH W	Entire Length		2	Pulverize, shape and pave
2012	CTH Y	S.Co. Line	N. for 8 mi.	8	Pulverize, shape and pave
2013	CTH C	Camp Bryn Afon	USH 45	6.6	Pulverize, shape and pave
2014	CTH J	STH 47	USH 51	1	Reconstruct
2014	CTH H	Kathan Lake	STH 70	2.1	Pulverize, shape and pave
2014	CTH N	USH 8	Co. Line	3.6	Pulverize, shape and pave

Source: Oneida County Highway Department *Reviewed annually and subject to change.

Table 4-6					
WisDOT Remaining 6-Year Highway Improvement Program 2008-2013 - Oneida County					
Year	Highway	From	To	Mileage	Type of Improvement
2010 -2013	USH 51	Jackson Hts Rd	CTH D	6.1	Expand inc. upgrade of ints and replace existing bridge
2010 -2013	USH 51	Minocqua	Woodruff	1.71	Reconstruct on existing align, inc. curb&gutter, sidewalk, stormsewer
2010 -2013	USH 70	N. Co. Line	Minocqua	7.8	New asphalt, replace signs

Source: WisDOT on-line as of time-of-writing / subject to rescheduling.

5. Trucking

There are two types of WisDOT designated truck routes within Oneida County—1) Designated Long, and 2) 65 foot Restricted. The Designated Long Truck Routes are USHs 8, 45 and 51 and STHs 17, 47, and 70. STH 32 east of US 45 is a 65' Restricted Truck Route.

These routes provide Oneida County with access to the rest of the state and the nation. Local truck routes often branch out from these major corridors to link local industry with the main truck routes as well as for the distribution of commodities within the local area. Mapping these local routes is beyond the scope of this study, and local issues such as safety, weight restriction, and noise impacts play significant roles in the designation of local truck routes.

County highways connect the County's rural areas with the designated state truck routes and serve an important role in linking the County's agricultural and forestry resources to the Region's major highways and economic centers. All county highways are generally open to truck traffic. The County uses seasonal weight limits in an effort to minimize damage.

6. Traffic

The most recent available Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts for selected locations in Oneida County are shown on the Transportation Map. The counts come from WisDOT's regular traffic counting program selected to give a general feeling for the traffic levels throughout the County. The selected counts do not necessarily reflect the peak traffic location of a given road.

AADT counts are calculated by multiplying raw hourly traffic counts by seasonal, day-of-week, and axle adjustment factors. The daily hourly values are then averaged by hour of the day and the values are summed to create the AADT count. Traffic in Oneida County has generally increased overtime as shown in Tables 4-7 A/B. The 2000 and 2003 data is the best available until the 2009 count processing is completed in early 2010. The 2006 counts are believed to be defective, and WisDOT recommends against using them.

Highway	Location	2000	2003	2000-2003 % Change	2000-2003 Net Change
USH 8	Just west of STH 47 at Rhinelander	8,800	10,000	14%	1,200
USH 8	At Co. Line in Woodboro	5,400	6,200	15%	800
USH 45	Just N. of Downtown Three Lakes	4,900	5,300	8%	400
USH 45	Just north of US 8 at Monico	1,600	2,200	38%	600
USH 51	Just S. of STH 70 in Minocqua	24,900	26,100	5%	1,200
USH 51	Between CTH L and CTH N in Nokomis	5,200	6,000	15%	800
STH 17	Just N. of Rhinelander	6,500	7,600	17%	1,100
STH 32	W. of Downtown 3Lakes	2,000	2,600	30%	600
STH 47	North of CTH D	4,900	5,500	12%	600
STH 70	West of USH 51	5,600	6,200	11%	600

Source: WisDOT & NCWRPC

Highway	Location	2000	2003	2000-2003 % Change	2000-2003 Net Change
CTH A	Just east of STH 17	1,500	1,400	-7%	-100
CTH C	At Starks	1,100	1,300	18%	200
CTH D	Just east of USH 51	1,600	1,700	6%	100
CTH D	Just east of CTH O	790	930	18%	140
CTH G	Just south of Rhinelander	2,100	2,100	0%	0
CTH G	1 mile north of CTH Q	710	710	0%	0
CTH J	Just east of CTH E	1,500	1,700	13%	200
CTH K	Just east of USH 51	1,200	1,600	33%	400
CTH K	Just west of STH 47	3,100	3,300	6%	200
CTH L	Just north of County Line	3,200	3,300	3%	100
CTH Z	1 mile south of CTH B	190	150	-21%	-40

Source: WisDOT & NCWRPC

7. Commuting Patterns

County Worker Flow data compiled by the Census is a way to analyze commuting patterns, see Table 4-8. Oneida is a net importer of workers.

Nearly 2,781 workers leave the County for work on a regular basis, while about 3,772 enter the County for work. This creates a net gain of about 991 workers.

Table 4-8 Oneida County Commuting Patterns			
	Living in listed county - working in Oneida County	Living in Oneida County - working in listed county	Net gain or loss of workers
Oneida	14,010	14,010	0
Forest	343	129	214
Langlade	220	103	117
Lincoln	672	759	-87
Marathon	98	243	-145
Price	85	62	23
Vilas	2,051	1,106	945
Elsewhere	303	379	-76
Total	17,782	16,791	991

Source: U.S. Census 2000 and NCWRPC

Oneida gains the most from Vilas County which sends 2,051 workers into Oneida, while only 1,106 Oneida residents travel to Vilas for work, a gain of nearly one thousand workers. Although Oneida is basically a net importer of labor from surrounding counties, it does have a negative exchange with Lincoln and Marathon where it has a net loss of 87 and 145 workers, respectively.

8. Park and Ride

With increasing cost of vehicle use, people are attempting to reduce those expenses by sharing rides, particularly for employment related commuting. Park and ride lots are one tool being promoted by WisDOT. The nearest designated park and ride facility is located at USH 51 and CTH S south of Tomahawk in Lincoln County. There are also lots in Shawano and Oconto Counties.

The City of Rhinelander and the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation have been working with the transportation groups to develop a park-and-ride plan that works in conjunction with the transit system, see *Transit* section, below. Park and ride lots will be established in downtown Rhinelander and town hall parking lots in rural areas, among others. Area employers seem willing to work with the system.

B. Transit & Transportation Systems for Persons With Disabilities

Headwaters Inc. is a private, non-profit sheltered workshop for the developmentally and mentally disabled. Headwaters provides transportation to its clients for employment, social and recreational activities and appointments. Headwaters and other area human services agencies in Oneida, Forest and Vilas counties have a history of working together on transportation. Headwaters has taken a lead role in coordinating transportation: managing a fleet of 34 vehicles it leases out to the other agencies and sponsoring studies of transit service needs and options for the tri-county area.

The most recent effort is a feasibility study for a rural transit system to serve the tri-county area including Rhinelander. A trial run was set up beginning in October of 2009 between Crandon and Rhinelander to test operations and usage. Headwaters hopes to attract more federal grants to fund implementation of the new system.

The City of Rhinelander and the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation have supported development of a transit system as an additional option for worker transportation. They have also been working with the transportation groups to develop a park-and-ride plan that works in conjunction with the transit system. Area employers seem willing to work with the system.

The Oneida County Commission on Aging provides demand-response specialized transportation for the elderly and disabled across Oneida County with paid and volunteer drivers. Oneida County also works with other agencies and adjacent counties to provide service in a more cost-effective manner, such as the Lakeland Senior Center in Woodruff. Headwaters Inc. provides transportation for residents of Oneida County that work at their Rhinelander workshop facility, while Opportunities Inc. provides demand-response service for their clients in the Minocqua and Rhinelander areas. See Map 4-2 for illustration of transit service areas. The Mole Lake and Potawatomi reservations provide transit services to their residents and also work with Oneida County to open service to non-tribal members. For example, Mole Lake provides weekly service to Crandon and Rhinelander.

Oneida County works with Headwaters Inc, the Tribes and Forest and Vilas counties on coordination and expansion of transportation services. In 2008, the group completed a coordination plan that recommended a tri-county mobility manager position and development of projects that fit available funding programs such as the Mole Lake-Crandon-Rhinelander route to evaluate the potential for a tri-county transit system.

Two subsidized or "shared-ride" Taxi services operate within Oneida County. The Discab serves the Minocqua-Woodruff area. Rapid Cab is based in Rhinelander, but serves the entire county.

School buses carry children back and forth from the various school districts as well as sport competitions and other events.

There is limited scheduled long distance intercity bus service available in Oneida County. Increasing cost of fuel might increase the demand for public and intercity bus service. Private charter bus companies can be contracted for service, with increasing costs and tightening budgets.

C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The Oneida County Biking and Walking Trails Council (OCBWTC) is a private non-profit organization with the goal of making Oneida County more walk-able and bike-able. The Council was originally generated as part of the County Health Department's efforts to improve community health. The OCBWTC and other agencies and organizations work toward making Oneida County more walk-able and bike-able by planning and developing trails, bike lanes and sidewalks.

The Council has updated the County's 2002 bike route and trail plan, see Map 4-3. The system is being planned for dual purposes of transportation and recreation. Rhinelander acts as a kind of hub with trails and routes reaching out like spokes to other destinations such as Minocqua/Woodruff, Three Lakes and the Bearskin Trail, among others. The plan also features connections to trail networks and key destinations beyond Oneida County to broaden the attractiveness and utility of the system. A good example of this is the Highway J project with 5 foot paved shoulders providing that linkage to Vilas County and the established bike trails in St. Germain.

A recent statewide study indicated the economic impact of biking is about \$1.5 billion in the state. This may or may not be a sign of a change in the impression that silent sports like biking can't compete with motorized sports like snowmobiling or ATV-ing. Interest in biking is increasing as well as participating in the traditional activities of hunting and fishing. Oneida and Vilas Counties have been identified as being very bike-able compared to neighboring counties. Expansion of bike trails is a benefit to the county in terms of helping to capitalize on this growing segment of the tourism economy. OCBWTC wants to work with the County Highway Department to consider adding bike accommodations on resurfacing or reconstruction projects.

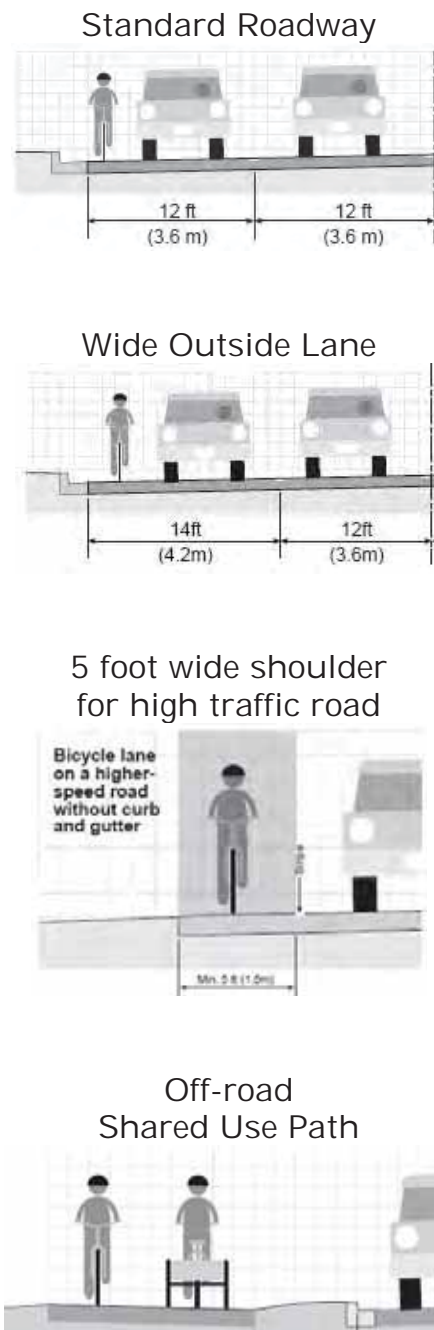
All roads except freeways are available for bicycle and pedestrian travel. Oneida County and its local units have slowly expanded designated bike routes on highways and off-road trails over time. Sidewalks exist in Rhinelander and other town centers such as Minocqua-Woodruff and Three Lakes.

Basic types of bicycle facilities include shared roadways, improved shoulders, bike lanes, and off-road shared use paths. See Figure 2. Each of these types may encompass a range of specifications for differing applications. WisDOT design manuals should be consulted for appropriate specifics.

On a shared roadway, bicyclists and motorists are accommodated in the same travel lane, where motorists may sometimes find it necessary to overtake bicyclists by switching into the oncoming travel lane. The majority of cycling in rural areas currently occurs on paved roadways with no special accommodations for bikes.

Paved shoulders of 2 or 3 feet have clear benefits to bikes. For designation / marking as a bike route, paved shoulders should be at

**Figure 4-2
Bicycle Facilities Cross-Sections**



Source: WisDOT

least four feet wide, the AASHTO minimum standard as described in the Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities. WisDOT (FDM 11-45-10) recommends five foot paved shoulders on rural two-lane state trunk highways. Paved area should be wider at the intersection of gravel drives to reduce the amount of loose gravel carried onto the bicycle path. Shoulder rumble strips provide an unsafe surface for bicycling unless additional paved width is provided for bicycle use.

Electric personal assistive mobility devices such as wheel chairs, scooters and Segways can utilize many of the same trails and roadways as cyclists and pedestrians.

D. Rail

The Canadian National Railroad (CN) operates on tracks running east to west through the southern and central portion of the County. Recently, the track between Rhinelander and Crandon to the east was taken out of service, but CN is currently retaining it for possible future use. CN has also reduced service in the area to 3 trains per week. Freight can be loaded / unloaded at the rail yard in downtown Rhinelander, and service is also provided to industrial sites west of the City.

There is no passenger rail service available in Oneida County.

E. Airports

The Rhinelander - Oneida County Airport is a commercial airport with scheduled passenger service and freight movement year-round. The airport serves as a feeder for larger, more urban hubs. Service from the airport is challenged by competition from other feeders, primarily Central Wisconsin - Wausau, which draws from a more dense surrounding population, hence has higher passenger use and better service, and is approximately a one to one and a half hour drive from anywhere in the County. Service levels at Rhinelander sometimes are infrequent enough, combined with higher prices, such that passenger use can be discouraged. General aviation has been growing over the last several years spurring the airport to add six new hangers and schedule two more to house private aircraft.

The airport's service area is generally considered to be north of Highway 8 within a two-hour drive time. The airport has studied leakage or loss of fares to outlying airports. Central Wisconsin Airport near Wausau, and approximately 1 to 1 ½ hour drive from anywhere in the County, is Rhinelander's primary competitor siphoning nearly 30% of passenger trips from its service area. Major airports like Minneapolis, Milwaukee and Chicago,

although more distant, each draw away about 6% of Rhinelander's potential business. The airport is subject to airline pricing policies. Another issue is the frequency of flights to provide options for consumers. When the number of airlines serving the airport goes down or when airlines switch to higher capacity aircraft and reduce the number of trips, the airport loses passengers to competing airports. An upcoming concern is the phase-out of propeller planes in favor of larger jets, and the potential decrease in frequency of flights. In addition, the airlines adjust prices and service to the feeder airports based on economic factors such as the number of passengers using the airport, cost of fuel, landing fees, available services, etc. This economic necessity challenges the airport in that, as passenger numbers go down, service sometimes is decreased as well, which may further reduce passenger use.

Beyond the 175 jobs it provides, the airport is an economic engine for the County. Business use has grown to 40% of passenger trips, and many area businesses rely on airfreight to bring in supplies or deliver product. The airport is a vital factor in economic development as level of air service is important to many businesses as they look for areas to locate.

The Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport is located in the City of Rhinelander and is the closest scheduled air passenger service available to Oneida County residents. This is an air carrier / air cargo airport, which is designed to accommodate virtually all aircraft. Airports in this category are usually referenced by the type of air carrier service provided, and Rhinelander is a short haul air carrier airport. This airport serves scheduled, nonstop, airline markets and routes of less than 500 miles. Short haul air carriers typically use aircraft weighing less than 60,000 pounds, and use primary runways with a length between 6,500 to 7,800 feet.

Air carrier enplanements at the Rhinelander / Oneida County Airport were 38,925 in 2004 and remained steady through 2007 when the numbers began to decline to 27,494 in 2009. In terms of cargo, about 1.5 million pounds moved through the Rhinelander / Oneida County Airport in 2004 and this had increased to about 1.9 million pounds in 2009. WisDOT projections show total aviation operations increasing to 44,040 by 2010, and 45,740 by 2020 for an 8 percent increase from 2000.

The Lakeland Airport/Noble F. Lee Memorial Field is cooperatively owned and operated by the Towns of Woodruff, Minocqua, Arbor Vitae, and Lac du Flambeau. The facility is located within the Town of Arbor Vitae. This transport/corporate airport is intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft used in regional service, and small airplanes (piston or turboprop) used in commuter air service.

Total aviation operations (take-offs and landings) at Lakeland Airport are projected to remain stable around 21,090 per year through 2010, then by 2020 the amount of operations will increase to 21,510. The airport is served by a full service fixed base operator and includes single hangars, multi-unit T-hangars, and a terminal building.

The Three Lakes Municipal Airport has a lighted grass runway but is closed in the winter. This facility is classified as a basic utility airport for smaller aircraft. Aviation operations are projected to remain stable around 2,000 per year through 2020.

There are a number of private landing strips and heliports located throughout the County.

F. Water Transportation

There are no harbors or ports within Oneida County, so there is no significant water transport of passengers or freight. Today, tubing, boating and sailing are popular forms of recreational transportation in and around Oneida County. Oneida has more than 830 miles of navigable streams and rivers.

G. Other Modes Of Travel

There is significant use of a variety of miscellaneous other vehicles within Oneida County including snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), horses, cross-country skis, and others. For the most part, however, these forms of travel are not recognized as modes of transportation, but rather as forms of recreation. As such, these alternative forms of travel will not be addressed extensively in the transportation element. However, it is important to be aware of interactions between recreational forms of travel and more traditional transportation systems. For example, snowmobiles have an extensive network of their own trail routes that often parallel or cross public highways. A snowmobile trail may compete against a bike trail for the same right-of-way. Although snowmobile and bicycle trails can easily coexist, fundamental differences often keep the interests at odds.

4.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goal 1:

To provide an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens, while maintaining the rural character of the County.

Investigate implementation of policies which can help enhance, encourage, and maintain the viability of the airport for passenger, freight and private use.

Objectives:

1. Maintain the efficiency, safety and functionality of the County's existing transportation system, which links the urban center with outlying towns, adjacent communities and the region.
2. Encourage a balanced transportation network that provides a choice in the type of mode (i.e. car, bus, bike, walking, etc.) easy transfer between modes and transportation opportunities for those without use of an automobile.
3. Achieve close coordination between development of transportation facilities and land use planning, land development and rural character preservation.
4. Preserve the scenic value along select roadways to enhance and protect the County's rural character.
5. Minimize the negative impacts of proposed transportation facility expansions.

Policies:

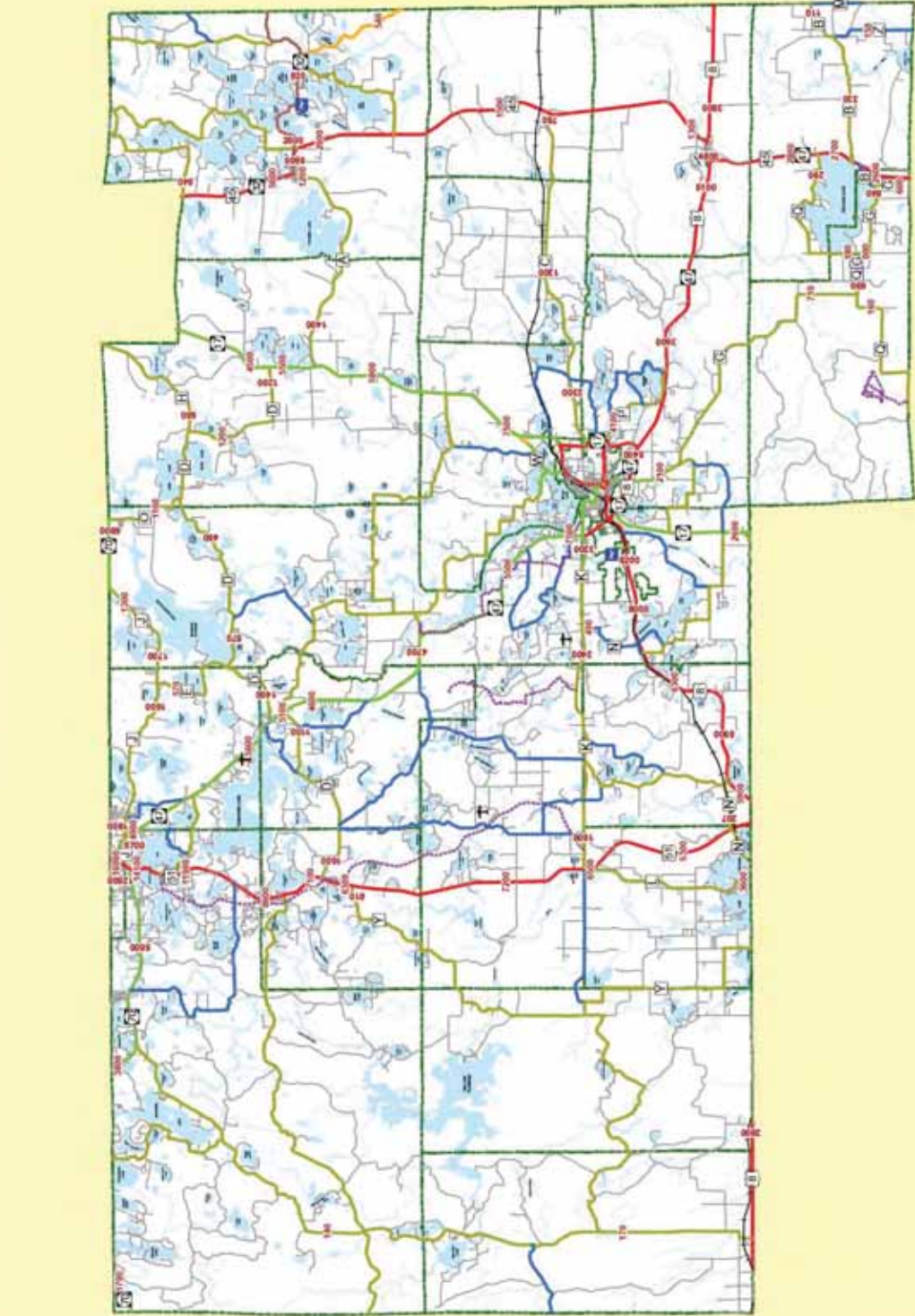
1. Work with the Department of Transportation (WisDOT), the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRCP) or private Engineering Firms to ensure that the County's transportation system is coordinated with surrounding regional systems and that the County's interests are well served when major transportation facilities or programs are proposed.
2. Work with WisDOT on corridor preservation for all federal and state highways.

3. Plan for extension of County highways and other major arterials as necessary to complete connections, provide for appropriate routes for trucks and emergency vehicles and serve planned development areas.
4. Preserve scenic views by limiting off-premise advertising along selected highways.
5. Consider future road locations, extensions, or connections when reviewing development plans and proposals.
6. Work with local governmental units to plan for a network of interconnected roads in planned development areas to control highway access, preserve rural character, and improve access to these areas.
7. Space roadway access according to minimum standards to increase safety and preserve capacity.
8. Consider upgrading where land uses generate heavy traffic on roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use, including seasonal uses.
9. Because commercial and residential development increases traffic on roads, the county should consider assisting towns with implementing road impact fees for new development projects that place a burden on or require upgrading of town roads.
10. Work with towns to update and implement Town Roadway Management Plans to provide for the appropriate maintenance of town roads.
11. Encourage traditional neighborhood designs (TND) to support a range of transportation choices.
12. Support coordination and consolidation of specialized transit by a variety of agencies that serve the County's elderly and handicapped residents.
13. Support the development of a tri-county transit system with Forest and Vilas counties.
14. Support implementation of a County park-and-ride plan and establishment of park-and-ride lots.
15. Continue support of the Rhinelander / Oneida County Airport.
16. Support the Oneida County Biking and Walking Trails Council bike route and trail plan and subsequent updates.

May 17, 2013

17. Support expanded bike accommodations on County Highways with resurfacing/reconstruction projects and additional off-road bike trails.
18. Continue to encourage Canadian National (CN) Railroad to maintain quality rail service to Oneida County and the City of Rhineland.

DRAFT



Legend

- Air Strip
- Airport
- Bike / Hiking Trails
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Collector
- Local Roads
- Railroads
- Civil Division Boundaries
- Water



Source: WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCRWSPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



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Legend

- Civil Division Boundaries
- Water
- US Highways
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Lakeland Senior Center
- Opportunities Unlimited
- Headwaters Inc
- Oneida County



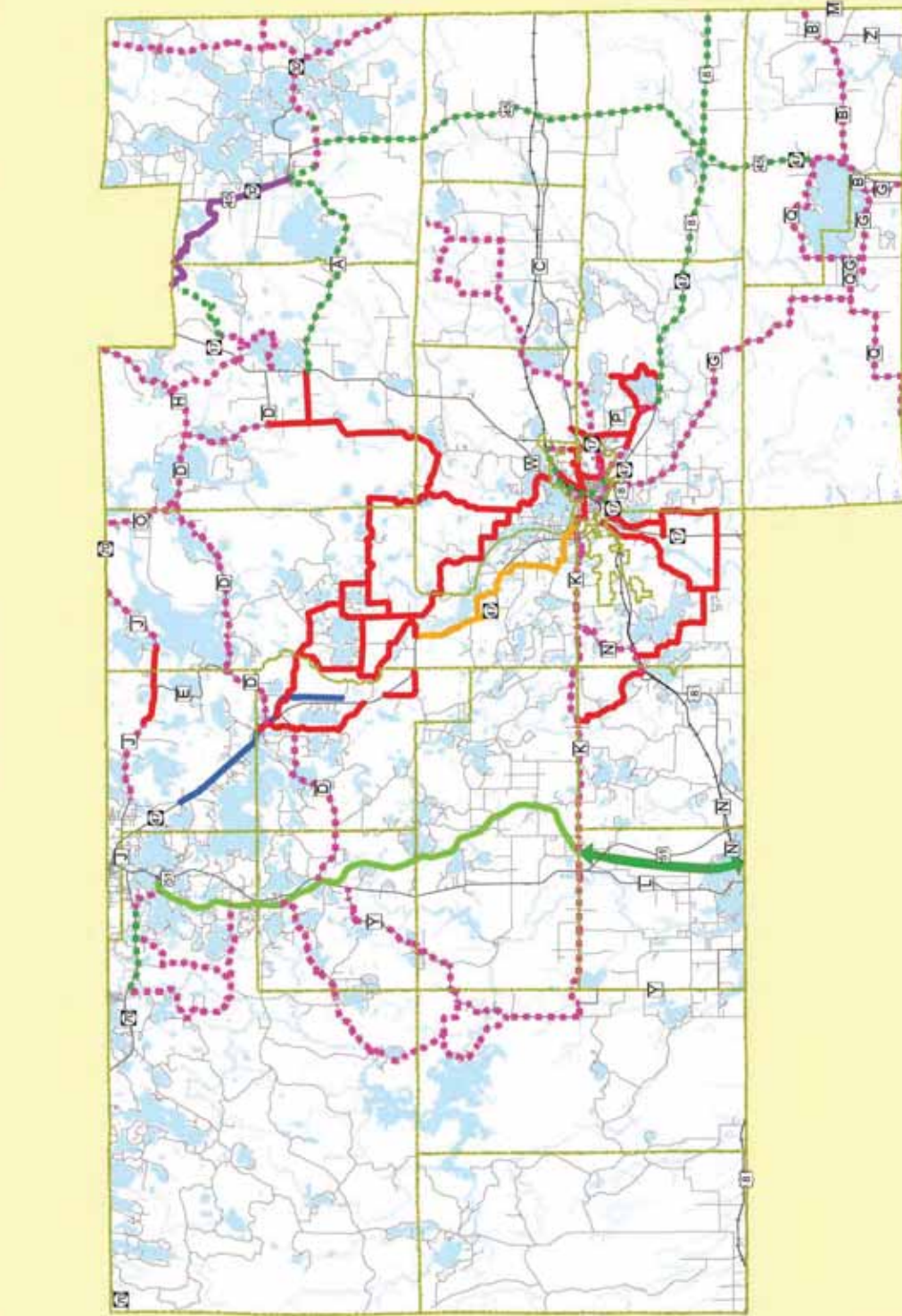
Source: WI DNR, NCRWSPC, WI DOT

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Legend

- Civil Division Boundaries
- US Highways
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Bearskin Trail
- Existing Off Road Trail
- Newbold Trail
- On Road Trails
- Three Eagle Trail
- Proposed Off Road
- Proposed On Road Trails



Source: WISNR, NCRWRPC, WISDOT

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Element 5: Utilities & Community Facilities

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- B. Issues

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- A. Water-related Facilities
- B. Solid Waste & Recycling Facilities
- C. Public Works
- D. Public Safety
- E. Health Care
- F. Education, Recreation & Culture
- G. Energy & Telecommunication

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Maps:

- Map 5-1: Recreational System
- Map 5-2: Surface Water & Dams
- Map 5-3: Community Facilities
- Map 5-4: Fire Service
- Map 5-5: School Districts
- Map 5-6: Utilities

5.1 Background

This is the fifth of nine elements that comprise the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan. This element is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local government unit such as sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other government facilities.” The future of development in Oneida County depends upon plans and policies of the communities within the county. These plans and policies are defined by the expressed desires of the community. Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Legislation establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, two relate directly to this element. These goals are:

- 1) Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential commercial and industrial structures.
- 2) Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Although these components are separated, they are all interrelated. For example, the pattern of land use affects the delivery of public services, as does the shape of the transportation network. The condition of groundwater as a natural resource also determines the quality of the County’s most basic utility: the water that residents drink. The economic development strategies adopted by the County affect how land is used and the kind of community facilities that local governments can provide. As a result of this connectivity, the information provided by this chapter is referenced in other parts of the plan where connections exist. This chapter will focus on describing these public services and facilities in detail and identifying the goals, objectives and policies intended to protect and utilize these resources in a responsible and efficient manner.

A. Previous Studies

1. Oneida County Land & Water Resource Plan

This plan was prepared in 2006 to meet the State requirement to create a land and water resource management planning process. An update is in process currently and is expected to be complete by the end of 2011.

The plan consists of an overview of the land and water resource management plan, performance standards and prohibitions, land and water resource management concepts, as well as issues more particular to Oneida County. The condition of Slaughterhouse Creek, adjacent to the former City of Rhinelander landfill, is the sole water body listed as impaired by factors other than atmospheric mercury.

Because of the degree to which Oneida County is dependent on natural resources, both in terms of forestry and tourism, the quality of surface water is especially important, as the plan describes it:

“The DNR describes Oneida County as having excellent watershed characteristics as a result of a high percentage of land in forest cover. Oneida County contains approximately 68,447 acres of surface water. One of the highest concentrations of natural lakes in the world is found in Oneida County along with Vilas County to the north. In Oneida County alone there are 428 named lakes with a total of 66,391 acres and 701 unnamed lakes for a total of 2,056... The County also contains 830 miles of streams, of which about 192 miles are classified as trout streams.”

Beyond the value of surface water as an attraction or amenity it has an inter-relationship with the quality of groundwater, the primary source of drinking water to the majority of the counties rural residents, and thus perhaps the most important “utility” in the county.

2. Waters of Wisconsin: The Future of Our Aquatic Ecosystems and Resources

This report is the product of a yearlong effort involving State agencies and private groups to emphasize the importance of water in the state. It looks at a broad range of issues involving water quality including storm water runoff, land-use, and transportation. One of the major findings in the report is the need for policy adjustment regarding the protection of groundwater and surface water.

“The ‘buried treasure’ of groundwater is simply indispensable to life on the ‘surface’ of Wisconsin. Groundwater connects to and feeds our wetlands, streams, and lakes; supplies water to 750,000 private wells and 97% of Wisconsin’s municipalities; supports farming across the state, including more than 340,000 acres of irrigated land; and contributes in countless ways to Wisconsin’s commercial, industrial, and recreational economy.”

The residents of Oneida County have a heavy reliance on groundwater for drinking water. This makes it especially important to implement policies that will ensure the quality and quantity of water resources.

3. Regional Comprehensive Plan: A Framework for the Future, 2002 – 2020

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) entitled “A Framework for the Future” was adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in December of 2003. It is an update of a plan adopted by NCWRPC in 1981. The RCP discusses utility and community facility issues throughout the ten-county North Central Region. The RCP focuses on a range of trends in public facilities and makes general recommendations on how local governments throughout the ten-county region should deal with them.

4. Oneida County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan

This document is currently being prepared by a committee in response to the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, which requires local governments to adopt such a plan to be eligible for certain disaster mitigation programs. The report looks at general conditions in Oneida County, including population, transportation, land use and economics. A detailed description of the county’s wetlands, floodplains and water bodies sets the stage for subsequent discussions of flooding events. An inventory of utilities, community facilities and emergency services form the background for understanding how the County might respond to a disaster.

Risk assessment is at the heart of the All-Hazards Mitigation program. In order to mitigate the risks, it’s necessary to assess their relative importance. The report reviews mostly weather-related disasters and how they have affected the county in the past. Examples of hazards include floods, tornadoes, winter storms, drought, fire, and hazardous materials accidents. The likelihood of any given hazard occurring is estimated based upon historical data and the impact of these hazards is evaluated. The plan seeks to recommend how County government should respond to such occurrences and suggests mitigation measures to reduce the risk caused by identified hazards.

Oneida County has created an *Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)* to coordinate the County and local units of government during times of response and recovery. The EOP provides a general guide for County and municipal emergency response personnel when responding to disasters and links the County and municipal emergency operations plans.

5. City of Rhinelander, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan

This report was prepared for the City of Rhinelander by NCWRPC to satisfy the requirements of the State Comprehensive Planning statutes in 2008. It contains the nine required elements, including a section on Utilities & Community Facilities. The Plan is particularly useful for the information it provides about public facilities and services within the city.

6. Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), 2005-2010

Completed in August 2006, this plan attempts to classify, measure, and ultimately provide for the preferences and needs of a statewide recreating public. Many factors, from changing demographic and land use trends, to recreational supply, and conflict with other recreation uses, affect the quality, supply, and demand for outdoor recreation.

7. State Trails Network Plan

This 2001 document clarifies the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) role and strategy in the provision of all types of trails. The plan identifies a series of potential trail corridors that would link existing trails, public lands, natural features, and communities. This statewide network of interconnected trails would be owned and maintained by municipalities, private entities, and partnerships of the two. Preserving transportation corridors, such as old rail lines, is specifically discussed as a very important strategy in the creation of recreational and alternative transportation corridors.

Segment 15—Ashland to Rhinelander

This potential trail would connect Ashland with Woodruff, Minocqua, Rhinelander, and finally to Crandon. From Woodruff/Minocqua, an old abandoned rail corridor near the route of State Highway 47 may possibly provide the opportunity to connect the City of Rhinelander. If the rail corridor is not intact, it may be feasible to use roadways and existing trails, since the northern half of the route is through the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest.

Segment 19—Langlade Co to Michigan

This abandoned rail corridor links the State of Michigan with the Mountain Bay Trail near Eland in Marathon County. It passes through a few state wildlife areas and some county forests. This corridor also links to the proposed Three Lakes to Rhinelander and Crandon to Tomahawk abandoned rail corridors in Oneida County.

Segment 68—Rhinelanders to Three Lakes

This abandoned rail corridor would link these two communities by an off-road connection. At Rhinelanders, links to the Washburn to Fond du Lac corridor, and at Three Lakes links to the Langlade County to Michigan corridor are possible. Significant bike trail interest has occurred in Oneida County. Strong support can be expected for this connector trail.

Segment 69—Tomahawk to Crandon

This abandoned corridor would link these two communities by an off-road connector. This corridor intersects the Langlade County to Michigan corridor at Pelican Lake and links the Argonne to Shawano corridor in the east with the Tomahawk to Wausau corridor in the west.

8. Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridor Plan

In 2002 Healthy People, Healthy Oneida County and the Oneida County Health Department engaged NCWRPC to prepare a corridor plan “to increase the mobility of people within the County by making walking and bicycling viable and attractive transportation choices.”

The Plan identifies fifteen possible trail routes, including loops at Crescent Lake near Rhinelanders and the Willow Reservoir, connections between the existing Bearskin Trail and Rhinelanders, between Rhinelanders and Woodruff, and Rhinelanders and Three Lakes, as well as trails along Highways 8 and 45. Maps of proposed corridors were distributed to every Town in the county, three public hearings were held and surveys distributed. Strong support (98%) was voiced for the trail planning process. A large majority of respondents (73%) said they used the Bearskin Trail.

The Plan concludes with recommended implementation strategies for how a County Trail Plan might be made a reality. Grant money should be sought to the degree possible, but “The success of this effort is contingent on support of the private sector and the cooperation and coordination of the various municipalities affected by the project...By working together, the public and private sectors can build a *healthier Oneida County*.” This plan is currently in the process of being revised and updated.

9. North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan, 2004

This 2004 document is intended to guide the development of an interconnected bikeway system for the North Central Wisconsin Region. Potential trails are identified and an improvement description, created by each county that trails existed in, to facilitate how the plan can become reality cost effectively.

Oneida County trails within this regional plan come from the 2002 Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridor Plan. That plan established a network of on-road bike routes that conform to the recommendations made in the Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridor Plan. These trails are shown on Map 5-1.

10. Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2007-2011

The primary purpose of this recreation plan is to provide continued direction in meeting the current and future recreation needs of the County. This direction takes the form of an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities followed by establishing recommendations to meet identified needs. Adoption of this plan and its subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) allows for continued eligibility for financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON), the Stewardship Fund, and many other federal and state funding programs. The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission prepared the plan for the Oneida County Forestry, Land and Outdoor Recreation Department.

11. Rural Areas and the Internet

This report is based on survey data collected by the Pew Internet & American Life Project. It seeks to provide a portrait of how the Internet has impacted rural areas, and how that impact differs from impacts in suburban and urban areas. Many of the differences identified conform to the differences in the demographic profiles of urban, suburban and rural areas. Populations in rural areas generally are older, less well educated, and have generally lower incomes than in urban or suburban areas. These are characteristics that generally correlate to lower rates of Internet usage; and usage is lower in rural areas. Thus in part, lower rates of Internet usage in rural areas may simply be a reflection of demographic differences in rural areas.

More substantive differences in access to the Internet are reflected in the fact that nearly thirty percent of rural residents said they had access to only one local ISP against less than ten percent in urban and suburban areas. A quarter of rural residents said they lacked broadband access against five percent of urban residents and eleven percent nationally. Significantly eight percent of rural users have Internet access only at a

place other than their home or workplace, such as a library or cyber-cafe. Also of interest is the fact that for low-income residents (household income below \$10,000/year) Internet use is notably higher among those over 50 and lower among those under 29 than in either suburban or urban areas.

Several differences in the way rural residents utilize the Internet illustrate important patterns that may show deeper trends in how Internet usage differs from urban/suburban areas. Rural residents who have been on-line for at least three years are ten percent more likely to be satisfied with technology. They are less likely to be involved in a range of on-line transactions including, travel reservations, car buying, on-line banking, financial or job-related research, or look for a job or a place to live. They are more likely to seek out religious or spiritual information, play games, do instant messaging, or look for health information. This may speak to a preference among rural people to stick with face-to-face transaction where they are available. More importantly it may speak to the way that the Internet can serve to expand the access of rural residents to the larger world. This is best illustrated by the fact that the "on-line community" of an urban or suburban user is twice as likely to be within the local community. Over half of rural Internet users say their on-line group is "all over the country". Ten percent more rural than urban/suburban users describe the Internet as "more useful for becoming involved in things going on outside their local community."

12. Status of Investments in Advanced Telecommunication Infrastructure in Wisconsin, 2008

This is the sixth biennial report to the Legislature as required under Wis. Stat. §196.196(5)(f). The report contains updated information and reviews new services and technologies related to the deployment of and investment in telecommunications infrastructure throughout the state. This report also comments on the use of advanced telecommunications infrastructure for distance learning, libraries and access to health care. A new section has been added that outlines Wireless E911 grant activities.

The Commission believes that the evidence suggests that the telecommunications network is no longer a significant limiting factor for the improvement of distance learning, interconnection of libraries, access to health care and services to persons with disabilities. Although there are some areas of the state where broadband for these purposes is still limited, the most significant limiting factors are the ability of customers to pay for services, the ability of advanced service providers to recover costs for providing service and the development of equipment that will allow individuals in the home to use the telecommunications infrastructure.

The Internet has become the medium of choice for distance education programs for higher education so there is less reliance on dedicated high-speed networks. Nearly all libraries have access to the Internet and growth continues in the number of libraries with high-speed dedicated access.

For individuals with disabilities, the focus remains on the development of assistive technologies that enable the more effective use of telecommunications infrastructure by improving access to computers, web pages and Internet connections.

In assessing the current state of telecommunication facilities in the report looks at the most current available figures and concludes:

“Many companies have invested in fiber and provide innovative services...In addition, a state program was recently launched to assist in deployment...Nine companies were granted tax credits and exemptions in this program to help spur broadband deployment in rural Wisconsin” (p. 3)

13. American Transmission Company: 10 Year Transmission System Assessment

The American Transmission Company was created in 1998 by a consortium of Wisconsin electric utility companies to own and manage transmission infrastructure in the state. Among the key findings of significance to Oneida County are those concerning what is known as the Rhinelander Loop, serving Oneida County and the Eagle River area:

“The Rhinelander Loop will require additional interconnections to other portions of the system in order to reliably serve load in the future. Interim measures are needed to avert overloads, low voltages, and voltage collapse.” (p 46)

The plan shows the entire 115kV line of the Rhinelander Loop and the lines that connect to it at Venus near Monico and Highway 8 west of Rhinelander, to be Transmission System Limiters, and the line from the Highway 8 transformer in Rhinelander to Skanawan in Lincoln County to be overloaded. All seven transformers on the Rhinelander Loop are described as Low Voltage, and several, including some in the Minocqua-Woodruff area.

Listed as a Conceptual Plan, is a two-phase improvement to address these shortcomings. Phase 1 is to construct a new 138 kV line between Cranberry (near Eagle River) and Conover where it will connect to an upgrade 138 kV line to Plains in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Phase 2 calls for the Dead River-Plains-Venus-Weston line, which would

upgrade the existing 115kV line that connects to the Rhinelander Loop at Highway 8 to 345kV. These projects would, "improve generator stability at Weston and at Presque Isle, increase transfer capability between the Upper Peninsula and Wisconsin...and provide a long-term solution for the Rhinelander Loop." (p. 96)

B. Issues

- Groundwater Protection

Virtually every Oneida County resident depends on groundwater for drinking water. A combination of factors makes the county's groundwater an important resource. One of the major threats to groundwater quality is the number of septic systems that have reached, or are about to reach, the end of their useful life. A program to replace or update these systems is an important step that could be taken to safeguard the quality of drinking water in the county. Malfunctioning or older septic systems in large numbers can overload this natural filtration system and contaminate the underground drinking water aquifers. Because of the central role of groundwater in meeting the drinking water needs of county residents great care must be taken to safeguard the quality of this important resource.

- Recreational Amenities

There are roughly 1,000 miles of snowmobile trails, 26 miles of ATV trails, about 40 miles of hike and bike trails, and 39 miles of cross-country ski trails. These assets, along with 1,129 lakes covering 68,447 acres, and over 830 miles of streams, of which 192 miles are classified as trout streams, and nearly 179,000 acres of public lands all form a basis for the county's visitor appeal, but they also offer a significant amenity to the people who make Oneida County their home. There has been recent attention to the effects of the sedentary lifestyle on the health of Americans. Obesity has been described as an epidemic. One of the more obvious prescriptions for this condition is to get out and walk more or ride a bike. Development of a countywide trail system would offer county residents and visitors an attractive way get their exercise.

- Access to Broadband

Internet access is the key to the information economy. Having the broadband access that is necessary to do business over the Internet will be a significant factor in Oneida County's economic viability in the future. This need has recently received a boost from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that sets aside \$7.2 billion for the

development of broadband Internet, especially in rural areas. As it becomes a more realistic possibility for some individuals to do business over the Internet this kind of information infrastructure, especially in an amenity rich environment like Oneida County, is an important part of building an economic future for the county.

- Needs of an Aging Population

Oneida County's increasing aging population puts special burdens on the infrastructure in the county, especially the health-care system. As noted in the Housing Element, there are special services that can help seniors stay in their homes as they age and to avoid more expensive institutional care. The quality and availability of hospitals, nursing homes, and EMS facilities are of particular concern to older residents. Accessibility of public facilities is a consideration not merely to the disabled, but to the entire aging population. For example, curb cuts and handicap accessible ramps make it easier for everyone to get around. Social support networks and nutrition programs also provide a fuller and richer life for seniors and special needs populations.

5.2 Inventory & Trends

A. Water-related Facilities

1. Drinking water

The City of Rhinelander, Lake Tomahawk, the Lakeland Sanitary District encompassing the parts of the Towns of Minocqua, Woodruff and Arbor Vitae in Vilas County, and the Three Lakes Sanitary District #1 provide water supplies for domestic and commercial use to the town centers. See Map 5-3

The City of Rhinelander maintains four high capacity wells, three large water towers, for a combined storage capacity of roughly 1,000,000 gallons, and a 1,250,000 gallons underground reservoir. The City has a wellhead protection plan and has incorporated it into its zoning ordinance. There are also 184 high-capacity wells licensed in the county.

The City's water distribution system serves most of the City. The distribution system is made-up of 66 miles of water mains ranging from 4-inches to 16-inches in size.

Three Lakes Sanitary District #1 provided water service to the town center and adjoining area. The District maintains two wells, capable of producing 510 gallons/minute. There is a single storage tower with a

capacity of 150,000 gallons, although it is usually kept at about half that. The system operates with about five miles of pipe in the village area of the town.

The Lakeland Sanitary District operates three high-volume wells capable of pumping up to 2,100 gallons/minute. It has two storage towers, with capacities of 300,000 gallons and 75,000 gallons, and roughly 18.5 miles of water pipes.

2. Wastewater

A municipal wastewater treatment facility serving the city of Rhinelander is located on the south side of the city along the Wisconsin River. Wastewater treatment facilities serve the Lakeland Sanitary District #1, the Lake Tomahawk Sanitary District, and the Three Lakes Sanitary Districts #1 & #2. See Map 5-3.

The original city of Rhinelander wastewater treatment plant was constructed in 1938 and provided primary treatment for an average daily flow of 1.50 million gallons per day. The anaerobic digesters were modified in 1960 to provide better digestion. In 1976-77, additions to the existing facilities were constructed to provide secondary treatment for an average flow of 1.86 million gallons per day. In the mid-1980's, new rotating biological contactors (RBC) were installed. In 1995-96, secondary treatment was changed from the RBC method of treatment to the trickling filtering system and a solids handling/sludge storage facility was added to the site.

The Rhinelander Wastewater Treatment Plant is located within the city limits of Rhinelander on Hwy 17 S on the Wisconsin River. The plant has a 1.86 million gallons per day dry weather flow capacity and a wet weather flow capacity of 4.0 million gallons per day. The plant serves a residential population of over 8,100 as well as numerous industrial and commercial customers. The Wastewater Utility is in the process of construction of a new wastewater treatment facility south of the City adjacent to Highway 17. The new facility is scheduled to be in service by July 2012.

The Wastewater Utility also owns and maintains the sanitary sewer system, which consists of more than 60 miles of collection and trunk sewers, and twenty lift stations, which feed several miles of force mains

The Lakeland Sanitary District recently upgraded its treatment plant and is expected to meet the needs of the community for twenty years. It has a treatment capacity of 750,000 gallons/day, and currently operates at

about 50 percent of that capacity. There are 19 miles of sewers within the District.

Three Lakes Sanitary District #1 operates a treatment plant originally built in 1958 and upgraded in 1970 to a capacity of 131,000 gallons/day. The plant was recently reassessed to be operating at about 67 percent of capacity (about 40,000 gallons/day). The district maintains roughly five miles of sewer pipes.

Three Lakes Sanitary District #2 was created in 2005 during the construction of the New Northernnaire. The re-circulating sand/gravel filter system was designed to accommodate the New Northernnaire condominiums and single detached homes. Owned and maintained by the New Northernnaire, although in the event that the condominium association is unable to maintain service ownership will revert to the Town of Three Lakes.

The Lake Tomahawk Sanitary District #1 has a treatment plant, built in 1999, with a capacity of 57,000 gallons/day that currently operates at roughly 50 percent of capacity. The District maintains 14.3 miles of sewer pipes.

In Oneida County, a combination of County and state regulations control the installation and maintenance of privately owned wastewater disposal systems (POWTS). Traditionally on-site disposal systems have relied on drain-fields or mounds that spread effluent over a large area allowing waste to be dispersed without adversely affecting groundwater quality. The success of these systems is dependent on the depth and permeability of the soils in which they are installed.

In 1999 the Department of Commerce proposed a revision of the plumbing standards under which POWTS were regulated (COMM 83). Unlike the old code, the new rules prescribed criteria for end results, or the required degree of purity for water discharged from the system, in addition to the specific characteristics regarding installation. A number of newer technologies that were not as dependent on soil depth and percolation characteristics were approved for use as part of this revision. Although these technologies had been in use in other states they were not permitted in Wisconsin.

Soil suitability characteristics in Oneida County vary widely for installation of POWTS. A portion of land in the county holds severe limitations for these systems. A severe rating usually indicates that the soils are not desirable for the operation of a soil absorption system because of poor soil permeability, high water tables, periodic flooding, shallow depth to bedrock, and steep slopes. When these conditions

prevail, the area is unsuitable for development that utilizes septic tanks for wastewater disposal. The Wisconsin Fund offers financial assistance to homeowners who meet financial criteria to replace failed septic systems.

3. Stormwater

The majority of Rhinelander is currently served by the City's concrete pipe storm sewer system. There is some stormwater coverage in Lake Tomahawk and about 35 percent of the village area in Three Lakes has storm sewers. In the built-up, Minocqua-Woodruff area all of the "island" area and along the major highways (51,47 & 70) is served by storm sewers, so that a considerable portion of the urbanized areas are covered.

4. Dams

There are 42 dams in Oneida County. Twenty of these dams are described as large, and 22 are small. Fourteen dams are owned by utilities, eleven are privately owned, two are owned by the County, nine by Towns, and three are owned by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). See Map 5-2.

B. Solid Waste & Recycling Facilities

The City of Rhinelander contracts with a private firm to operate a weekly curbside pick-up of solid waste, recycling, for residents. The city provides a 35-gallon cart or 52 stickers and a recycling bin to all single, duplex and triplex dwellings; 65-gallon and 95-gallon carts are also available for an additional charge. Brush and leaf pick-up occurs every spring and fall. About 1,800 tons of solid waste is hauled to the Lincoln County Landfill annually.

Although the Oneida County Landfill, located in the Town of Woodboro, no longer has active land filling, the site still handles disposal, recycling, and composting of waste within Oneida County. Waste collected at the site is hauled out of the county by a private firm, under contract with the County. There is a small demolition waste area on site. There are no current plans to reopen/expand landfilling operations. But the Waste Department will always be researching alternate ways to dispose of Oneida County solid waste.

Most of the Towns have abandoned town dumps, closed during the 1980s. Some Towns, such as Three Lakes, have transfer stations at these abandoned dump sites where residents can drop off their garbage and recycling.

In 1990, the state passed a Solid Waste Reduction, Recovery and Recycling Law. One of the primary purposes of the law was to encourage recycling. Unlike solid waste that is land filled, recycled material has an economic market value. Recyclable materials will continue to be sold as long as markets exist.

C. Public Works

1. Town Halls & Garages

Each Town and the City of Rhinelander have a public building used for government meetings and other public gatherings. Adjacent to most of these buildings are garages for the storage of road maintenance equipment as well as firefighting equipment in several cases.

See Map 5-3

2. Cemeteries

Cemeteries serve as unique and tangible links to our past. There are fifteen cemeteries located throughout the county. Many of the existing cemeteries have substantial capacity and there are many undeveloped areas throughout the County suitable for new cemeteries.

D. Public Safety

1. Sheriff/Police

The Wisconsin State Patrol, the Oneida County Sheriff's Department, and the City of Rhinelander and Towns of Minocqua, Woodruff, and Three Lakes Police Departments are the six law enforcement agencies that operate within Oneida County.

The State Patrol has statewide jurisdiction on all public roads but operates mainly on State and U.S. numbered highways as a matter of general practice. The Wisconsin State Patrol, located in Wausau, has statewide jurisdiction on all public roads but operates mainly on State and U.S. highways as a matter of general practice to enforce traffic and criminal laws, and help motorists in need. They also help local law enforcement by reconstructing traffic accidents; inspecting trucks, school buses, and ambulances; and helping local agencies with natural disasters and civil disturbances.

The Rhinelander Police Department consists of the Chief of Police, Captain of Police and the Chief's Administrative Assistant, nine full-time Patrol Officers and four full-time Patrol Sergeants, two full-time Detective Sergeants and one full-time Drug Investigator. Rhinelander is served by

an enhanced 911 (E911) emergency response system that is operated by a consolidated Dispatch Center located at the Oneida County Sheriff's Department.

Police protection in the Town of Minocqua is provided by the Minocqua Police Department with eight patrol officers. In addition to its chief the Department also has a lieutenant, patrol sergeant, boat patrol (jointly operated with Woodruff) and parking officers, as well as a team of dispatchers and administrative staff. Minocqua maintains a 24-hour, 7-days a week, fully staffed Dispatch Center.

The Town of Woodruff has a police department with five full-time and three part-time officers, and an administrative secretary. Woodruff also provides space in its Town Office for a full-time Sheriff's deputy, who serves the northwest area of Oneida County.

The Town of Three Lakes Police Department provides police protection in the town. The Department includes a Police Chief and a staff of three full-time and three part-time officers and a part-time secretary.

Historically, the rural and sparsely settled areas of Oneida County have needed minimal police service. However, as development increases there may be increased demand for law enforcement services. The County Sheriff provides general law enforcement services throughout the County.

The Oneida County Sheriff's Department, located on the east side of Rhinelander just off of STH 17, provides service to all the towns and the City of Rhinelander in Oneida County for law enforcement.

The Oneida County Sheriff's Department maintains 14 full-time telecommunicators in our state-of-the-art communications center. The Enhanced 911 Center provides dispatch services for one full time fire department, sixteen volunteer fire departments, three ambulance services, nine first responder groups, one City police department and three Town police departments.

The Investigative Division of the Oneida County Sheriff's Department consists of five full time Detective Sergeants and is supervised by a Lieutenant of Detectives. In addition, the Investigative Division includes special assignments to two Detective Sergeants who manage the Drug Enforcement Unit and the Police-School Liaison Unit.

The Patrol Division is responsible for all initial investigations, crash investigations, and handling most calls for service. Other specialized functions include DARE, Crime Prevention, Recreational Patrol, Police School Liaison, a dive team, and HAZMAT/Bomb Technician duties.

2. Fire

Fire protection services in Oneida County are provided by volunteer fire departments in a complex pattern with mutual aid assistance agreements between Towns. There are sixteen volunteer fire departments located in Oneida County that serve the local units of government: Cassian, Crescent, Hazelhurst, Lake Pelican (Enterprise & Schoepke), Lake Tomahawk, Little Rice, Lynne, Minocqua, Monico, Newbold, Nokomis, Pine Lake, Pelican, Sugar Camp, Stella-Piehl, Three Lakes, and Woodruff. The City of Rhinelander, is a paid full-time fire department, while the remainder of the departments rely on volunteers for this service. There are two joint departments: Stella-Piehl and Pelican Lake (Enterprise & Schoepke), and one Town (Woodboro) contracts for services from neighboring Towns (Cassian & Crescent). See Map 5-4.

The Rhinelander Fire Department has a Fire Chief, and a crew of 18. There are six persons on three 24-hour shift rotations. Seventeen of the crew are nationally registered Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). Three, including the Chief are EMT instructors as well as having 4 certified fire instructors. The inspection department has an administrative assistant. The Department is also part of the Oneida County HAZ-MAT Team and Wisconsin State Task Force 4 for structural collapse.

3. Jail

The Oneida County Jail is a 200 bed, state of the art facility that was completed in July 1999. The pod design allows staff to visually observe the inmate population 24 hours per day. In addition to housing its own inmates, the Oneida County Jail houses approximately fifty inmates from the Wisconsin Prison System.

4. Emergency Medical Service (EMS)

Some Townships provide first responders service to the Community. The City of Rhinelander provides ambulance service for the City of Rhinelander.

Oneida County provides a countywide ambulance service. The Oneida County ambulance service consists of nine ambulances located throughout the County.

Oneida County contracts with Saint Mary's Hospital and Howard Young Medical Center to provide EMT-Paramedic personnel to staff the ambulances. Each hospital staffs a first out ambulance at a paramedic level. Two additional ambulances are located at the hospitals, staffed by paid on-call personnel. Four outlying ambulances are located in Sugar

Camp, Three Lakes, Nokomis, and Pelican Lake. These ambulances are staffed with paid on-call personnel funded by the individual municipality. Three ambulances are based at Howard Young Medical Center to serve Minocqua and surrounding area. See Map 5-3.

E. Health Care

Saint Mary's Hospital, affiliated with Ministry Health Care, is located in a 238,460 square-foot medical campus is a combined hospital and clinic built in 2004, and shared with Ministry Medical Group–Rhinelanders includes:

- Comprehensive Birthing Center and Women's Imaging Services;
- Five state-of-the-art surgical suites and three surgical procedure rooms; and
- Cancer Center equipped with the latest technology available in medical and radiation oncology.

Saint Mary's Hospital has had a presence in Rhinelanders since 1896.

A variety of specialized medical and dental clinics are also located throughout the city, including a new Aspirus Clinic.

Howard Young Medical Center is located in Woodruff. This Hospital facility provides 24-hour emergency service and critical care.

There are a number of clinics in Rhinelanders, Three Lakes, Minocqua and Woodruff that provide medical care, as well as several independent doctors' offices.

There are a range of senior services available in the county as well. There are Senior Centers in Rhinelanders (operated by the County Department on Aging) and in Woodruff, as well as eight dining sites throughout the county.

There are two nursing homes in Rhinelanders and one in Woodruff with a total capacity of over 200, as well as several in surrounding communities (Tomahawk, Crandon and Phelps). A Residential Care Apartment Complex (RCAC) is a residential facility that offers a 24-hour on-site attendant, along with a number of services such as aid with medications and personal care. There are twelve RCAC facilities in the county, six in Rhinelanders with a total of 232 units, five in Minocqua-Woodruff with 144 units, and one 24-unit facility in Three Lakes. Community Based Residential Facilities (CBRF) offer round the clock care and a level of services that is greater than an RCAC but less than a nursing home. There are nine CBRFs in the county, five in Rhinelanders with a capacity

of 74, on facility, capacity 16, in Lake Tomahawk, and four facilities with a capacity of 75 in Minocqua-Woodruff.

F. Education, Recreation & Culture

1. Libraries

The City's public library opened in 1898. The Rhinelander District Library (RDL) is a member of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS), a seven county cooperative public library system. RDL is also a member of V-Cat, a shared information system administered by WVLS that provides local library users with direct access to over one million items in the collections of thirty-one system members. Additionally, access to library materials from throughout the state and nation is available via the statewide interlibrary loan network.

The RDL serves the residents of the City of Rhinelander and the adjacent Towns of Crescent, Newbold, Pelican, and Pine Lake, as well as the entire county. In 2005 it was named Library of the Year by the Wisconsin Library Association for exemplifying how comprehensive quality library programs and services positively impact people at all ages and stages of life.

In 2006, the library collection contained over 75,000 titles and nearly 90,000 holdings in many formats, including books, magazines, large-print, audio-books, microfilm, videocassettes, DVDs, and music CDs. Special collections include art history, genealogy, pre-school education kits and parenting materials. Public Internet access includes wireless capability.

The Edward U. Demmer Memorial Library serves Three Lakes, and surrounding towns. The library provides a wide range of material and services including, a Local History Room, children's activities, lending from the Wisconsin Valley Library Service, books, CDs, DVDs and videos, and high-speed Internet access and wireless service, and meeting rooms available to the public.

The Minocqua Public Library offers a wide range of services including programs for children and young adults, lending DVDs, CDs and audio books, as well as a complete range of periodical and a collection of 29,500 volumes. Nine computers with broadband Internet connections and three catalogue computers are available, in addition to wireless Internet connections. The Library is part of the Wisconsin Valley Library System.

Nicolet Technical College library is also in Rhinelander. See Map 5-5.

2. Parks, Trails & Natural Areas

Public recreation areas in the county include at least 54 publicly owned access points to lakes in the county. By providing access to water-based recreational opportunities these facilities broaden the range of options available to residents and visitors alike. Recreational facilities are also available on school grounds, including playgrounds, ball diamonds, tennis courts, soccer fields, and basketball hoops. There are a number of such facilities in the county. There are also ten school forests, totaling nearly 2,000 acres, in addition to the more than 82,000 acres of County forests, all open to the public, although some areas are closed to motorized vehicles.

The City of Rhinelander and the Towns of Hazelhurst, Lake Tomahawk, Minocqua, Monico, Newbold, Nokomis, Sugar Camp, and Three Lakes also provide neighborhood and community level recreational facilities for their residents. These facilities provide opportunities for active and passive recreation experiences. There are six parks in Rhinelander, two in Hazelhurst, four in Lake Tomahawk, eight in Minocqua, three in Monico, two each in Newbold, Nokomis and Sugar Camp and three parks in Three Lakes. The Town of Woodruff shares funding of the Brandy Park & Beach located in Arbor Vitae in Vilas County. The County operates six parks and three other areas. The State also manages eighteen natural areas and two wildlife areas that function as public hunting grounds. The DNR also has extensive holdings in the county.

There are several developed trails in the county, including 39-miles of cross-country ski trails, 11.5-miles of snowshoe trails, five miles of mountain bike trails, 214-miles of general purpose motorized trails, 26-miles of ATV trails, and roughly 1,000-miles of snowmobile trails. See the County Outdoor Recreation Plan. See Map 5-1.

3. Schools

The School District of Rhinelander serves all or parts of seven surrounding townships and the City of Rhinelander. During the 2006-07 school year, approximately 2,900 students were enrolled in the three elementary schools, a middle school, a high school, an elementary charter school, a secondary charter school, and a secondary alternative education program.

Rhinelander High School with an enrollment in 2006-07 of approximately 1,100 students, provides over 200 academic courses to help students

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prepare for their continuing education, for entering the work force, and to acquire skills necessary to make a meaningful contribution as citizens in our changing world. In 2006-07 James Williams Middle School had over 600 students in grades six through eight. The district's secondary charter school is also available to middle school level students. The district's three elementary schools enrolled approximately 1015 students in 2007-08. An elementary charter school is available to children in grade K-5 located in the Town of Cassian-Woodboro, and enrolled approximately 110 students in 2007-09.

There are three parochial schools that serve the area:

Nativity of Our Lord Catholic Elementary School

Zion Lutheran Elementary School

Trinity Lutheran School of Minocqua

Seventh Day Adventist

The remainder of the county is served by the seven school districts. The Towns of Enterprise and Schoepke belong to the Elcho School District in Langlade County, which has a K-8 grade school, and a high school. The Town of Minocqua is part of three different school districts including: MHLT (Minocqua, Hazelhurst, Lake Tomahawk) also known as Minocqua J1, Arbor Vitae - Woodruff, and Lakeland Union High School. MHLT Elementary School and Lakeland Union High School are located in Minocqua and have enrollment of about 550 and 890, respectively.

The Town of Lynne is in the Prentice School District and is served by Prentice Elementary and High Schools. The northern section of Newbold is in the Northern Pines School District from St. Germain in Vilas County.

The Three Lakes School District has three school facilities: Sugar Camp and Three Lakes Elementary Schools, and Three Lakes High School. The current enrollment is 607. Enrollment has declined by thirty percent since 2001.

Arbor Vitae - Woodruff is an elementary school district serving children in grades 4K through grade 8 living in the Towns of Arbor Vitae and Woodruff. The District encompasses nearly 130 square miles and has an enrollment of about 600 students.

The Towns of Nokomis and Little Rice are in the Tomahawk School District, which has an elementary, middle and high school serving 1,573

students in 2005 – 595 students in elementary school, 394 in middle school and 546 in high school. See Map 5-5.

Enrollment is declining in many school districts and the trend is projected to continue into the future. Over the coming years, the major issue for these school districts will be to compensate for a shrinking student population while maintaining high-quality education.

Most of the county is in the Nicolet College district. The Nicolet Area Technical College is located just outside of the City of Rhinelander. Nicolet is a public community college serving Northern Wisconsin from its Lake Julia campus south of Rhinelander, from the Lakeland campus in Minocqua, and from other instruction centers located within the Nicolet District. The College offers one- and two-year career diplomas and degrees, liberal arts university transfer studies, and a comprehensive continuing education program. Nicolet currently serves over 1,500 students each semester with offerings in vocational-technical and liberal arts and approximately 10,000 in continuing education, trade extension, and apprenticeship programs.

Created in 1967 as a pilot community college, Nicolet was destined to be unique in Wisconsin. In a state with University of Wisconsin branch campuses and separately administered technical colleges, Nicolet's mission is to combine the two functions and offer a comprehensive educational program incorporating occupational education, liberal studies, and continuing education offerings.

The Nicolet District is comprised of all of Oneida, Vilas, and Forest counties, and portions of Iron, Lincoln, and Langlade counties. The District presently includes approximately 4,000 square miles with a population of 70,000 persons.

Other nearby higher educational opportunities include: the University of Wisconsin – Marathon County, a two-year university center, in Wausau; the Northcentral Technical College, also located in Wausau; UW-Stevens Point; and UW-Green Bay.

4. Museums

There are a number of museums in Oneida County, most focused on the northwoods history of the county with special emphasis on logging.

- Rhinelander Logging Museum Complex: consists of a number of structures including the cook shanty, bunkhouse and blacksmith

shop, along with a school museum, Soo Line Depot, model railroad, outdoor displays, and a gift shop.

- Known as “the Angel on Snowshoes” Dr. Kate Newcomb ministered to the health needs of early loggers in northern Oneida County. The Dr. Kate Museum in Woodruff tells her story.
- Rhinelander Historical Society: reflects the elements of family life in Rhinelander from the turn of the 20th century to the present.
- Mecikalski General Store, Saloon, and Boardinghouse: a complex of restored buildings that show life in the logging days – on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Three Lakes Historical Society Museum: includes the Grossman Cabin (c.a. 1903), restored and relocated, a remnant of early settlement.
- Minocqua Museum: displays from the early days and the people who made a difference in the history of the community.
- Northwoods Children's Museum: a hands-on, interactive play museum. One area of the museum changes with seasonal exhibits to reflect different historical or cultural themes.

5. Day Care

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families lists 29 licensed childcare facilities in Oneida County. Fourteen of these facilities are in Rhinelander, six in Minocqua, three in Lake Tomahawk, two in Woodruff and one each in Three Lakes and Woodboro. Of these childcare facilities eighteen are described as group (capable of handling more than eight children) and ten as family (less than eight children) and one is a camp. Five of the childcare facilities are managed by the YMCA.

G. Energy & Telecommunication

1. Electric

The Wisconsin Public Service serves the largest part of the county. Xcel Energy serves many areas in the western part of the county. Price Electric Coop serves part of the Town of Lynne. American Transmission Corporation (ATC) to provide long distance electrical transmission within the county, primarily through the “Rhinelander Loop” discussed elsewhere in this element in greater detail. Long-term problems with power level in the county should be addressed by planned improvements.

2. Gas

ANR Pipeline Company provides a pipeline to move petroleum through the County. The pipeline runs 7 miles from the southern part of the

County to the City of Rhinelander and the 20 miles from the City to the eastern county line with Forest County. Wisconsin Public Service provides natural gas to the City of Rhinelander along with the following towns: Crescent, Enterprise, Hazelhurst, Lake Tomahawk, Minocqua, Monico, Newbold, Nokomis, Pelican, Schoepke, Stella, Piehl, Pine Lake, Sugar Camp, Three Lakes, Woodboro and Woodruff.

3. Telecommunication

Three telephone providers: Frontier Communications, Verizon North, and Century Tel service the County. Frontier is the largest with about 60% of the County. Verizon serves about 39% of the County, and Century Tel serves only a small number of customers on the south side of the County. Internet Dial-up service is available throughout the county. Digital subscriber line (DSL) makes efficient use of copper wire using special equipment to provide broadband access on existing phone lines. Delivery of DSL service is dependent on the length of the customer's loop from the central office (depending on the technology used this can range from 10,000 to 18,000 feet). This distance can be extended by installation of an access multi-plexer at an intervening point along the line. There are 14 cell towers located in Oneida County. See Map 5-6.

Wireless telephone coverage is generally available throughout the county. Cable TV service is available from Charter Communications in the city. Cable TV is also available in the Minocqua-Woodruff area, as well as broadband Internet through cable or DSL.

5.3 Goal, Objectives & Policies

Goal 1:

Strive to provide the best quality public services to all the citizens of the county, including water related facilities, solid waste and recycling facilities, public works, public safety, health care, education, recreation, culture, energy, and telecommunication

Objectives:

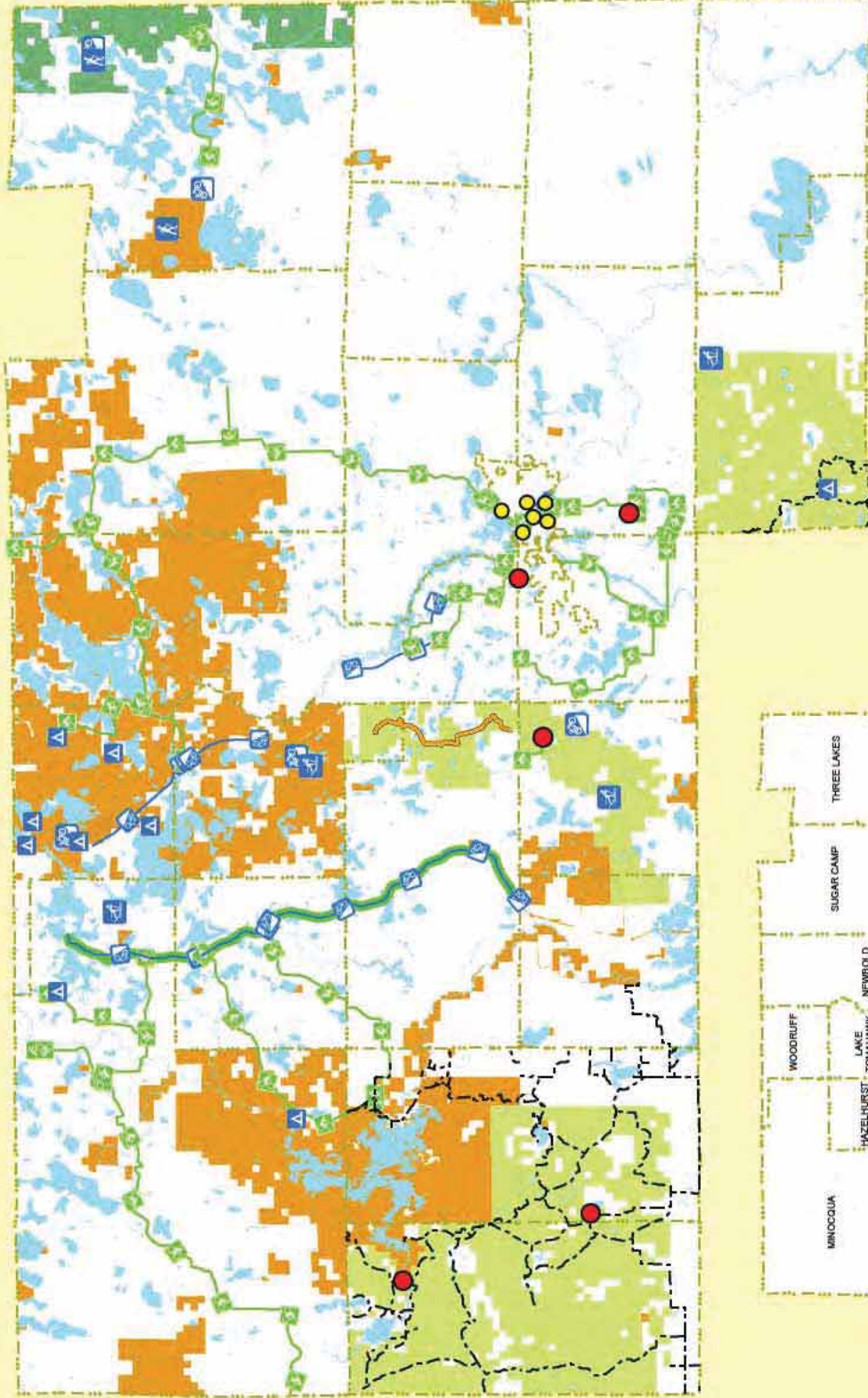
1. Direct more intensive development to areas where a full array of utilities, community facilities and public services are available
2. Monitor and control the effects of high-volume wells, private on-site waste disposal systems, and solid waste disposal on the quality and quantity of groundwater in the county.

May 17, 2013

3. Provide for law enforcement, ambulance, volunteer fire and first responder services to residents, whether by the county or by local units of government.
4. Support high quality educational opportunities for all residents.

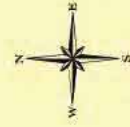
Policies:

1. Ensure that schools, public safety, health care, and other community facilities are of the highest quality without placing undue financial burden on county taxpayers.
2. Make more extensive use of the Wisconsin Fund to upgrade failing on-site disposal systems on qualifying properties
3. Assure public health and groundwater quality when permitting and monitoring private on-site wastewater and wells.
4. Encourage the development of a comprehensive county-wide trail plan that includes facilities for hikers, bikers, ATVs, as well as the disabled and elderly, and that ties together attractions and natural and cultural resources throughout the county.
5. Encourage land acquisition and development strategies for parks, as outlined in the County Outdoor Recreation Plan.
6. Promote improved broadband Internet service throughout the county.



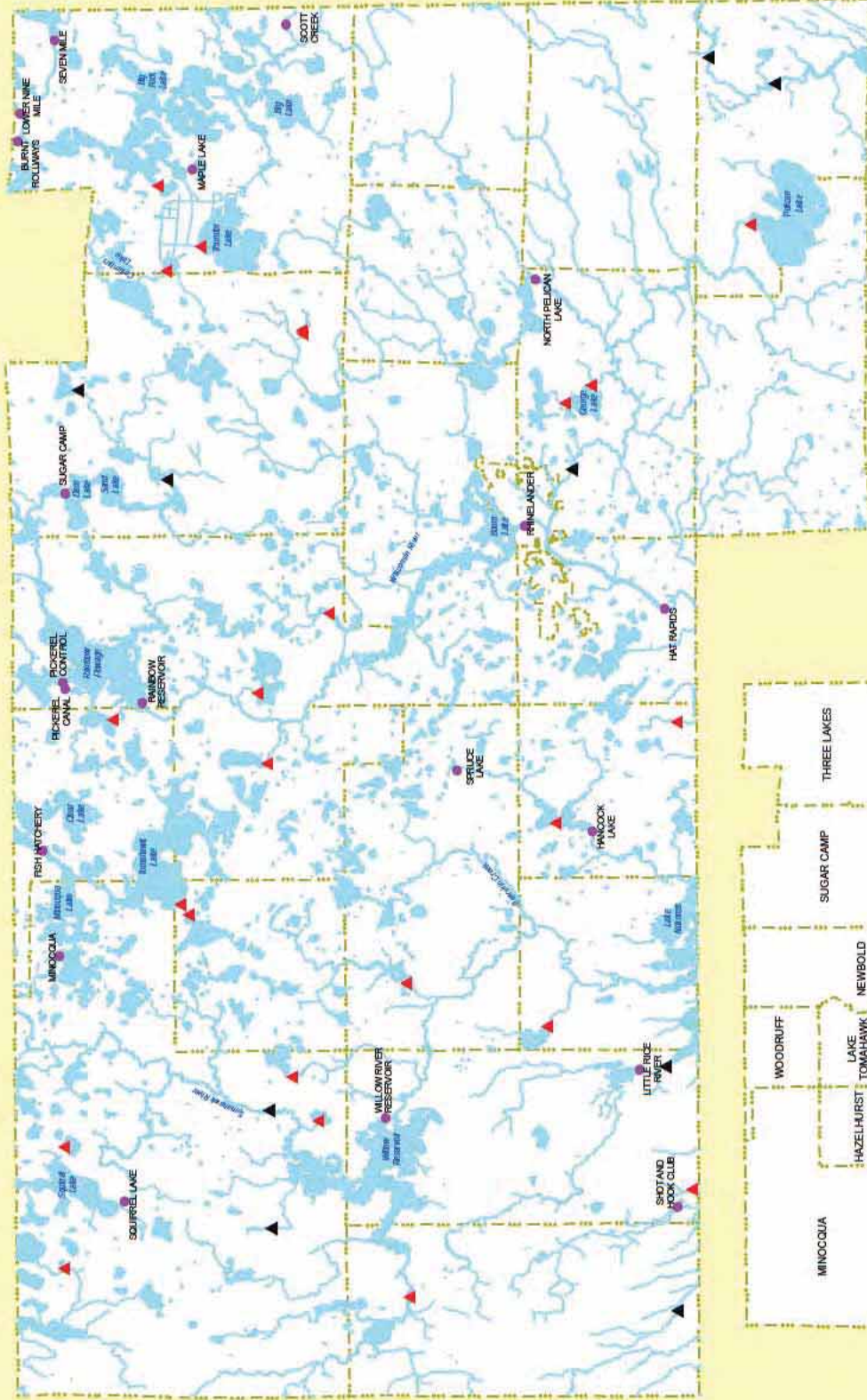
Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- ATV Trails
- Existing - On Road
- Existing - Off Road
- Bearskin-Hiawatha State Trail
- Cassian Two-Way Ski Trail
- City Parks
- County Parks
- XC Ski Trails
- Bike Trails
- Hiking Trail
- State Campgrounds
- Federal
- Oneida County
- State
- Water



Source: NCWRPC, WI DNR, Oneida County
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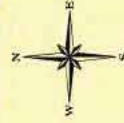


Legend

Minor Civil Divisions

Dams

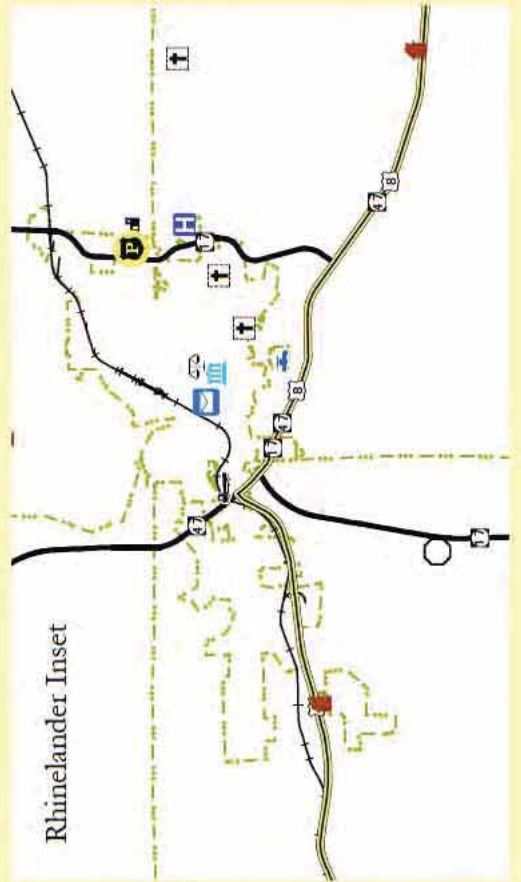
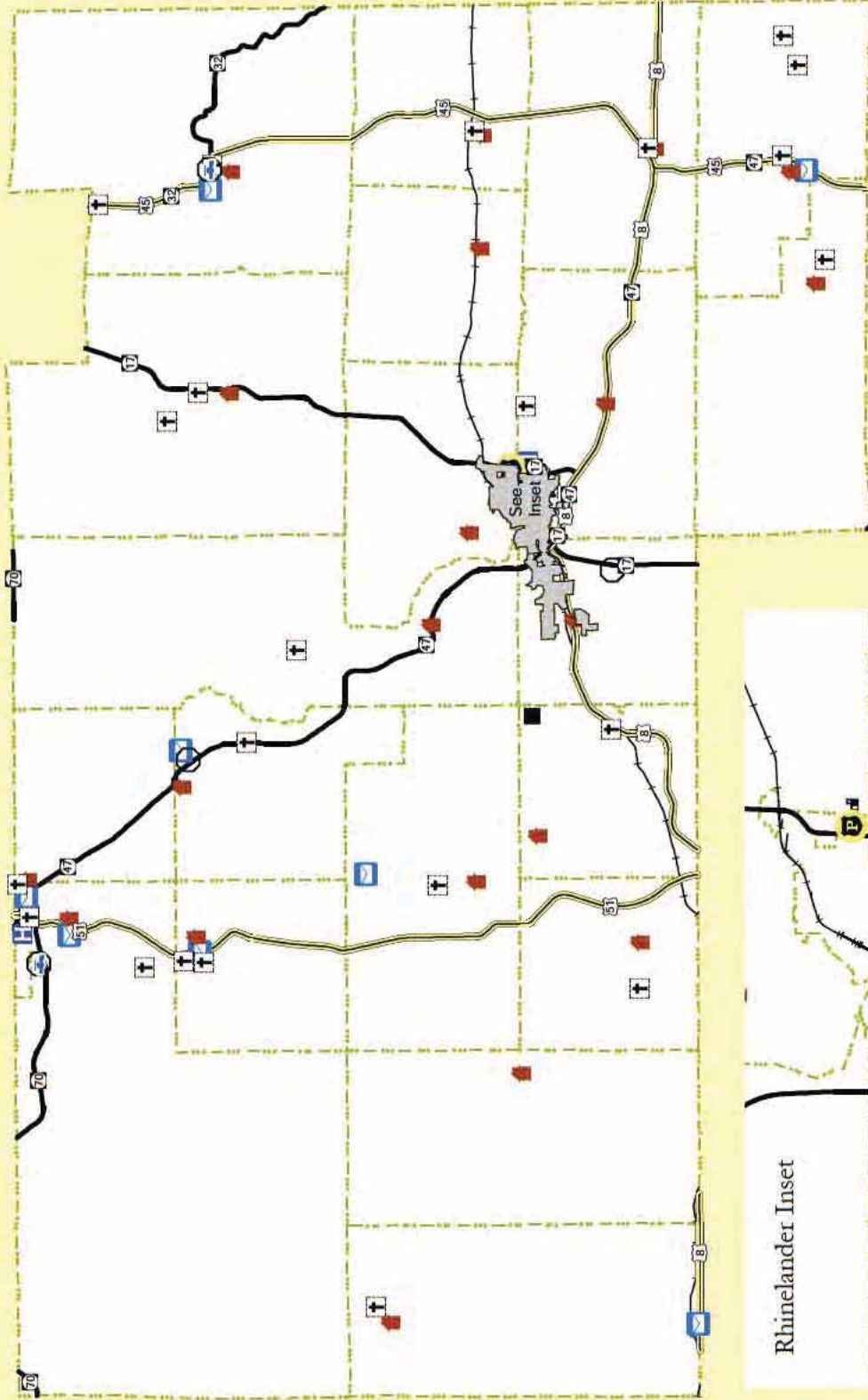
- Large
- ▲ Small
- ▲ Unknown
- Water



Source: NCWRPC, WI DNR, Oneida County
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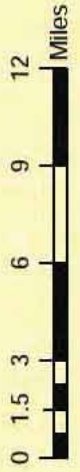
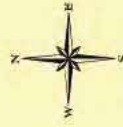


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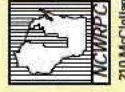


Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highways
- State Highways
- Railroad
- Public Water Supply
- Waste Water Treatment Plant
- County Garage
- Landfill
- Cemetery
- City Hall
- Town Hall
- Jail
- Court House
- Sheriff's Department
- Hospital
- Post Office



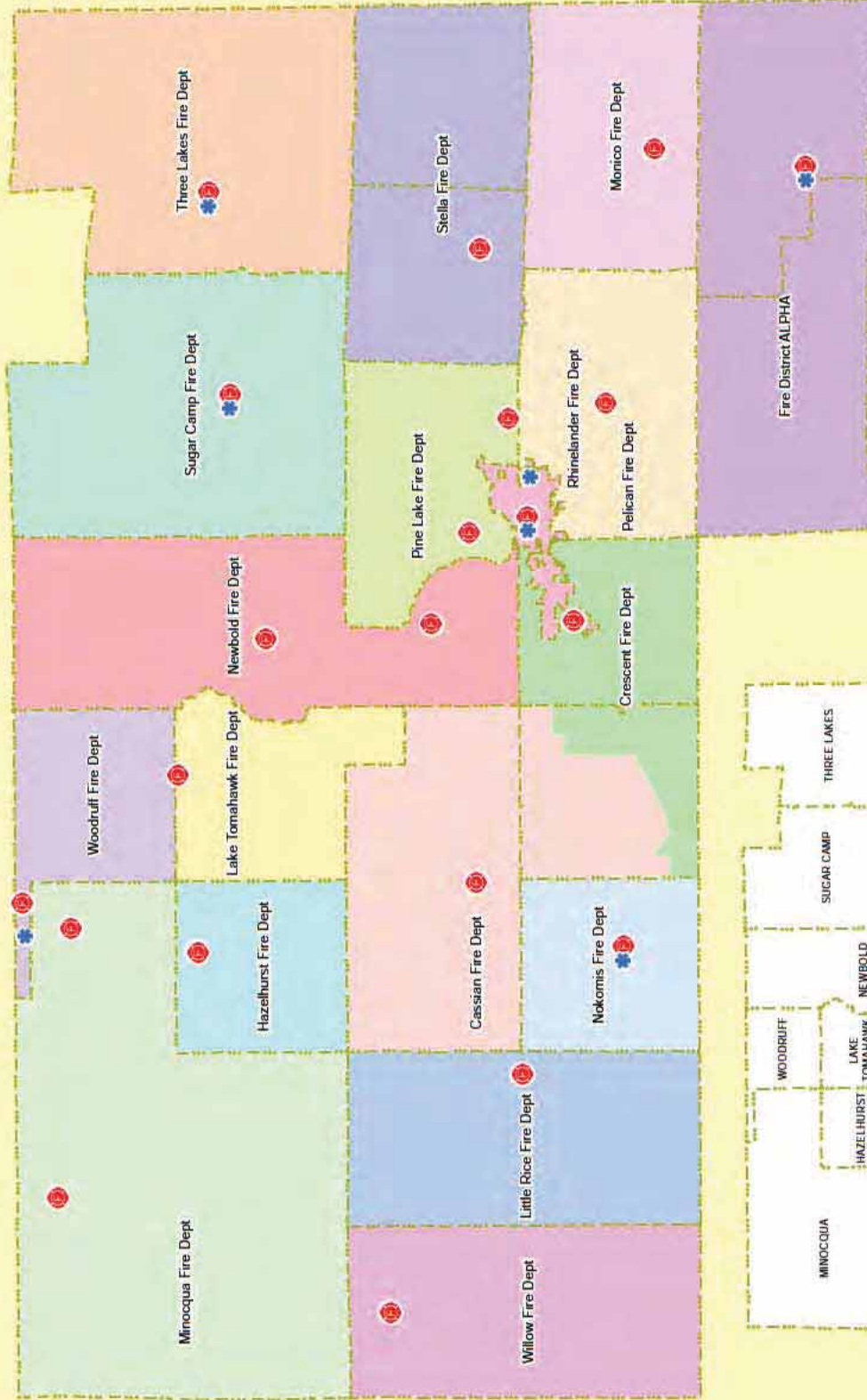
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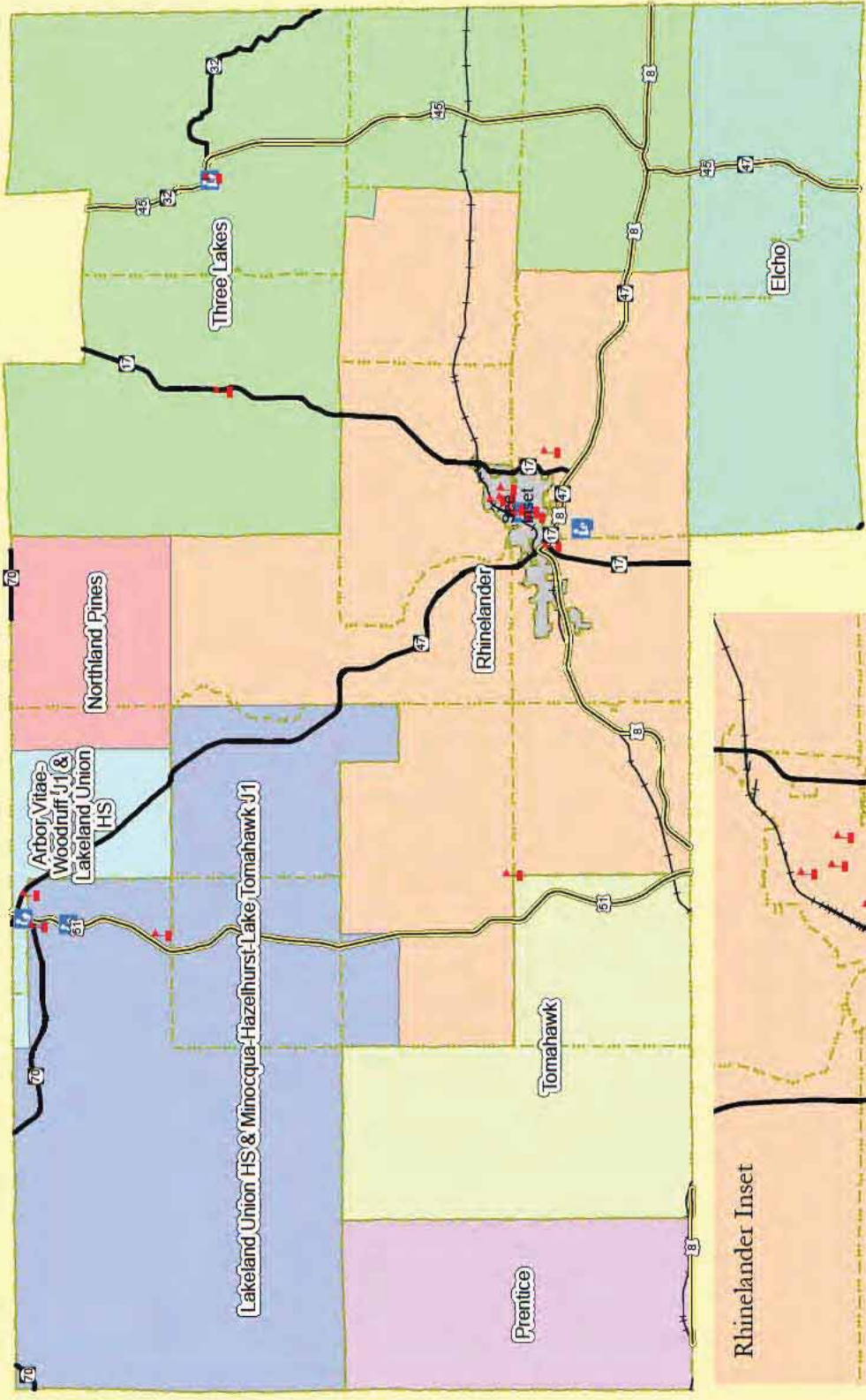
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Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- Fire Departments
- Ambulance Service



Source: NCWRPC, WI DNR, Oneida Co EM
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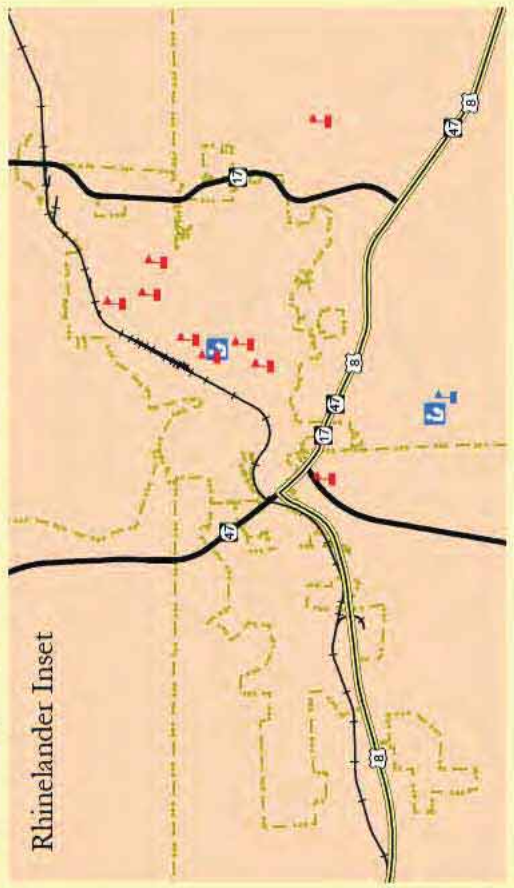
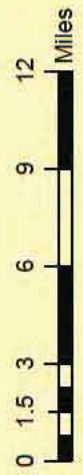


Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highways
- State Highways
- Railroad
- Schools
- Tech College
- Library

School Districts

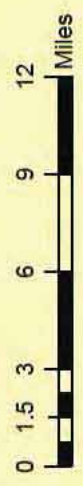
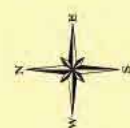
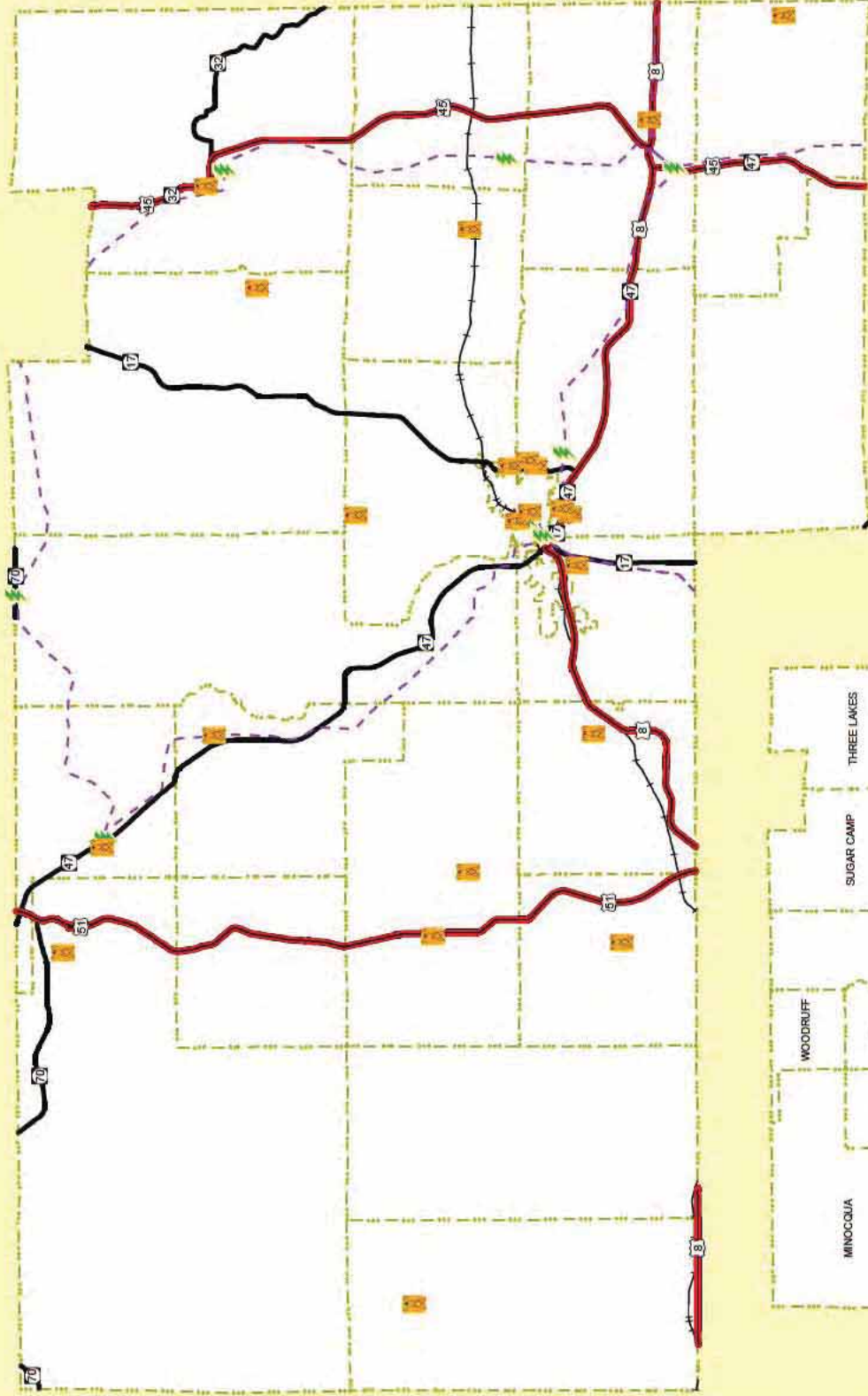
- Arbor Vitae-Woodruff J1 & Lakeland Union HS
- Elcho
- Lakeland Union HS & Minocqua-Hazelhurst-Lake Tomahawk J1
- Northland Pines
- Prentice
- Rhinelander
- Three Lakes
- Tomahawk



Source: NCWRPC, WI DNR, Oneida County
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Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highways
- State Highways
- Railroad
- Substations
- High Voltage Powerline
- Communication Towers

Source: NCWRPC, WI DNR, ATC
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Element 6: Economic Development

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- A. Previous Plans
- B. Issues

6.2 Inventory & Trends Page 4

- A. Economic Sectors
- B. Economic Sector Changes
- C. Major Employers
- D. Economic Analysis
- E. Labor Force Analysis
- F. Incomes & Wages
- G. Economic Development Infrastructure
- H. Economic Development Programs

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Tables:

- Table 6-1: Employment by Sector
- Table 6-2: Major Employers
- Table 6-3: Location Quotient
- Table 6-4: Labor Force Indicators

6.1 Background

This is the sixth of nine elements that comprise the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan. This element is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of the economic base and quality employment opportunities”.

An analysis of the economic base and labor force of Oneida County is included, as is the identification of the county’s strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining business. Various economic development programs available at the local, regional, state, and federal levels are also included.

A. Previous Plans:

All planning processes should include a review of previous planning processes. Below is a review of the three most relevant economic development-planning efforts.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Oneida County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development District as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) is the agency that is responsible for maintaining that federal designation. As part of maintaining that designation, the NCWRPC annually prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report. The report serves to summarize and assess economic development activities of the past year and present new and modified program strategies for the upcoming year. In addition this report identifies potential public works projects for funding within the region.

Key findings from this regional level plan involve an inventory of the physical geography of the Region and its resident population. Labor, income, and employment data are covered and analyzed to provide a picture of the economic status of the Region. Construction, wholesale trade, retail, transportation, and manufacturing all have grown rapidly since 1980. Finance, insurance, real estate, and services have lagged behind national averages.

Regional Comprehensive Plan: A Framework for the Future, 2000-2020

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) developed this plan in compliance with the State of Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Law. One component of this plan is the Economic Development Element. Within this element, economic indicators are analyzed on a regional level and economic infrastructure is inventoried. The element offers some

general regional goals and policies for the development of the regional economy over the next two decades.

Key findings from this regional level plan are: 1) the Region's labor force and participation rates are increasing and unemployment is decreasing; 2) primary export industries include agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, transportation, communication, and retail; 3) the Region's economy is mostly comprised of slow growth industry but it is shifting into a service based economy which shows much faster growth rates; 4) the Region is a competitive location for new industry starts compared to national average; 5) the Region has several available industrial parks; and 6) the Region will benefit most from the creation of new or expansion of existing industries.

B. Issues:

The planning process includes the identification of issues. These are the things that need to be addressed in the plan.

- Commercial and Industrial Development

Not all available sites are capable of offering the wide range of services necessary to appeal to all types of industrial development. Access to a major four-lane highway is available. Oneida County also suffers from lack of diversification in its industrial economy leading to a heavy reliance on relatively few industries. Such dependence means that local employment, as well as commercial retail trade, goes up and down with the business cycles for the dominant local industry. Continued economic diversification is a key to the community's growth.

- Recreation and Tourism

There is an opportunity to capitalize on the natural resource base of the county as it relates to outdoor recreation and tourism. In 2007, tourism spending was estimated at \$211 million, which ranks 16th overall in the state.

- Income and Employment Levels

Although the county has made progress toward closing the gap over the last twenty years, income levels still are below state and federal levels and the unemployment rate exceeds both state and federal levels. A focus should be placed on living wage jobs.

- Commuting Patterns

Based on 2000 Census, there are about 1,000 more employment opportunities than there are persons to work them in the County. The majority of the people coming into the county to work are from Vilas County, followed by Lincoln, Forest and Langlade County. These 991 jobs represent an opportunity to import more workers and their families into the county.

- Housing

Economic development efforts geared toward job creation require that there is housing available for the population taking the new jobs. Providing jobs for persons who do not live in the area greatly reduces the economic impact of the business upon the community. Employees tend to spend the majority of their wages in areas near their home. If employees are unwilling or unable to purchase/rent homes near their place of work, they will live in “bedroom communities” to obtain a more affordable housing situation. Creating situations in which both the business and its employees live in the same community can maximize the benefits of commercial activity with respect to revenues and economic performance.

- Forestry

The county must monitor the status of its forest resources through proper management practices if the forestry industry is to maintain its position as a primary driver of the county’s overall economy. The county has substantial forest areas that produce timber for the wood products industry as well as value added wood products firms. Balancing tourism and development against forestland use fragmentation will be a challenging economic development issue in Oneida County’s future.

- Agriculture

There is limited agricultural production in Oneida County. The primary products are potatoes and cranberries.

6.2 Inventory & Trends

The purpose of analyzing the county’s economy and identifying economic trends in this element is to answer some obvious questions. Which industries in the county have lagged in terms of economic performance? What are the underlying causes of poor economic performance in certain industries? What measures can be taken to address the economic problems that exist? When answering these questions, it is customary to use a comparative analysis between the county, the State of Wisconsin, and the nation.

The analysis helps to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each industry sector in the county thereby identifying potential strategies for economic development. The information presented in this analysis has been collected from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

A. Economic Sectors

Overall, in 2008, there were 15,687 persons employed in the fourteen basic economic sectors in the county. That is an increase of nearly 35 percent since 1990. Those basic economic sectors are presented below. They are: government; agriculture, forestry & fishing; mining; construction; manufacturing; transportation & utilities; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance, insurance & real estate; educational services; health care; arts, entertainment and recreation; accommodation and food services; and services. See Table 1.

Between 1990 and 2008, the three fastest growing sectors were construction, service and government. In terms of total employment, retail trade is the largest segment of the economy, followed by services, manufacturing and government. The data shows a significant reduction in manufacturing employment from 2000 to 2008. Oneida County has lost over 500 manufacturing jobs since 2000. The downturn in manufacturing jobs in Oneida County can be attributed to the recession that has impacted our nation's economy.

It should be noted that the number of employees in certain sectors, particularly those workers engaged in agriculture, forestry & fishing, may be understated because this information utilizes Department of Workforce Development data; those who are self employed or work in family businesses are not reflected in this data. Note that the employment totals may not match because of nondisclosure in some sectors. Some changes were made to the data collection procedures between 2000 and 2008, which makes some sector comparisons difficult.

Table 6-1: Employment by Sector					
Sector	1990	2000	2008	1990 to 2008 Net Change	1990 to 2008 % Change
Government	469	1,069	967	498	106.18%
Agric., For. & Fishing	200	204	178	-22	-11.00%
Mining	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	488	832	917	429	87.91%
Manufacturing	1,866	1,958	1,382	-484	-25.94%
Transp. And Comm.	405	517	326	-79	-19.51%
Wholesale Trade	294	310	423	129	43.88%
Retail Trade	2,252	3,057	3,483	1,231	54.66%
Fin., Ins. & Real Estate	469	519	545	76	16.20%
Educational Services	1,093	1,317	1,137	44	4.03%
Health Care & Social Assistance	2,080	2,907	2,815	735	35.34%
Arts Entertainment & Recreation	108	99	111	3	2.78%
Accommodation & Food Services	1,332	1,732	1,675	343	25.75%
Services	572	1,647	1,728	1,156	202.10%
Totals:	11,628	16,168	15,687	4,059	34.91%

Source: Department of Workforce Development; ES 202 Reports, 1st Quarter; 1990, 2000 & 2008 NCWRPC

1. Government: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew by 106 percent, which was greater than the state and national growth rates of 24 percent and 19 percent respectively. Government is the seventh-largest sector in the county, representing 967 jobs.
2. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector experienced a slight decline of 11 percent. During the same time frame state and national employment has decreased over 30 percent. About 180 persons in the county are employed in this sector.
3. Mining: Although the data shows no employment in mining, there are actually limited numbers of people employed in this sector that are not reflected in DWD data. During the time both national and state employment has decreased in the mining sector. Non-metallic mining activity within the county typically involves sand and gravel (aggregates) extraction for local use.
4. Construction: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew by nearly 88 percent outpacing both the state and national growth rates of 58 and 57 percent. Over 917 persons are employed in this sector. Construction is the eighth-largest sector, accounting for about 6 percent of total employment.

5. Manufacturing: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector declined by 25 percent, this outpaced both the state and national rates which experienced decreases of 6 percent and 21 percent respectively. About 1,382 persons are employed in this sector which makes manufacturing the fifth largest sector, accounting for about 9 percent of total employment. According to County Business Patterns, there were 73 manufacturing establishments in the county with total annual payroll over \$71 million dollars in 2000. By 2007, there were 55 establishments with an annual payroll over \$66 million.

6. Transportation, Public Utilities and Communication: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector decreased almost 20 percent, which is in excess of both the state and national growth rates which decreased by 6 and 13 percent. About 326 persons are employed in this sector. Transportation, Public Utilities and Communication is the fourth-smallest sector, accounting for over 2 percent of total employment.

7. Wholesale Trade: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew by about 44 percent, outpacing both the state and national growth rates which declined by 2 and 7 percent. Wholesale Trade employs about 423 persons, which accounts for about 3 percent of total employment.

8. Retail Trade: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew by 55 percent outpacing both the state and national growth rate. Over 3,400 persons are employed in this sector. Retail Trade is the largest sector, accounting for about 22 percent of total employment in the county. According to County Business Patterns, there were 300 retail establishments in the county with total annual payroll exceeding \$63 million dollars in 2000. By 2007, there were 249 establishments with an annual payroll over \$80 million.

9. Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew by about 16 percent, which was less than both the state and national growth rates of 31 and 26 percent respectively. About 545 persons are employed in this sector, which accounts for over 3 percent of total employment.

10. Educational Services: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew 4 percent. This is the sixth largest sector in the county, employing 1,137 persons. Educational services comprise just over 7 percent of total employment with an annual payroll of about \$36.6 million.

11. Health Care & Social Assistance: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew 35 percent. About 2,815 persons work in this sector which makes this the second largest sector in the county and comprises about 18 percent of total employment. According to County Business Patterns, there were 105 establishments in the county with total annual payroll exceeding \$103 million dollars in 2000. By 2007, there were 117 establishments with an annual payroll over \$124 million.

12. Arts, Entertainment & Recreation: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew nearly 3%. About 111 persons work in this sector, which makes this the smallest sector in the county comprising about 1 percent of total employment.

13. Accommodation & Food Services: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew 26 percent. About 1,675 persons work in this sector, which makes this the fifth largest sector in the county comprising just over 10 percent of total employment. According to County Business Patterns, there were 203 establishments in the county with total annual payroll exceeding \$19 million dollars in 2000. By 2007, there were 203 establishments with an annual payroll over \$22 million.

14. Services: Between 1990 and 2008, this sector grew by 200 percent, which greatly exceeds the state growth rate of 39 percent and the national growth rate of 52 percent. About 1,728 persons are employed in this sector making it the fourth-largest sector, accounting for about 11 percent of total employment.

B. County Business Patterns

In 2007, according to the U.S. Census Bureau County Business Patterns, there were a total of 1,438 establishments in the county with an annual payroll of about \$457,747,000. The most establishments were in Retail (249); followed by Construction (247); Professional Services (143); Other Services (excluding public administration) 127; Financial, Insurance & Real Estate (125); accommodation & food service (117) establishments; Health Care & Social Services with (117) establishments.

C. Major Employers

Oneida County's largest employers are displayed in Table 6-2. The largest employer in the County is St Mary's Hospitals followed by Howard Young Medical Group and Foster & Smith Inc. Foster and Smith Inc., a top supplier of pet supplies, accounts for the majority of jobs in the Wholesale Trade sector of the county's economy. The three sectors which are prominent in the list of major employers are: Health Care with Sacred Heart St Mary's Hospitals, Howard Young Medical Group and Ministry Medical Group; Retail with Walmart and Trigs; and Educational Services with the Rhinelander School District and Nicolet Technical College.

Employer Name	Industry
Sacred Heart St Mary's Hospitals	General medical & surgical hospitals
Howard Young Medical Group	General medical & surgical hospitals
Foster & Smith Inc	Mail-order houses
Wal-Mart	Discount department stores
Wausau Paper Specialty Products	Paper, except newsprint, mills
School District of Rhinelander	Elementary & secondary schools
Trig's	Supermarkets & other grocery stores
County of Oneida	Executive & legislative offices
Nicolet Area Technical College	Technical and Junior colleges
Ministry Medical Group Inc	Offices of physicians, except mental

Source: Wisconsin DWD 2008 and NCWRPC.

D. Economic Analysis

The primary technique used here to analyze the county's economic base is called the "Location Quotient". The technique is commonly used to provide detailed economic information about the local economy and industry sectors within the economy.

1. Location Quotient

This analysis technique compares local, state and national employment levels by economic sector. The result of this analysis is a numeric value called a location quotient. The model is derived from the premise that the local economy may be divided into two sectors: 1) a "basic" or non-local sector and 2) a "non-basic" or local sector.

Those employers providing goods and services that are purchased or consumed by customers outside the study (the county in this case) are considered to be basic employers. Conversely, goods and services consumed by the local community are considered non-basic. Thus, economic success of the community is measured by its ability to bring in money from outside of the community; the community offers goods and services that are sought out by other regions that do not have them. This type of economy is also known as an export economy and is usually the overall goal of many economic development programs.

The location quotient model uses employment information for both the county and the nation by industry and compares their ratios of sectoral employment to total employment. Each industry sector is assigned a location quotient value which in turn is used to identify those employees considered export, or "basic"

within a given industry sector. “Non-basic” employees are those workers whose wages are derived from money circulating within the existing local economy. In any community, certain goods and services simply cannot be obtained locally and consumers must look elsewhere. This is known as an industry sector “leakage”. Too many leakages can result in a declining economy as consumers continue to spend their money in communities other than their own. Fortunately, Oneida County has more basic employees than non-basic; however, if existing industries are not retained and new opportunities are not created in basic industries such as manufacturing, this status could change in the future.

The location quotient can be described by the following equation:

$$LQ_i = (e^t_i / e^t_T) / (E^t_i / E^t_T)$$

where:

e^t_i = regional (county) employment in industry i in year t

e^t_T = total regional (county) employment in year t

E^t_i = national employment in industry i in year t

E^t_T = total national employment in year t

If that number is greater than 1.00, it is determined to be an exporting sector, while if it is below 1.00; it is determined to be an importing sector. Exports bring money from outside the county into the local economy and imports represent local dollars flowing outside the county. Table 3 provides a summary of the location quotient analysis results of those categories that exceed 1.00.

The data analyzed is from the U.S. Census, County Business Patterns. That data set examines only the private sector, since that is where most economic growth takes place. The information presented is broken into detailed categories similar to the industry composites utilized by the North American Industry Classification Standard (NAICS). See Table 6-3.

Oneida County has fourteen different sectors that are considered an exporting sector. A primary reason for Oneida County being an export economy is because Rhinelander is a regional hub for Vilas, Forest and the north portion of Langlade and Lincoln Counties. In addition Oneida County has more jobs than there are persons in the workforce, identified in the commuting patterns.

Table 6-3: Location Quotient	
Economic Category	Location Quotient
Construction	1.07
Manufacturing	1.26
Retail Trade	1.01
Transportation and Warehousing	1.14
Information	1.58
Finance and Insurance	1.28
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1.13
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1.52
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1.34
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1.53
Educational Services	1.27
Health Care and Social Assistance	1.33
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1.35
Accommodation and Food Services	1.32

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1998 and 2007 County Business Patterns

- Construction

Oneida County has an abundance of small businesses in the construction field. The demand for construction of housing, in particular vacation homes, has led to the expansion of the construction sector in Oneida County. The category has a location quotient of 1.07.

- Manufacturing

Manufacturing is always an important component of any economy given its tendency to provide more and higher paying jobs than most other sectors. This category has a Location Quotient of 1.26.

- Retail Trade

Retail trade is commonly in demand in rural areas. Oneida County provides basic retail services to residents, but most specialized retail requires imports from surrounding areas. This category has a Location Quotient of 1.01.

- Transportation and Warehousing

Oneida County has a developed transportation and warehousing industry. The local supply of these services is roughly adequate to meet overall demand. This category has a Location Quotient of 1.14. Many industries rely upon

transportation and warehousing as a major component of their business practice. Oneida County's rural setting creates a situation where the local industries must have effective transportation and warehousing services to compete in a regional, national, or global market.

- Information

The Information sector comprises establishments engaged in producing and distributing information and cultural products, providing the means to transmit or distribute these products as well as data or communications, and processing data. The information sector has been expanding in Oneida County much like the rest of the nation. The information sector has the ability to expand if broadband infrastructure becomes more widely available. This Category has a Location Quotient of 1.58.

- Finance and Insurance

The Finance and Insurance sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in financial transactions and/or in facilitating financial transactions. This Category has a Location Quotient of 1.28.

- Real Estate Rental and Leasing

The demand for real estate within the county has helped increase the supply of real estate agents and companies located within the county. This Category has a Location Quotient of 1.13.

- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

The Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector comprises establishments that specialize in performing professional, scientific, and technical activities for others. These activities require a high degree of expertise and training. This Category has a Location Quotient of 1.52.

- Management of Companies and Enterprises

The Management of Companies and Enterprises sector is comprised of establishments that hold the securities of (or other equity interests in) companies and enterprises for the purpose of owning a controlling interest or influencing management decisions or establishments (except government establishments) that administer, oversee, and manage establishments of the company or enterprise. This Category has a Location Quotient of 1.34.

- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services

The Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services sector comprises establishments performing routine support activities for the day-to-day operations of other organizations. This Category has a Location Quotient of 1.53.

- Educational Services

The Educational Services sector comprises establishments that provide instruction and training in a wide variety of subjects. This instruction and training is provided by specialized establishments, such as schools, colleges, universities, and training centers. Currently, the Rhinelander School District, Lakeland Union High School and Nicolet Technical College are major employers in the Education services sector. This Category has a Location Quotient of 1.27.

- Health Care and Social Assistance

The demographic makeup of Oneida County necessitates significant health care and social assistance services. This category has a Location Quotient of 1.33. This industry is likely to continue to grow not only in Oneida County, but throughout Wisconsin. Currently, Sacred Heart St. Mary's Hospital, Howard Young Medical Group, Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Medical Group are major employers in the health care industry.

- Accommodation and Food Services

Oneida County is a popular tourist destination and therefore offers a variety of lodging and food services to accommodate the demands that tourism generates (such as hotels, motels, and full-service restaurants). This category has a Location Quotient of 1.32. This economic sector is considered to be a major export economy for Oneida County.

- Arts Entertainment and Recreation

The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector includes a wide range of establishments that operate facilities or provide services to meet varied cultural, entertainment, and recreational interests of their patrons. This category has a Location Quotient of 1.35.

E. Labor Force Analysis

This section examines four factors related to the county labor force. These factors are labor force, unemployment, workforce participation, and education & training. Table 6-4 displays a variety of information related to the county labor force.

1. Labor Force

Overall, the labor force has grown from 16,042 in 1990 to over 19,200 in 2008. That represents a growth of over 19 percent, which is less than the state's growth rate of about 27 percent. The labor force is defined simply as the number of persons, sixteen and over, employed or looking to be employed. Persons over sixteen who are students, homemakers, retired, institutionalized, or unable/unwilling to seek employment are not considered part of the labor force. In 1990, 15,235 of those were employed and that rose to 18,067 in 2008, an increase of almost 19 percent.

Table 6-4: Labor Force Indicators					
Indicator	1990	2000	2008	Change 1990- 2008	State 1990-2008
Labor Force	16,042	19,811	19,211	19.75%	26.77%
Employed	15,235	18,846	18,067	18.59%	29.34%
Unemployed	717	965	1144	59.55%	-9.82%
Unemployment Rate	4.47%	4.87%	5.95%	33.23%	-28.79%
Participation Rate	50.64%	53.87%	53.32%	5.29%	11.21%

Source: Wisconsin DWD, 1990 to 2008 and NCWRPC.

As identified earlier in the plan, the county has experienced population growth since 1990, although that growth is not the same among all age groups. In 1990, over 24 percent of the population was 17 and under, while only 18 percent were 65 and older. By 2000, there were about 22 percent 17 and under, while the 65 and older grew to almost 19 percent. These population trends affect the make up of the local labor force.

2. Unemployment

Unemployment is defined as the difference between the total civilian labor force and total persons employed. Stay-at-home parents, retirees, or persons not searching for employment are not considered unemployed because they are not considered to be part of the labor force. In 1990 the county had 4.5 percent unemployment, which was similar to the state rate of 4.3 percent. By 2008, the county had 6.0 percent unemployment rate, compared to the state rate of

4.7 percent. Over the last twenty years, Oneida County has generally had higher unemployment rates than the state average.

3. Workforce Participation

Much of the growth in the county's labor force has been due to the increase in the participation rates. In 1990, only about 50 percent of the population over 16 was in the labor force. By 2008, that rate increased to 53 percent. The national participation rate in 2008 was 66 percent, and the state rate was 55 percent. Workforce participation is expressed as a percentage of persons not actively seeking employment divided by the total working age population. These persons may not seek employment due to retirement, disability, choose to be a home care provider, or simply are not looking for work. In any event, these persons are not receiving unemployment benefits, nor are they seeking employment in any capacity. Oneida County's lower participation rate may be attributed to the county's higher median age.

4. Education & Training

Worker productivity has often been cited as one important reason for the strength of Wisconsin's economy. Both education and training are critical to maintaining that productivity.

The level of educational attainment is an important indicator of the skills of the labor force. Formal education and job training reflect a community's ability to provide a labor force for certain types of industry. As identified earlier in the plan, educational attainment in the county is very similar to the national average in terms of those with a high school diploma or better, and bachelor's degrees or higher, although, the county does lag behind the state in both areas.

Training is another labor force indicator. Partnerships between local businesses, governments, and educational institutions are very useful in developing the regional economy. Institutions such as UW-Stevens Point and Nicolet Technical College, often direct their programs to the training needs of local workers and businesses. Training services for dislocated workers are provided at the Northern Advantage Job Center located in the City of Rhinelander. The center is a one-stop resource for employers to meet their workforce needs and job seekers to get the career planning, job placement, and training services they need to obtain jobs. Organizations such as the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board are important to this process as well.

F. Income & Wages

There are two basic measures of income: median household income and per capita income. Median household income provides an indication of the

earnings of the typical family or household unit while per capita income provides a measure of earning power on a per person basis. As identified in the Issues & Opportunities Element of this plan the Median Household income in 2000 was \$37,619 and the Per Capita income was \$19,746. Both Median and Per Capita Incomes have risen over the last decade, by 37 and 41 percent respectively. Both of these rates are below the state growth rates for the same time period.

Wage data for all industries in 2008, from the Department of Workforce Development, indicate that employees in Oneida County earn an average annual wage over 28 percent below the overall state average. The average annual state wage is \$39,169 and in Oneida County it is \$30,418. Employees earn less than the state average in all employment categories except of the Natural Resources and Mining category.

G. Economic Development Infrastructure

Overall, Oneida County's economic development infrastructure is concentrated in the City of Rhineland, although there are industrial park facilities in Three Lakes. This infrastructure investment provides a wider range of opportunities for the prospective entrepreneur or expanding business, and greatly increases the county's chances of developing and maintaining a stable employment base for its workforce in the future.

Oneida County's variety of infrastructure amenities includes:

- Four fully serviced industrial parks located in Rhineland, including two with rail service.
- One fully serviced industrial park located in Three Lakes.
- Major highways, including U.S. Highways 8, 45 & 51 and State Highways 32, 17 & 47.
- A public-use commercial airport with both daily scheduled commercial and freight service.

Industrial Parks are the critical economic development infrastructure in the county. The creation of industrial parks enables communities to compete with other communities to attract new businesses or to relocate existing businesses for expansions. An industrial park is a parcel of land that has been developed according to a plan that provides sites for potential industrial firms. The "park" is designed in such a way that it ensures compatibility among industrial operations and the existing activities of the area in which the park is located. The "park plan" provides for appropriate building setbacks, lot sizes, building

to land ratios, architectural specifications, and landscaping required by the local codes and as necessitated by the nature of industrial activity.

Currently, there is discussion related to the development of a major business park facility west of Rhinelander.

The Oneida County Economic Development Corporation proposes to develop a Sustainable Business Park west of Rhinelander. The Sustainable Park concept evolved as a site-specific approach to creating an industrial park that achieves more sustainable economic development, designed in harmony with the ecosystem and environmentally sensitive in its operation. An equally important principle is that the development concept for the park must match the resources and needs of the local and regional economy. Currently the Sustainable Park is under development, although some obstacles have been encountered.

H. Economic Development Programs

1. Local:

Oneida County Economic Development

A non-profit organization that promotes the economic development of Oneida County. The organization is comprised of area business persons, citizens, local government, utility company representatives, state agencies and elected officials, educational institutions and other organizations essential to the growth of Oneida County. The purpose of the group is to serve the needs of new businesses coming to the area as well as to assist existing companies.

Oneida County Revolving Loan Fund

A Wisconsin Department of Commerce Economic Development Grant was awarded to Oneida County in 1989. This grant enabled Oneida County to establish a revolving loan fund in order to assist local businesses and is administered by the Housing Authority.

Rhinelanders Downtown Initiative

Downtown Rhinelander, Inc is a non-profit volunteer organization devoted to making the historic business district of Rhinelander a pedestrian-friendly, warm and charming destination by providing educational assistance, support and leadership in an effort to spur economic revitalization and historic preservation, guided by the Wisconsin Main Street Program.

Chambers of Commerce

Area Chambers of Commerce promote commercial, financial, professional, and general business interests of Oneida County. Services include: provide event information, promotion of tourism, local event & activity sponsorship, retail trade sector support, and local economic development training seminars.

City of Rhinelander Downtown Works Revolving Loan Program

The Downtown Works Revolving Loan program developed to assist in the recruitment of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses in Downtown Rhinelander. The fund was developed through a partnership among three organizations: Downtown Rhinelander Inc., City of Rhinelander and the James E. Cleary Foundation Inc. The partnership has committed at least \$90,000 annually for a 10 year period starting in 2009. The revolving loan funds will be disbursed and administered by a representative board of directors under the guidance of the program director. Funds will be loaned to prescreened and eligible applicants at a very low interest rate to encourage downtown development.

The goals of the fund are: 1) foster economic growth and stability in downtown Rhinelander; 2) provide financial and technical assistance to participating businesses; 3) facilitate the lending process for qualified applicants; 4) encourage shared equity partnerships among local financial institutions, Downtown Works, and downtown business owners; and 5) attract appropriate and complementary businesses to the downtown area based upon the "clustering" development model.

City of Rhinelander Economic Development Committee

The Economic Development Committee oversees the administration of the City's Economic Development Program. The Committee is comprised of area business persons, citizens, Rhinelander's City Administrator, City Aldermen and other organizations critical to the economic growth of the City of Rhinelander. The purpose of this committee is to assist the needs of existing businesses in Rhinelander as well as supporting the development of new businesses in Rhinelander.

2. Regional:

North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation

The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) manages two revolving loan funds designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed-rate, low down payment, low interest financing. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism and other manufacturing and service industries.

Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center (NWMOC)

The Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center provides operations assessments, technology training, and on-site assistance to help firms in northern Wisconsin modernize and streamline manufacturing processes.

Grow North Economic Development Corporation

Grow North Regional Economic Development Corporation was created in 2004 to foster cooperation among economic development partners in Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Oneida and Vilas counties. Although the communities in each county have their own unique attributes, economic development partners throughout the region have recognized the value of collaborative efforts to grow and diversify the north woods economy. Grow North Regional Economic Development Corporation is a non-profit organization whose mission is to assist the counties and communities throughout our region in their efforts to recruit and retain businesses, stimulate new job creation and to foster an environment conducive to entrepreneurial growth and new company formations.

3. State:

Rural Economic Development Program

This program administrated by Wisconsin Department of Commerce provides grants and low interest loans for small business (less than 25 employees) start-ups or expansions in rural areas, such as Oneida County. Funds may be used for "soft costs" only, such as planning, engineering, ad marketing assistance.

Wisconsin Small Cities Program

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce provides federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to eligible municipalities for approved housing and/or public facility improvements and for economic development projects. Economic Development grants provide loans to businesses for such things as: acquisition of real estate, buildings, or equipment; construction, expansion or remodeling; and working capital for inventory and direct labor.

University of Wisconsin Extension Office

The Center for Community Economic Development, University of Wisconsin Extension, creates, applies and transfers multidisciplinary knowledge to help people understand community change and identify opportunities.

The Wisconsin Innovation Service Center (WISC)

This non-profit organization is located at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater and specializes in new product and invention assessments and market expansion opportunities for innovative manufacturers, technology businesses, and independent inventors.

Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The UW-SBDC is partially funded by the Small Business Administration and provides a variety of programs and training seminars to assist in the creation of small business in Wisconsin.

Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)

This program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, provides immediate assistance and funding for the cost of transportation improvements necessary for major economic development projects.

Other State Programs

Technology Development grants and loans; Customized Labor Training grants and loans; and Major Economic Development Project grants and loans.

4. Federal:

Economic Development Administration (EDA)

EDA offers a public works grant program. These are administered through local units of government for the benefit of the local economy and, indirectly, private enterprise.

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA – RD)

The USDA Rural Development program is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America. Financial programs include support for such essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. USDA-RD promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools. The program also offers technical assistance and information to help agricultural and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their member services.

Small Business Administration (SBA)

SBA provides business and industrial loan programs that will make or guarantee up to 90% of the principal and interest on loans to companies, individuals, or government entities for financing in rural areas. Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation acts as an agent for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that provide financing for fixed asset loans and for working capital.

1. Future Opportunities

Future economic opportunities will depend to a large extent on emerging technologies. The national goal of energy independence and the availability of vast tracts of public and private commercial forestland provide an opportunity to expand the forest industry by supplying raw materials for wood-based energy products including gasohol, wood pellets and other similar products.

Additionally, the advent of the Internet provides opportunities for information based jobs and telecommuting that did not exist in 2000. Establishing broadband, high-speed Internet connectivity can greatly increase the opportunities for industry and jobs built around that

technology while minimally impacting the rural character of the county.

6.3 Goals. Objectives & Policies

Goal 1:

Maintain, diversify and expand the economy, while maintaining the rural character and environmental integrity of the county.

Objectives:

1. Promote the retention and expansion of the current economic base.
2. Encourage the creation of new businesses.
3. Promote the relocation of compatible businesses to the county.
4. Pursue increased funding from both public and private sources.
5. Encourage infill development throughout the county, where existing facilities exist.
6. Encourage sustainable yield forestry by promoting the harvesting of wood products as raw materials for the energy industry.
7. Encourage development of high-speed Internet infrastructure capabilities to meet the growing needs and challenges of an information based economy.

Policies:

1. Working with the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation conduct a business retention survey from time to time to understand the needs of area businesses.
2. Working with the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation and UW-Extension continue to support and expand the Inventors & Entrepreneurs Club to assist local inventors to create new firms, work with area entrepreneur networks.
3. Pursue U.S. Economic Development Administration, USDA – Rural Development, and Wisconsin Department of Commerce funds, among other sources for projects.
4. Research private community and national foundations as a source of project funding.

5. Examine the economic impacts of metallic mining on groundwater, health, and quality of life in the county by employing commonly accepted business practices of due diligence, cost benefit analysis and risk assessment.
6. Encourage “best management practices” for the development of county and private commercial forestland that both benefit the economy of the county and maintain its rural character.
7. Encourage the location of communication towers in areas that provide the widest coverage throughout the county while minimizing the impact on the landscape and wildlife migration patterns.

Goal 2:

Conserve and enhance the quality of life in the county by promoting the infrastructure and human resources that will foster economic development compatible with Oneida County’s rural Northwoods character.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and enhance public facilities and services.
2. Work with area schools and the technical college to develop and maintain a well-educated and trained workforce.

Policies:

1. Continue to support the Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport as an economic development asset.
2. Continue to support an active rail system as an economic development and tourism asset.
3. Plan for an adequate supply of land for commercial and industrial needs.
4. Evaluate, maintain and enhance infrastructure as necessary to facilitate economic growth, such as an industrial park.
5. Promote telecommunications infrastructure, especially broadband Internet, and other technology related to development and expansion.
6. Encourage industrial development to areas with the infrastructure and services to support the development.
7. Encourage educational institutions to develop training programs needed by the area’s businesses to meet identified needs.

8. Support and work with local school officials on expanding the school to work program.
9. Working with Workforce Development, determine current employment characteristics and identify existing and future employment needs.

Goal 3:

Encourage the coordination of economic development efforts with the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation, City and Towns, Chambers of Commerce, as well as other local and regional organizations.

Objective:

1. Establish strong local and regional partners in the area of economic development.

Policies:

1. Incorporate the economic development strategies developed in the Town plans into the County plan.
2. Continue and strengthen relations with the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation, local chambers and other local organizations.
3. Participate in regional economic development efforts with surrounding counties, Grow North, the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and other regional efforts.

Element 7: Intergovernmental Cooperation

7.1 Background

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C. Planning Efforts in Surrounding Counties

7.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

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7.1 Background

This is the seventh of nine elements that comprise the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan. This element is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals maps and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts and adjacent communities, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services.

The element shall analyze the relationship of the County with area school districts and adjacent local units of government, the state and other governmental agencies. In addition, this element shall identify existing or potential conflicts between the County and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation also establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, one relates directly to intergovernmental cooperation:

- 1) Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.

This Comprehensive Plan provides overall recommendations for relationships with local and overlapping jurisdictions to achieve visions for future growth, avoid inefficient or conflicting development patterns, and promote intergovernmental agreements.

A. Previous Studies

1. Regional Comprehensive Plan: A Framework for the Future, 2000 – 2020

This updates a 1981 Regional Development Plan for the North Central Wisconsin Region, which includes Oneida County. It addresses several issues having to do with intergovernmental cooperation. Consistency is perhaps the most pressing of these issues because of its central role in the 1999 revision of the Wisconsin comprehensive planning statutes that have inspired the creation of this and many other comprehensive plans since then.

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) is only advisory and seeks to provide a backdrop for local planning efforts, informing local governing bodies about the context for their planning. Although at this time the need for consistency between plans of governmental bodies at various levels is not yet entirely clear, the degree to which planning efforts in various jurisdictions can be coordinated makes subsequent problems of inconsistency less likely. The RCP also looks at annexation, extra-territorial review and zoning, cooperative agreements and revenue sharing, and other methods that local governments can use to address common issues. Not all conflicts between local governments can be settled

through the use of these methods, but by looking at problems that transcend local boundaries in a regional context, solutions are more likely to be discovered.

2. Kettl Commission

One of the most essential and basic forms of inter-governmental cooperation in Wisconsin is the shared revenue program. A significant portion of the final report of the Wisconsin Blue-Ribbon Commission on State-Local Partnerships for the 21st Century (Kettl Commission) is devoted to the shared revenue program. Although the reforms proposed in the report have not been enacted, with the continuing pressure on the State budget they can provide valuable insight into how inter-governmental cooperation can provide a basis for cost savings in the future.

The report recounts the origins of the shared revenue program when the State began to pay local governments for property tax income lost by the removal of utility property from the tax rolls. The program was broadened when the State income tax was enacted in 1911. At that time ninety percent of the money was returned to the jurisdiction where it was collected. In 1972 a formula based on needs measured by revenue, property value and population was introduced. These formulas established equalization of revenues as an important goal of the program.

One of the flaws of the program, as presently constituted, that the report points to is that under the current formula a municipality increases its shared revenue funding by increasing its revenues and spending. "Higher expenditures...produce a higher shared revenue payment. Not only does this create an incentive to increase municipal spending to receive higher state shared revenue, it distorts municipal strategy." The report proposes a way that the system might be improved, by removing this perverse incentive to increase spending, and still maintain the commitment to equalization among communities that is such an important part of the program's history. At the same time it would attempt to increase accountability and improve performance as well as promoting economic development by rewarding growth. To do this the report advocates greater collaboration among neighboring jurisdictions.

"Too many communities unnecessarily duplicate public services... (we should) create strong incentives for municipalities to work together to identify those services where significant savings are possible...whoever can do the job best ought to do the job... (through) a performance-driven mechanism for purchasing specific services instead of providing unspecified support".

In providing a basic level of service, what the report calls Badger Basics, a number of alternatives are explored, but the common thread is a “focus on funding services instead of spending...eliminate the incentive...to spend more money to receive more state aid.” To replace the per capita component of the current program, which in the 2000-2001 fiscal year amounted to \$142 million, the report advocates what it calls area-wide growth sharing. These would be geographic areas with significant economic common interests; “small enough to encourage collaboration among the governments within them...(and) on a large enough scale to encompass substantial economic activity and to prevent large financial disparities among the regions.” It goes on to suggest that in constructing these areas they should be based on existing geographic and economic relationships: they should conform to actual functional units. “The boundaries ought to be drawn to capture service-delivery areas and to encourage the interactions with which local governments are used to dealing.” The report suggests funding such a program through a 0.25 percent of sales tax revenues designated to it. In the current climate such a development seems unlikely, but that does not diminish what the report says about how cooperation between jurisdictions can potentially improve services while lowering costs.

In 2002 Governor McCallum appointed the Wisconsin Task Force on State and Local Government (Sheehy Commission) to revisit issues examined by the Kettl Commission, especially the shared revenue program. The final report of the Commission looks at six issues and makes a number of major recommendations for reform that will make the program more cost effective. Much of this report, as with the Kettl report, is directed at how State law should be reformed. These concerns are well beyond the purview of the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan, but there is valuable guidance to be gleaned from the work of both the Kettl and Sheedy Commissions that can be applied by local governments to providing services, even in the absence of reforms at the State level.

The first of the major recommendations made by the Sheedy Commission is to authorize regional tax base growth sharing, a concept introduced by the Kettl Commission. Such a policy would “strongly promote these agreements, especially in troubled economic times like these or in troubled regions and counties be they urban or rural.” These areas should be drawn to “reflect that Wisconsin’s economic strength begins in the communities and regions, and that regions compete globally...Growth sharing also can be tied to support for regional services and infrastructure and therefore encourage service sharing.” Major recommendations 4 & 5 deal with protecting service equity, penalizing inefficiency, and providing incentives in the shared revenue program for jurisdictions that enter into shared service agreements. Incentives for this kind of cost savings that are made a part of the shared revenue program would make it much easier for local jurisdictions to enter into this kind of agreement, but it is not necessary to wait for the State before these efficiencies are realized.

Local governments can enter into inter-governmental agreements to provide shared services now. Major recommendation six provides something of a roadmap for how these agreements should be designed.

“Local governments should create functional service delivery lines without regard to their political boundaries...Cost-saving opportunities may exist in providing and paying for services or facilities, including schools, in developing areas within one or adjacent jurisdictions. Laws authorizing fees against property owners and/or developers should be expanded to more easily allow for the recovery of direct costs to affected properties, with emphasis on cost management, inter-jurisdictional cooperation and fairness.”

It is crucial to the success of these agreements that they be based on carefully drawn areas. This is especially true for the proposed tax base growth sharing areas. It is necessary to “create functional service lines that support integrated decisions and systems approaches... jurisdictional lines and service delivery systems that make sense in today’s world.” Greater integration within regions that share common economic interests is the fundamental building-block of the growth sharing concept. But just as important is the idea of performance-based assessment of possible cooperative agreements: “a best practices function...(that) evaluates examples of service delivery based on: customer service, costs, efficiency, effectiveness and other factors such as rural-urban differences.” The quality of service delivery must be the primary criteria for any inter-governmental agreement. Just as jurisdictional boundaries should not pose an obstacle to efficient service delivery, an inter-governmental agreement is not an end in itself. The determining factor should be how to provide the highest quality services at the lowest possible cost.

One way to ensure this happens is by making sure that those who are served by such agreements, and those who pay for them be represented in their implementation. “By local decision, communities should share the costs of museums, recreational facilities, airports, zoos, etc. that are presently paid for by central cities but used by citizens regionally. Communities that share the cost of these facilities should have a voice in their construction and management.” Each inter-governmental agreement is different and must take into consideration all the ways in which each community is unique, but these reports do offer insight into how such agreements might be designed. The focus of these reports is, however, reform at the State level that would restructure the shared revenue program to provide incentives for this kind of cooperative agreement.

As mentioned earlier it is not the task of this Plan to focus on what State policy should be, but inter-governmental cooperation and shared service delivery is equally in the interests of local governments and of the state generally. Where

structural incentives to foster cooperative agreements would be helpful in facilitating this approach there is ample justification for local governments to enter into such arrangements, even in the absence of incentives.

Returning to the work of the Kettl Commission, there is a clear imperative for inter-governmental cooperation as the best way to serve citizens in many cases. "Putting citizens at the center provides a way of focusing everyone on problems we must effectively solve...the strongest existing partnerships in the governmental system took their first steps by concentrating on real problems of real people – and determining how best to solve them." The reason for doing this goes beyond simple questions of lowering the cost of government it involves ensuring that citizens receive the kind of government service that prepares them for a brighter future. "Growing the 21st century economy, on the other hand, demands unprecedented partnership between the state and its local governments and between local governments in every region."

B. Intergovernmental Issues

- Shared Services

Oneida County presents opportunities for local governments sharing services. Whether this involves one Town contracting with another for fire or EMS service, or the County agreeing to work with an adjacent County to solve a common problem, the goal is to maximize the benefit from the expenditure of public dollars. The economies of scale that result from a single entity providing service to a number of jurisdictions can benefit all by reducing cost and at the same time improving the quality of services received. Perhaps the best example of how various levels of government can cooperate to deliver services is the EMS service provided by the County through a contract with Howard Young Medical Center and St Mary's Hospital. Ambulances are stationed at the fire halls in Nokomis, Sugar Camp, Schoepke, and Three Lakes. These outlying ambulances are staffed with paid on-call personnel funded by the individual municipalities. There are two joint fire departments (Stella-Piehl and Pelican Lake) and Woodboro contracts with the Town of Crescent for fire service. These arrangements show how shared service agreements can work to the benefit of each party to the agreement.

- Overlapping Jurisdiction

Corporate boundaries of towns, cities and counties often do not coincide with the boundaries of other functional units set-up by service-providing agencies, most notably school districts. This overlapping of service boundaries can often cause problems and be an obstacle to providing services in the most cost-effective manner.

The school districts within the county offer a particularly clear illustration of how functional boundaries do not always coincide with established units of government. There are three school districts that operate primarily in Oneida County, the Rhinelander School District, Three Lakes, Lakeland and Minocqua-Hazelhurst-Lake Tomahawk districts. There are five districts from outside that cover parts of the county: the entire Town of Lynne is in the Prentice district, Little Rice and Woodboro are in the Tomahawk district, Enterprise and Schoepke are in the Elcho district, most of Woodruff is in the Arbor Vitae-Woodruff district, and the western part of Woodruff and the northern third of Newbold is in the Northern Pines (St. Germain) district. School district boundaries are set based on the location of school buildings, where the students live and the efficiency of transporting children to any given school.

In planning for intergovernmental cooperation it is important to remember that jurisdictional boundaries can present an obstacle to efficient service delivery. There can also be inconsistency between service delivery districts and other entities. All of these overlapping jurisdictions must be taken into consideration when considering how best to effectuate intergovernmental agreements and how best to deliver services to citizens.

- Consistency of Plans

It is required that, after 2010, land-use control actions be consistent with an adopted plan. An attempt should be made to make policies between adjoining jurisdictions consistent with one another, to the greatest degree possible. The consistency requirement in the comprehensive planning statutes deals with the need for land use decisions to be consistent with the plan, but there is no legal requirement that plans be consistent one with the other.

When Oneida County undertook the process of creating a comprehensive plan it was decided to adopt a “bottom up” approach and use the plans prepared by the Towns and City as a basis for the County Plan, in particularly related to the future land use plans/maps. At the time that the County process was initiated seven Towns (Cassian, Crescent, Hazelhurst, Newbold, Pine Lake, Stella, and Woodboro) had plans in place and two Towns (Lake Tomahawk and Three Lakes) were engaged in their own planning process, and three Towns (Little Rice, Nokomis and Sugar Camp) chose to prepare Coordination plans on their own. Eight Towns (Enterprise, Lynne, Minocqua, Monico, Pelican, Piehl, Schoepke, and Woodruff) started working with the NCWRPC as part of the County process, however, three of these Towns subsequently decided to prepare coordination plans (Enterprise, Lynne, and Schoepke).

Since the County Plan provides a basis for land use decisions made throughout the county it must allow those making the decisions to honor the wishes of the Towns without applying different standards to the various parts of the county.

To do this the County Plan seeks to establish a general framework for decision making without engaging in the specific, fine-grained analysis that would restrict its ability to abide by the expressed vision of the individual Town and City plans. Although this represents something of a balancing act, it is in keeping with the policy adopted by the County Board in authorizing the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan.

7.2 Overview of Current & Potential Efforts

A. Current Levels of Cooperation

This section looks at the existing inter-governmental cooperation agreements in effect in Oneida County.

1. Cross-jurisdictional Service

a. Fire Departments

In addition to the full-time paid department in the City of Rhinelander, there are sixteen volunteer fire departments located in Oneida County. The Town of Woodboro contracts with adjoining Town of Crescent to provide fire services. There are two joint fire departments: Stella-Piehl and Pelican Lake (Enterprise & Schoepke). Fire service is one of the most common types of cross-jurisdictional services. This kind of joint service arrangement is fairly standard and includes mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities.

b. School Districts

It is not uncommon in rural areas for school district boundaries not to conform to other local government units. There are three primary school districts in Oneida County: Three Lakes, Minocqua-Hazelhurst-Lake Tomahawk and the Rhinelander School District. Seven towns are served in whole or in part by districts located outside the county. The Lakeland High School serves both the Minocqua-Hazelhurst-Lake Tomahawk and the Arbor Vitae-Woodruff districts. The Rhinelander District operates seven schools: a high school, middle school and three elementary schools, two charters schools, and an alternative education program.

Like all school districts the Rhinelander District has taxing power. The administration of the District is totally separate from any of the municipalities where it operates and from the County. Especially in attracting families to a community the quality of the schools is a crucial factor, so the District must be considered to be bringing a primary public service to the municipalities where it operates. In the City of Rhinelander the school district is both a large landowner and a major employer.

All of these factors argue for a high level of cooperation between local governments and the school districts that serve them. The location of a school can have a large impact on land use and development patterns. The quality of education is a major factor in creating a competitive workforce. Schools are often, especially in rural communities, the site of the most visible recreational facilities and a focus of community identity.

2. Annexation and Extra-territorial Jurisdiction

An often contentious issue between local governments, annexation and the related power of extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) has led to conflicts between towns and incorporated municipalities around the state. It has also become the basis for cooperation and boundary agreements that have served the interests of both cities and towns. Under state law, a City or Village has certain land use authorities within its ETJ. These areas are 1½ to 3 miles depending on the size of the community. Extraterritorial plat review is required within the ETJ of a City or Village. This gives Cities and Villages the right to review and approve any land division within its ETJ. In order to exercise extraterritorial zoning it is necessary for the City or Village to form a committee with the adjacent Town, in which both parties have three representatives. A majority of committee members must agree and the governing body of both jurisdictions must adopt whatever agreement is reached in order for extraterritorial zoning to go into effect.

Annexation is the statutory process for transferring lands from unincorporated areas (towns) to incorporated areas (cities and villages). Annexations are typically designed and initiated by landowners, and not by Villages or Cities. Landowners can petition a City or Village to have their land annexed. Landowners can shop around for the best deal on public services and regulations. Cities and Villages can only accept or reject the petition. As a result, Cities and Villages often have to rely upon incremental annexation to address local needs.

Annexations often provide the trigger for lengthy and expensive legal struggles between competing community land use visions, and for tax base and community identity. A more constructive approach may be to explore intergovernmental agreements. The methods of inter-governmental cooperation available to address annexation-related issues include: general intergovernmental agreements; municipal boundaries fixed by court judgment; boundary change by cooperative plan agreement; and revenue sharing agreements.

There have been significant instances of residential and commercial annexation around Rhinelander, especially in the area of the 8/17-bypass route. There is a possibility of annexation to expand the County's industrial park on the west

side of Rhinelander, as well, but most future annexations are likely to be driven by residential properties seeking a connection to City sewer and water.

3. Joint Planning Efforts

a. County/Town Cooperation on Zoning and Land-use

Counties are required by statute to seek approval from Town boards for any re-zoning within that town. In Oneida County they have sought a higher level of communication between the County and the Towns on land use regulation. Although they don't have the veto power conferred by the statutes for zoning changes, the Towns are routinely consulted on conditional use applications and changes to zoning and land division ordinances.

Intergovernmental cooperation does not necessarily take the form of written agreements or contracts. Often it is more about informal arrangements and practices. Trust and respect are two crucial components of any form of cooperation and this is especially true of relations between governmental units. The cooperation exercised by the Towns and the County in planning and zoning can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of local government by getting along together.

b. County Trail System

Oneida County has a number of trails: snowmobile trails, cross-country ski trails, horse trails, off-road motorcycle and ATV trails, and hiking trails; including the Bearskin Trail, the Cassian and Enterprise Forest Unit ski areas, Washburn Non-Motorized Trail, and two segments of state-funded ATV trails, among others.

Starting in 2002 Healthy People, Healthy Oneida County and the Oneida County Health Department initiated a process of planning for a countywide system of non-motorized trails that would make "walking and bicycling viable and attractive transportation choices." A system of trails, or even a more systematic approach to the trails that already exist, could serve to, literally, tie together existing assets, and provide a basis for future improvements. The goal of such an approach is the development of a plan for on-road and off-road bike and hiking/running trails which connect existing cultural, economic, and natural resources throughout Oneida County.

Recent medical literature points to the health risk of obesity as an argument in favor of a coordinated approach to trail development. The predominance of older persons in the population and their need for exercise and non-automobile transportation options also supports the need for trails. Trails also increase the opportunity to expand the county's appeal as a visitor destination. A comprehensive approach to trail planning could address both the needs of

Oneida County residents to easy access to transportation and exercise options and the potential to increase the variety of visitor activities within the county.

The effort to create a countywide trail system and link it to other resources within and outside of the county will necessarily involve cooperation between the County and City as well as the Towns, surrounding Counties, and various government agencies. Such a unified trail system would be a great asset to the county, and the process to achieve it may represent a model that could be applied to other problems and projects.

4. Regional Efforts

a. Grow North

Grow North Regional Economic Development Corporation was created in 2004 to foster cooperation among economic development partners and foster economic growth efforts in Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Oneida and Vilas counties recognizing the value of collaborative efforts to grow and diversify the Northwoods economy.

Grow North Regional Economic Development Corporation is a non-profit organization whose mission is to assist the counties and communities throughout our region in their efforts to recruit and retain businesses, stimulate new job creation and to foster an environment conducive to entrepreneurial growth and new company formations. Grow North's partners include private-sector businesses, regional service providers, educational institutions, local economic development organizations and others who are interested in supporting our mission. Members recognize the importance and value of collaboration to ensure that the Grow North region remains competitive in the global economy.

The Grow North vision is a vibrant, unified Northern Wisconsin regional economy that retains and attracts thriving businesses and a high-quality workforce, fosters entrepreneurial activity, and inspires continuous improvement in the region's quality of life. Recently Grow North has focused on how by emphasizing the region's natural resources and improving the quality of educational opportunities among the workforce so the Grow North area can become more integrated into the New Economy.

b. Oneida County Economic Development Corporation

In 1989, the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation was created as a partnership between business and industry, responsible for new business growth and the expansion of businesses already located in Oneida County. The mission of the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation is: "To

promote and stimulate the orderly growth of stable businesses which will provide year-round employment throughout Oneida County while maintaining a high quality of life with a livable wage.”

The Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC) acts as an economic development coordinator for all of Oneida County. OCEDC assists individuals investigating the feasibility of going into business, works with existing business to expand and retain economic viability, and works to attract new business in an effort to expand the economic base and provide employment alternatives to the citizens of Oneida County. OCEDC also acts as a conduit between business and government on a local, regional, state, and federal level.

c. Tri-County Human Service Center

A joint project of Oneida, Forest and Vilas Counties the Human Service Center (HSC) provides alcohol and drug abuse counseling, outpatient mental health services, programs for those with developmental disabilities, and other community support programs. Funding for HSC is provided by each County on the basis of population, with Oneida County providing 54 percent of the budget in 2008, Vilas County contributing 31 percent, and Forest County adding fifteen percent. The Center offers a range of services including community integration for the developmentally disabled, intensive supervision persons with OWI charges, residential treatment, emergency services, and mental health outreach. After a recent reexamination of Oneida County's role in the HSC, continued participation was approved with some organizational and staff changes.

B. Potential areas of Cooperation:

This section looks at the areas where there is the potential for additional cooperation.

1. Cross-jurisdictional Service

There are a number of opportunities for cross-jurisdictional service delivery arrangements in the county. One area where such arrangements can be successful is road maintenance and snowplowing. By making agreements to share the expense of equipment or by contracting out this kind of work substantial cost savings are possible for Towns.

As mentioned above, shared services can increase efficiency and reduce cost. These arrangements already exist between many Towns in relation to fire and EMS service. Applying these same considerations to such basic Town services as snowplowing and road maintenance could yield considerable savings.

2. County Land Use Regulations

Several of the Towns in Oneida County have adopted Coordination Resolutions, which “will provide local citizens the opportunity to sit at our table with your officials and planners and represent our interests in retaining a healthy, socially cohesive and economically stable citizen base at our town level.”¹ What is being expressed in this statement is a desire on the part of the Town to be dealt with as an equal by another level of government. The Oneida County Board authorized this as a “bottom up” plan intended to give voice to the concerns of the Towns and build on them as a basis for County land use regulations. At this time it is not clear the degree to which such a Resolution can compel state or federal officials to “sit at our table”, but as a matter of policy Oneida County can take steps to affect such a relationship with the Towns on an *ad hoc* basis.

Oneida County should enact an explicit policy that the County will honor, to the extent possible, the wishes of individual Towns, as expressed through adopted resolutions, in administering land use regulations such as land division, general zoning and shoreland zoning. This could take the form of a resolution adopted by the County Board instructing the Planning & Zoning Committee to give extra weight to the recommendations of the Towns on land use matters within their boundaries. Since the actions of the Planning & Zoning Committee are advisory such a policy should be, to some extent, binding on the County Board as well.

Because the County Board is responsible for administering regulations for the county as a whole, flexibility must be left in such a policy to allow for consideration of the interests of the entire county. Even more important, land use regulations must be administered consistently throughout the county in order for those regulations to be effective, and legal, so adjustments in the positions advocated by the individual Towns will have to be made on occasion. The Board’s policy should be stated as abiding by Town recommendations “to the greatest degree possible”, but to ensure that such a standard is honored it may be helpful to require that, at least in cases where the Town recommendations are over-riden, written findings and an explanation of Board actions be provided to the applicant and the Town. At this time the Wisconsin Attorney General has opined that the statutory powers of Wisconsin Towns do not include the power to require that the County or State government “Coordinate” with Towns that have adopted the aforementioned resolutions.

C. Planning Efforts in Surrounding Counties:

This section reviews the status of comprehensive plans in counties surrounding Oneida.

¹ Letter from the Town of Nokomis to NCWRPC, March 17, 2009

1. Lincoln County

Lincoln County adopted a County plan that covers all the Towns in the county but two, although the individual Town plans do not currently meet all the criteria for comprehensive plans. The two cities in the county Merrill and Tomahawk have adopted comprehensive plans. The County recently updated the County Plan.

2. Langlade County

Langlade County adopted a County Plan. Five Towns (Antigo, Elcho, Neva, Polar, and Rolling) and the City of Antigo had previously prepared plans. All the Towns with zoning are under County zoning, and in those Towns with adopted plans they will provide the basis for County zoning decisions.

3. Forest County

Forest County received a planning grant from the state and has adopted a County Comprehensive Plan. Eleven towns, the City of Crandon and both the Mole Lake and Potawatomi Tribes have completed plans as well.

4. Vilas County

Vilas County has adopted a County Comprehensive Plan. Many towns have also adopted comprehensive plans.

5. Price County

Price County has chosen not to adopt a County plan.

7.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goal 1:

Encourage coordination and cooperation among all units of government.

Objectives:

1. Promote communication with other units of government, including adjoining towns, the county, the region, the state, and federal government.
2. Identify alternative solutions to existing or potential land use, administration or policy conflicts that may hinder inter-governmental cooperation.

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3. Encourage regularly scheduled meetings and on-going communications between County departments, local governments, state agencies, and surrounding governments.
4. Encourage the sharing of information between departments, local governments and citizens.

Policy:

1. Pursue dialogue with and between the Towns and City in the county to seek areas of coordination, cooperation and collaboration.

Goal 2:

Coordinate activities across jurisdictional boundaries to improve the quality and efficiency of services.

Objective:

1. Work together with other units of government, and others, to provide services in a more cost-effective manner.

Policies:

1. Periodically review existing shared service agreements, and explore additional agreements.
2. Encourage cooperative agreements regarding annexation, expansion of public sewer and water services, growth management and boundary agreements between the Towns and the City.
3. Encourage Towns to explore joint service agreements with neighboring Towns and the City where consolidating and coordinating services will result in better services and/or cost savings.

Goal 3:

Encourage countywide and regional planning efforts to address issues that will affect the future of Oneida County.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate the planning effort between the City of Rhinelander and its surrounding towns, as well as possible discussions with WI-DOA, DOT, and DNR, and any other governmental unit that can influence the planning process.

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2. Engage in and support processes to resolve conflicts between the plans of governments with overlapping jurisdictions.

Policies:

1. At least annually, meet with adjoining units of government to discuss issues of mutual concern.
2. Involve all school districts that serve the county in the planning process, to assist them with facility planning and site selection.
3. Encourage coordination with surrounding counties and the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission or other resources to address issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries or involve the larger region.

Element 8: Land Use

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Chapter 8: Land Use

8.1 Background

This is the eighth of nine elements that comprise the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan. This element is based on the statutory requirement for a compilation of goals, objectives, maps, and policies to guide the future development of the County. The land use element also provides a brief explanation of planning resources, implementation tools, an inventory and analysis of existing land uses by classification, a future land use review, and concludes with county goals, objectives and policies.

There are 14 state planning goals contained in the Comprehensive Planning Legislation. All of these goals can be related to land-use planning, with three being directly related. These 3 land-use planning goals are: (1) Encouragement of land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs, (2) Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities, and (3) Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.

The Land Use Element is based on locally adopted Town Plans. Each local plan provides additional information specific to that Town Plan and should be referenced for land use decisions.

A. Previous Planning Efforts

1. County

The County developed a Land Development Guide in 1982. Some background information was presented in that document, but most related to issues and policies. Issues and policies were categorized into the six categories of natural resources conservation, agricultural lands, sprawl vs. containment, services and facilities, waterfront development, and managing development. In all, over 60 policies were identified. The document outlined several actions, including the need to update the county's zoning and subdivision ordinances.

In addition, there are a variety of recently adopted specialized county plans that relate to some degree to land use. These plans include:

County Outdoor Recreation Plan: This plan's primary purpose is to identify existing recreational facilities and identify needed facilities for a five-year

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period. A variety of information is included in that plan, such as trail information, park inventory and future needs.

County Land & Water Resource Management Plan: This plan is currently being updated. The primary intent of this plan is to identify strategies to protect the quality and quantity of the county's soil and water resources.

County Forestry Management Plan: The purpose of the 15-Year plan is to manage, conserve and protect the natural resources within the county forest on a sustainable basis for present and future generations. The Plan contains information about forest resource planning, outdoor recreation planning, silvicultural practices, aesthetic management zones, trails and access control, biological communities, and wildlife species that exist within the county forest.

2. County Land Use Planning Tools

Zoning Regulations

There are two basic types of zoning, comprehensive (general) and shoreland.

Comprehensive Zoning has been a tool used by units of government since the 1920's in Wisconsin. In fact, Oneida County was the first rural county in the nation to adopt a zoning ordinance (May 16, 1933).

Zoning provides a reasonable protection of property rights of landowners by minimizing incompatible uses. Zoning identifies a variety of broad districts that identifies the primary allowable or permitted uses, as well as a list of permitted uses with some conditions, called conditional uses. Often a district will list non-permitted uses. These districts are displayed on an official zoning map. Fifteen of the county's 20 towns fall under comprehensive zoning. There are three towns that do not fall under comprehensive zoning; they are: Enterprise, Monico, and Sugar Camp.

Shoreland Zoning is mandated by state law and is administered at the county. The intent of shoreland zoning is to control development near waterways, in the most sensitive environmental areas. The area defined by state law is the area within 300 feet of a stream or river or to the landward side of the floodplain and 1000 feet of a lake, flowage, or pond. The county has jurisdiction throughout all of the towns for shoreland zoning, regardless if they have county zoning, local town zoning or no zoning, therefore all twenty towns fall under county shoreland zoning ordinance.

Land Division Regulations

The purpose of a land division or subdivision ordinance is to regulate and control the division of land to: Further the orderly layout and use of land; Prevent the overcrowding of land; Lessen the congestion on streets and highways; and Facilitate adequate provision for water, sewage and other public improvements. A subdivision ordinance includes technical requirements, design standards for plats and certified survey maps, and required improvements (i.e. stormwater detention, public and private sewage, land dedication).

The County Land Division Ordinance outlines procedures for land division, technical requirements, design standards for plats and certified survey maps, and outlines required improvements (i.e. stormwater detention, public and private sewage, land dedication). All towns are covered under this ordinance, except for those local units that have elected to have a separate land division ordinance that is more restrictive than the county ordinance. The County ordinance was updated in 2010.

Official Mapping

Counties have limited official mapping powers; cities and villages have much greater powers. Counties may prepare plans for the future platting of lands, or for the future location of streets, highways, or parkways in the unincorporated areas of the county. In addition, counties may adopt highway-width maps showing the location and width of any existing streets or highways, which are planned to be expanded; however, the municipality affected must approve the map.

3. Local Plan Status

All twenty towns and the City of Rhineland have completed either a comprehensive or coordination plan.

8.2 Land Use Inventory & Trends

A. Generalized Existing Land Use

Land use analysis is a means of broadly classifying how land is currently being used. Each type of use has its own characteristic that can determine

compatibility, location, and preference to other land uses. The maps, especially existing land use, are used to analyze the current pattern of development, and serve as the framework for formulating how land will be used

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in the future. The land use analysis was completed using recent air photos and in some cases completed Town Plans. See the Generalized Existing Land Use Map.

An Existing Land Use Map provides a “birds eye view” of existing development patterns in the county. Easily observed in the county are the vast woodlands, including wetlands, as well as the major agricultural areas. Residential development is concentrated around many of the larger lakes and scattered along town and county roads throughout the county.

The generalized existing land use categories used here include: Agriculture, Commercial, Industrial, Woodlands, Residential, Transportation, Open Grassland, Outdoor Recreation, Government/Public/Institutional, and Water. These are defined below:

Agriculture

Very little productive agricultural land exists within Oneida County in terms of traditional agriculture and production of cash crops. The Town of Stella has the largest area of tillable land in the county. The area does also have cranberry operations, many of which are concentrated in the Towns of Newbold and Three Lakes.

Commercial (Business)

Commercial uses are found throughout the county. Commercial uses include hotels, motels, and resorts, which are located throughout the county, particularly along lakeshores. It also includes commercial developments located along highways, such as gas/service stations, gift shops, restaurants, etc. Other commercial uses include those uses that provide goods and services required by both year-round and seasonal populations such as grocery stores, medical facilities, banks, etc.

There are several small communities with concentrations of development, including a mix of residential and commercial, with the largest being the City of Rhinelander. In addition, there are concentrated commercial uses in the small “downtown” areas of several towns such as Minocqua – Woodruff, Lake Tomahawk, and Three Lakes. These downtown areas play a large role in Oneida County's community character and northwoods aesthetic.

Much of the local business activity is located along the road system, scattered throughout the county. Higher concentrations of commercial

uses exist along the state and federal highways, including STH 8, USH 45, USH 47, and STH 51.

Government/Public/Institutional

Such uses are comprised of lands used for public schools, cemeteries, airfields, active and closed landfill sites, transfer stations/recycling sites, public facility and service buildings (i.e., municipal buildings, community centers), and provision of community utilities and services such as power, gas, and telephone.

Industrial

Industrial uses in Oneida County are concentrated in the Rhinelander area. Because of the desire for municipal water, sewer, fire protection, affordable land and other services, most industrial uses are typically located in incorporated municipalities, or where these are available. Some of these are also located adjacent to rail lines. Many of the industrial uses in the remainder of the county consist of active and abandoned gravel pits.

Open Lands

Open lands are areas that have no development and are clear of large concentrations of trees, such as open wetlands or fallow farm fields.

Outdoor Recreation

Oneida County has many areas that are dedicated for public parks and outdoor recreation. With an array of recreational resources provided from local, county, state, and federal sources, the effects of a growing population and accompanying service demands will place greater demands on the recreational facilities.

Residential

Residential development exists throughout the county. Residential development patterns can be generally characterized into four categories. These include: 1) high and low density lakeshore residential, 2) community and neighborhood concentrations, 3) remote subdivisions, and 4) rural, large-parcel residential.

Transportation

Transportation uses include the roadways that run throughout the county, the rail lines, and the airports. The transportation element identifies these uses.

Woodlands

Much of the county is comprised of forestland. The majority of this land in forest use is owned and managed by public entities for timber production, including the U.S. Forest Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and Oneida County. Much of this land is also heavily used for recreation purposes.

These areas are not only used by local residents, but also attract people from around the nation, and thus protection of these areas is important to maintaining the county's viable tourist economy. Protection of environmentally sensitive areas, such as riparian and forested habitats and floodway areas, whether on public or private land, is important for the same reason.

Water

Surface water comprises much of the land area in Oneida County. The development pattern is a direct reflection of the location of lakes, rivers, and streams.

Using this map, calculations were made with a geographic information system (GIS) to determine acreage calculations. Note that these are generalized and are not intended to be exact, but rather provide an overview of what the land is being used for now. The information is displayed in Table 8-1.

Table 8-1: Existing Land Use, 2009		
General Category	Acres	Percent
Agriculture (includes 1,294 Acres of Cranberry Bogs)	18,058	2.3%
Commercial	2,179	0.3%
Industrial (includes quarries)	1,281	0.2%
Governmental/Public/Institutional	938	0.1%
Open Lands	13,832	1.8%
Outdoor Recreation	2,017	0.3%
Residential	21,949	2.8%
Transportation	6,197	0.8%
Woodlands (includes 213,791 acres defined as wetlands)	650,155	82.2%
Water	74,044	9.4%
Total Acres	790,653	100%

Source: Existing Land Use Maps from local Plans & NCWRPC GIS

Woodlands were identified as the largest land use in the county. Over 82 percent of the county is considered woodlands, although much of this is also wetland. The second largest use is water, with over 9 percent of the total. Combined, these two uses represent 91 percent of the land use in the county. Residential uses make up less than 3 percent of the total.

B. Demographics Affecting Land Use

Population, housing and employment are the three most critical demographic factors that influence land use patterns. Land use patterns in Oneida County have been shaped by a variety of factors. These key factors are responsible for much of the development patterns, as they exist in Oneida County today.

In an effort to determine future land use needs, a series of projections were completed using 1980 and 2000 population, housing units and employment information. By continuing the trends of the last twenty years into the future, we determine the number of additional persons, housing units and jobs that will need a place somewhere in the county.

The population of the County has continued to grow over the last twenty years. In 2000, there were 36,776 people living in the County. Between 1980 and 2000, population grew by over 17 percent. Over that same period, total housing units increased by 15 percent, and employment increased by 68 percent. All of these factors are examined below:

1. Population

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) population projections are displayed in Table 8-2. The DOA projections indicate a 15 percent growth over the 30-year period from 2000 to 2030. The projected population, based on DOA, for 2030 is 42,423, an increase of 5,647 since 2000.

Table 8-2 displays the projected increase for population in five-year increments for 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030.

2. Housing

Over the last twenty years there have been significant changes in the number of housing units in the County. In 1980, there were 23,157 housing units and by 2000, there were 26,627 housing units in the county, an increase of 15 percent.

Housing will continue to be needed throughout the county as the population continues to increase. As displayed in Table 8-2 there will be over 42,400 year round residents in the county by 2030. Based on projected population growth and existing average household size of 2.34 we determined the total units needed in the county. An additional 2,413 housing units will be needed for the new residents alone. This does not include demand for seasonal housing, which currently accounts for about 39 percent of the housing stock.

Table 8-2 displays the projected increase for housing units in five-year increments for 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030.

3. Employment

Employment in the County is expected to continue to increase. In 2000, 15,964 jobs were located in the County. Using the 1990 to 2000 historic Department of Workforce Development employment trend an additional 11,200 jobs will be created in the county in the next 30 years, a 41 percent increase.

Table 8-2 displays the projected employment increases in five-year increments for 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030. See Table 8-2.

Table 8-2: Population, Housing & Employment Projections					
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Population					
DOA	38,949	40,003	41,029	41,876	42,423
Housing Units					
NCWRPC	27,556	28,006	28,445	28,806	29,040
Employment					
NCWRPC	19,079	20,858	22,802	24,928	27,252

Source: U.S. Census, Wis. DWD and NCWRPC

C. Land Demand

As the County's population grows there is demand for more housing and employment opportunities. The previous projections highlighted those needs. To translate land needs we use the various projections to determine overall land use demand.

Residential:

The overall residential land demand is based on the addition of over 5,500 residents, which will require about 2,400 new housing units to be added. Assuming a county wide average of about 1.5 acre of land needed per unit, we estimate about 3,600 acres over the planning period to accommodate anticipated population growth.

Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural:

Commercial and industrial development is subject to market forces and difficult to predict. Agricultural demand will remain stable over the period, so no additional land is expected to be added, except in the production of cranberries.

Currently there are about 3,700 acres of commercial land and about 1,300 acres of industrial land. There is no trend information available for either commercial or industrial lands in the county. Therefore, we make a general assumption that over the planning period that these uses will increase based on the existing employ per acre ratio. Using those projections we estimate a demand of about 1,900 acres for commercial uses and nearly 800 acres for industrial uses.

Table 8-3: Land Use Demand in Acres						
		2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Residential		700	902	877	724	468
Commercial		318	347	380	415	454
Industrial		131	143	156	171	186

Source: NCWRPC

Between 2010 and 2030, it is anticipated that approximately 1,200 acres will be needed every five-years to support residential, commercial and industrial development demands in the county. Over the planning period over 6,300 acres will be needed to meet the land demands in Oneida County.

D. Future Land Use

Developing the county plan was simple since it combines all of the locally developed and adopted town/city plans into one county future land use map. The county relied upon the local units to create their own plan. The future land use map includes twenty adopted town plans and the City of Rhineland.

Although a future land use map is advisory and does not have the authority of zoning, it is intended to reflect community desires and serve as a guide for local officials to coordinate and manage future development.

Land Use Categories

Much like the existing land use map process several future generalized land use planning categories were established. Some towns used only one category, such as the Town of Nokomis, while others used many. Generally each town used about 5 to 10 categories in the development of their plans. The resulting future land use map was prepared to present an overview of the county based on the adopted town plans. See Future Land Use Map.

The Future Land Use Plan map is not the same as the Existing Land Use map. The existing land use map categorizes the way land is being used today, while the intent of the future land use map is to identify areas for future development. Often times there is overlap, but the purpose of each map is very different.

It is important to note that the map developed here is for a general display of all of the town plans. As discussed earlier, all of the plans taken from each town plan as submitted. Therefore, the official future land use map is contained in the individually adopted town plans.

E. Redevelopment Opportunities

The most efficient development utilizes existing public services and infrastructure; these areas are referred to as redevelopment areas. Currently, the majority of existing public services are located in the City of Rhineland and where sewer and water facilities are in place, such as Minocqua – Woodruff, Lake Tomahawk and Three Lakes.

These areas have existing infrastructure and service capacity. The use of existing infrastructure and services is more cost-effective; therefore, new commercial, industrial and higher density residential development should be located in these areas. Areas where sewer & water and other infrastructure and services are not available should have minimal industrial and commercial development and only scattered residential development, where appropriate. There are some scattered sites throughout the county that may be available for reuse.

F. Land Values

Overall county equalized land values have increased over 170 percent over the last nine years; however, not all types of land increased equally. Residential property values increased by 187 percent and commercial values increased by only 148 percent, and agricultural values declined 78 percent.

In 1995 the state adopted a new assessment law called use-value assessment. This was intended to help maintain the viability of farms by providing a property tax break. Thus, lowering the taxes on agricultural uses and shifting the tax burden to other uses. The reduced tax valuation for the county reflects the impact of the law and not a decrease in farm values.

**Table 8-4:
Equalized Values (\$)**

Type of Property	2000	2009	% Change
Residential	1,063,166,300	3,050,128,200	187%
Commercial	96,346,700	238,883,300	148%
Manufacturing	1,701,600	2,470,900	45%
Agricultural	8,319,500	1,810,600	-78%
Undeveloped	13,949,200	17,806,700	28%
AG Forest	0	6,479,500	NA
Forest	151,658,700	289,659,800	91%
Other	406,600	1,640,800	304%
Total Value:	\$1,335,548,600	\$3,608,879,800	170%

Source: WI DOR, Statement of Changes in Equalized Values 2000 & 2009

G. Public Land Ownership

Public ownership of land has had a significant impact and will continue to impact the development patterns in the county. Nearly 26 percent of the county's total area is owned by public entities, such as the National Forest Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Oneida County, or tribal lands.

Public Ownership is displayed on Map 5-1.

**Table 8-5:
Public Ownership**

	Total Acreage	% of Total Public Ownership	% of County Acreage
Public Ownership			
Federal	10,236	5%	1%
State	111,454	55%	14%
Oneida County Forest	82,115	40%	10%
Lac du Flambeau Lands	686	*	*
Totals:	204,491	100%	26%

Source: Oneida County (* less than one percent)

A significant amount of land in Oneida County, as well as other northern counties, is owned and managed for the production of timber. However, much of these lands that are privately held are being divided and sold to individuals, which has changed the development patterns in the county. Three major trends are likely to continue throughout the planning period which relate to lake/waterfront development:

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- ✓ Conversion of seasonal to permanent residences will increase as the baby-boomer generation migrates northward for its retirement location.
- ✓ Waterfront development pressure and cost of shoreline property will continue to increase, as fewer lakefront properties are available.
- ✓ Large, privately owned parcels adjacent to lakes will likely face development pressure for subdivision.

H. Land Use Programs

The principle land use programs include the County Zoning and Land Division ordinances. Two other related programs that may impact land use within the Town are listed below:

Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Program:

In October of 1999, the Governor signed into law Wisconsin Act 9, the Budget Bill, containing substantial revisions of statutes governing comprehensive planning. The law has been revised by the signing of two additional bills into law. The first is AB 872, containing "technical revisions" which was signed

May 10, 2000. The second bill, signed April 13, 2004, is AB 608, which reduced the number of items that must be consistent with the plan to three, these are: official mapping, subdivision ordinances and zoning ordinances. Taken together these bills represent the most sweeping revision of the State's planning enabling laws in half a century.

The law (§66.1001 WI Stats.) requires all jurisdictions within the state that exercise control over land-use to prepare a comprehensive plan by 2010. It lays out the nine required chapters of the plan and requires a public participation process. Jurisdictions that do not have a comprehensive plan in place by the deadline may not engage in actions that impact land-use.

The comprehensive planning law is significant in many ways. The law creates for the first time a definition of a comprehensive plan; it requires that almost all local units of government have a plan; it sets requirements for public participation; and requires that the plan be consistent with local implementation tools. Most important, is that it maintains that the process be locally driven so all local units of government decide their own future.

Working Lands Initiative:

The Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative was passed as a part of the state's 2009-2011 biennial budget process. The goal of the Working Lands Initiative is

to achieve preservation of areas significant for current and future agricultural uses through successful implementation of these components. This is an expansion of the existing farmland preservation program. The main components include:

- Expand and modernize the state's existing farmland preservation program (FPP)
- Establish agricultural enterprise areas (AEAs)
- Develop a purchase of agricultural conservation easement matching grant program (PACE)

The Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative will require that each county update its Farmland Preservation Plans over the next few years.

I. County Resources

Oneida County has several departments that have some relationship to land use. The primary department is the Zoning, which is responsible for the administration of county zoning, issuance of building and septic permits, and general code enforcement.

The Land & Water Conservation Department is responsible for soil and water conservation, related planning and education and the Forestry Land and Outdoor Recreation Department manages all county lands, including the county forest, and coordinate recreation throughout the county.

All of these departments have standing county level committees that provide policy oversight, including Agricultural & Extension/Land & Water Conservation; Forestry, Land & Outdoor Recreation; and Planning & Development.

8.3 Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal 1:

Provide for a well-balanced mix of residential, business, industrial, recreational, forestry, and other uses to serve the future needs of Oneida County and to maintain the area as a desirable place to live and work.

Objectives:

1. Work with the Towns to guide the use, location, and density of development within both public and private lands consistent with the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan.

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2. Designate, maintain, and regulate an adequate quantity of suitable lands for future residential, commercial, forestry, industrial, recreational, and other uses in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and public input.
3. Encourage the clustering of new business, residential, commercial, and industrial development into planned development areas in order to promote defined development districts, conserve resources, and maintain the character of the area.
4. Encourage early identification of potential negative impacts from development proposals and promote strategies to minimize those impacts on neighbors, the community, and the natural resources.

Policies:

1. Consider the use, location, and density of development and how it affects the natural resources, community character, anticipated growth, and need for utilities and services.
2. Development should be discouraged in environmentally sensitive areas, including wetlands and flood plains.
3. Guide the location, mix, and quality of private development to meet both private and public land use demands.
4. Update land use regulations to better guide and manage the location, mix, quality, and impacts of development in the county.
5. Land uses should be planned and approved for development in an orderly manner and avoid land use conflicts.
6. Encourage infill development and redevelopment throughout the county, especially where facilities and services are available, such as Brownfields.

Goal 2:

Provide adequate infrastructure & public services, and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future demand for residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses.

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Objective:

1. Encourage new areas of growth within or near existing areas of development where adequate public facilities and services exist or are planned for expansion and where there is adjacent existing compatible development.

Policies:

1. Assure that the pace of development does not exceed the capacity of utilities, roads, and community facilities and services.
2. Discourage sprawling, low-density development where there is no existing infrastructure and service capacity.
3. New development should be responsible for paying for the cost of any new infrastructure costs required for that development.
4. All locally adopted plans should strive to be complimentary with and seek to minimize conflicts with other levels of government and implementation tools.
5. Work with Towns to develop and update individual comprehensive or coordination plans and create or modify implementation tools to reflect the future needs of their communities.

Goal 3:

Maintain and update the County Comprehensive Plan.

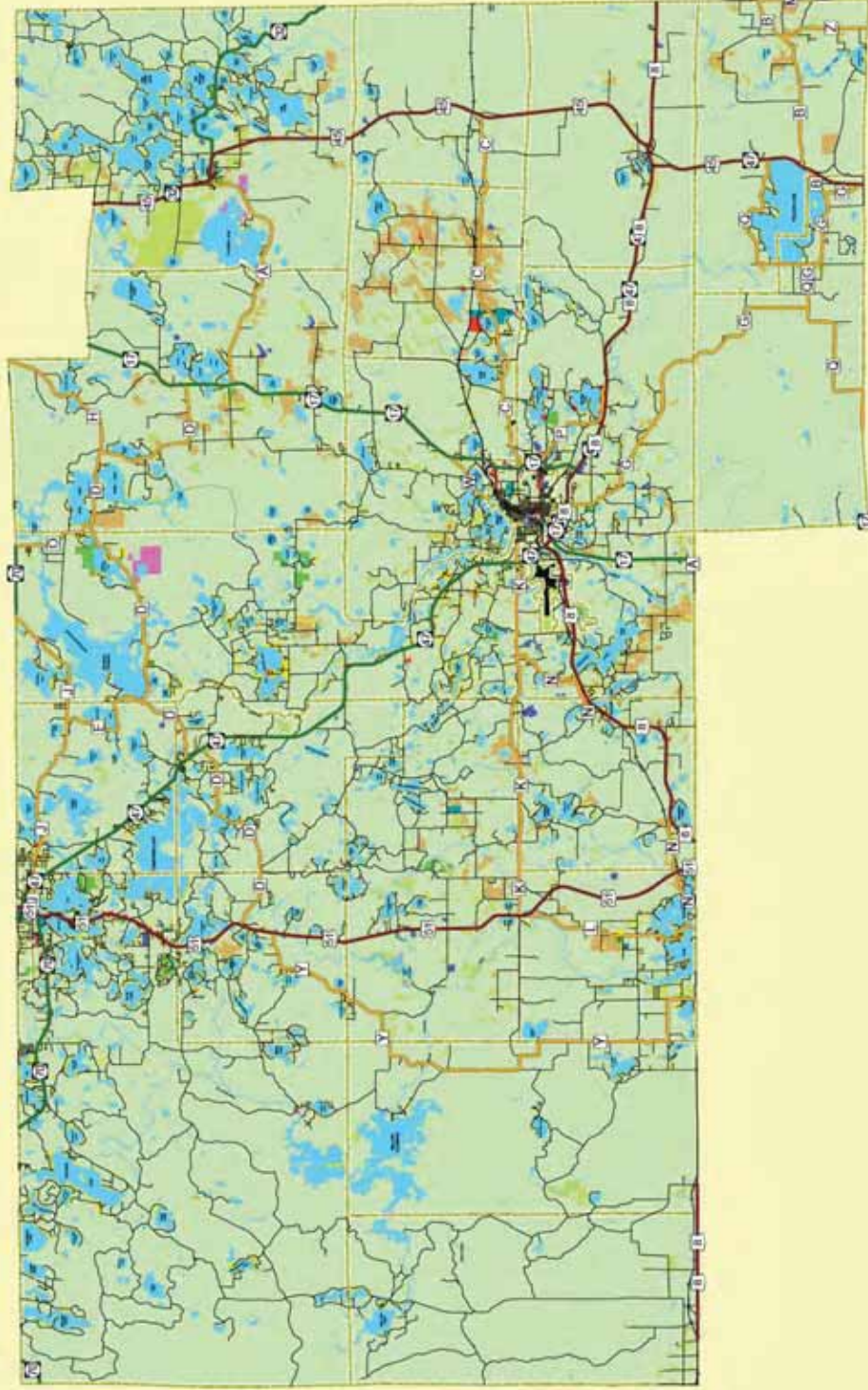
Objectives:

1. All comprehensive plans should strive to maximize public input in their planning efforts.
2. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
3. Promote flexibility in the plan.
4. Establish on-going communication with each Town.

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Policies:

1. Work cooperatively with the Towns to promote coordinated land use and a compatible development pattern that respects private property rights.
2. Establish a policy on the relationship between the county and town plans as it relates to plan implementation.
3. Establish a policy to ensure Towns are providing all plan amendments and updates to the county for incorporation into the County Comprehensive Plan.
4. The County will maintain the County Comprehensive Plan, which will serve as a guide for future land use and zoning decisions.
5. New development and redevelopment will be permitted based on consideration of this Plan.



Legend

- Civil Division Boundaries
- Federal Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Cranberry Bog
- Governmental
- Industrial
- Open Lands
- Outdoor Recreation
- Transportation
- Residential
- Water
- Woodlands



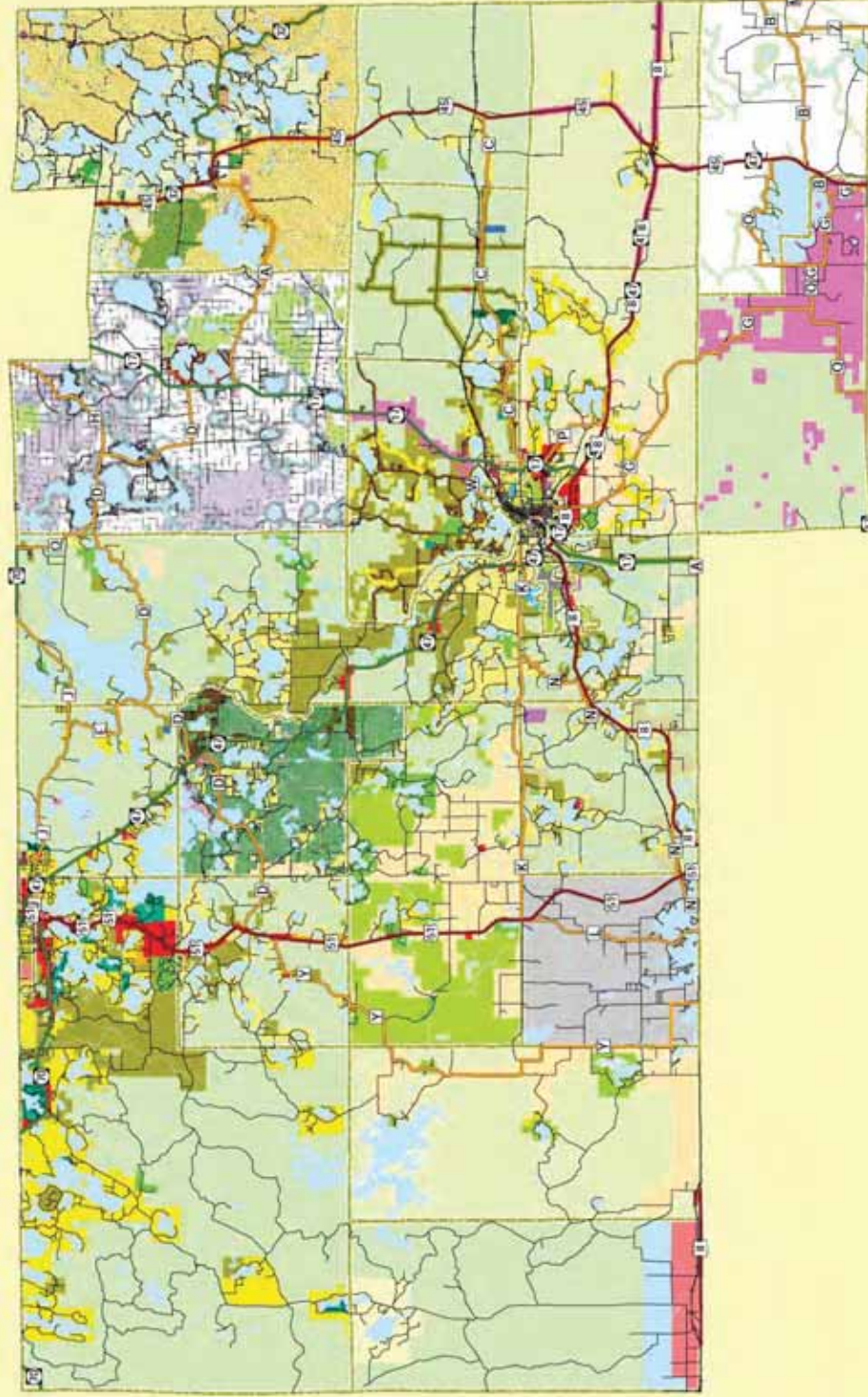
Source: WI DNR, NCRSPC, FEMA, Oneida County

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCRSPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



Prepared By:
**North Central
 Wisconsin Regional
 Planning Commission**

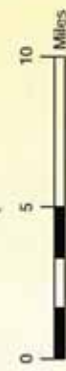
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Legend

- Federal Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Civil Division Boundaries

* Each town developed their own plan. As such, each used a variety of different land use categories. See individual plans for detailed future land use. (3/5/2012)



Source: Town Plans

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Prepared By:
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Element 9: Implementation

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9.3 Plan Monitoring	Page 2
9.4 Plan Amendments	Page 3
9.5 Plan Updates	Page 4
9.6 Implementation Tools	Page 4
9.7 Town – County Relationship	Page 6
9.8 Consistency Among Plan Chapters	Page 8
9.9 Recommended Actions	Page 8

Element 9: Implementation

9.1 Background

This is the final element of the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan. This element outlines plan adoption, monitoring, amendment, and update procedures. In addition, there is a review of plan implementation tools, procedures, and the overall recommendations to implement this plan.

The County Board and its various committees, boards, and commissions, along with county staff, will use the Municipalities Plan to guide development of the County in the years to come. In addition, landowners and developers will use the document as a guide.

9.2 Plan Adoption

The adoption process requires that the Plan Commission or a designated Committee, in this case the Comprehensive Planning Committee, review the Comprehensive Plan and pass a “resolution” to recommend the adoption of the plan to the County Board. That recommendation is forwarded to the County Board, which must adopt the Comprehensive Plan by “ordinance”. Prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, a public hearing is required to be held to solicit public comment. That public hearing must be advertised with at least a 30 days notice.

Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide development decisions over the next 20 years. The adopted County Comprehensive Plan incorporates adopted town and city level plans.

9.3 Plan Monitoring

Members of the County Board, Planning and Development Committee, County Staff, and other local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated. On an annual basis the Future Land Use Map should be reviewed and amended if necessary to keep the map current with Town and City Plans. At a minimum, the entire plan should be formally reviewed at least every five years and, by law, updated at least every 10 years.

As part of the comprehensive planning process, a number of goals, objectives, and policies were developed. To measure progress towards meeting those, a variety of actions need to take place. Therefore, the task to measure plan progress is as simple as determining if any action was taken or not on the various goals, objectives, and policies.

It is recommended that a formal periodic "Plan Status" report be prepared to summarize the progress toward implementation. This report might be jointly developed by various County Departments, as related to their involvement in the implementation of the goals, objectives, and policies developed within this plan.

Any evaluation should involve first reviewing the goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires. Then the policies should be reviewed and refined to eliminate completed tasks and identify new approaches if appropriate. Various committees and agencies would complete many of these actions at the department level. It should be noted that many of the policies identified in the plan are continuous or on going and should also be monitored to measure the plan's overall success.

9.4 Plan Amendments

The plan may be amended at any time upon the recommendation of the Planning and Development Committee and approval from the County Board. The process must follow the same statutory process described for initial plan adoption.

Amendments may be appropriate throughout the life of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change. Amendments may range from minor changes to the plan text or map changes.

A list of general criteria to consider when reviewing proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan, including:

- ✓ A town or city that has amended or updated its local plan and forwards a copy to the county.
- ✓ The plan amendment corrects an error made in the original plan.
- ✓ The amendment is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan and each Town and City plan.

Since all amendments need to follow the same process, it might be a good policy to hold smaller changes for a period of time or until deemed

appropriate. All Town Boards, the City of Rhineland and the public shall be notified of proposed plan changes and allowed an opportunity for review and comment. For significant amendments, it may be desirable to solicit public opinion through surveys and/or community meetings prior to the public hearing.

9.5 Plan Updates

According to the State's comprehensive planning law, comprehensive plans must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to the more routine amendments described above, plan updates may involve re-writing entire chapters of the plan document. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community's goals and objectives, based upon an analysis of current growth trends and major changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption.

It is important that all municipalities and the public be involved in the update process. To ensure that the public is engaged in plan amendments, the same procedure used for initial plan adoption must be followed, as outlined in State Statute 66.1001. Upon Planning and Development Committee review and resolution to make recommended changes to the Plan, the County Board shall call a public hearing to allow property owners and citizen's time to review and comment on recommended plan changes. The public hearing shall be advertised using a Class I notice with 30 days notice.

9.6 Implementation Tools

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. As discussed in previous elements, the most common implementation tools are the County's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. These regulatory tools are used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development. These tools and others should be reviewed and updated as needed to implement the comprehensive plan.

1. Zoning Ordinance

The County Zoning Ordinance is an extremely detailed, comprehensive, locally adopted law that is used to regulate and control how land is used and developed. The zoning ordinance contains rules for building setbacks, the density of development, the height and size of building and other structures, and the types of land uses that are allowed on each and

every piece of land in the County. The zoning ordinance consists of a written text and a map. The general purpose of zoning is to protect the public health, safety and general welfare. This is accomplished by minimizing the undesirable effects resulting from high-density urban development. Some methods for this include segregating and/or buffering incompatible land uses and by maintaining standards that ensure development will not negatively impact the community's character or environment.

The establishment of zoning districts and the zoning map indicate where specific types of development can and should be located. Zoning districts shown on the zoning map should be coordinated with the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan and the future land use map. While the zoning map and land use map do not need to directly match at the time the land use map is adopted, the intent is that the land use map will serve as a guide indicating how the property should eventually be zoned. However, the goal and objective statements in the comprehensive plan, as well as the policies and strategies, need to be considered in guiding future land use in the community.

Indiscriminate zone changes may result in weakening the comprehensive plan since, on a cumulative basis; they are likely to move the community away from its vision and stated goals and objectives. There will, however, be situations where changing the zoning district boundaries is in the best interest of the community. When changing the zoning would result in a conflict with the comprehensive plan, the plan should also be amended.

The County Board makes the final decisions regarding changes to the content of the zoning ordinance text and the zoning district assigned to each parcel of property in the community. These decisions are preceded by public hearings. The Planning and Development Committee also makes recommendations to the County Board on all proposed zoning ordinance text changes and zoning district map amendments.

2. Subdivision Ordinance

The subdivision ordinance establishes regulations on how large tracts of vacant land are to be split into smaller parcels. These regulations address design issues such as road access, street standards, public utility installation, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that a new residential area will be an asset to the community and a safe and desirable place for the people living in the neighborhood. The County Board makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance text. With input

from County staff, the Planning and Development Committee approves all subdivision plats.

3. Official Mapping

Counties have limited official mapping powers; while cities and villages have much greater powers. Counties may prepare plans for the future platting of lands, or for the future location of streets, highways, or parkways in the unincorporated areas of the county. In addition, counties may adopt highway-width maps showing the location and width of any existing streets or highways, which are planned to be expanded; however, the local unit must approve the map. Official maps are currently not being used in Oneida County.

4. Capital Improvement Program

There is also a non-regulatory approach to implementing the comprehensive plan; this generally involves decisions related to how the community will spend its financial resources, or a Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Some county departments already utilize the CIP, but not in relation to the County Comprehensive Plan.

A CIP is simply a method of planning for and scheduling expenditures for public improvements over a period of several years in order to maximize the use of limited public funds. Each year the CIP is reviewed as part of the budget process and extended one year to compensate for the previous year that was completed. This helps keep the improvement program current and allows for modifications to meet changing needs. Typically improvements or expenditures considered in the CIP process include:

- Public buildings
- Roads and highways, including maintenance and new construction/paving
- Utility systems, including construction/expansion, treatment plants, water towers, wells, etc.
- Long-term equipment
- Park and trail acquisition and development

9.7 Town - County Relationship

Local town and city plans are the basis for this county plan, particularly as it relates to land use. Therefore it is critical for each town, city and the county to communicate regularly regarding local plan amendments

and updates, since these local plans will be used to amend the county comprehensive plan.

The County recognizes that there may be differences between the Towns and City of Rhinelanders Goals and Objectives and the County Goals and Objectives in each jurisdiction's respective Comprehensive/Coordination Plan. The County understands that the differences between Town, City and County Goals and Objectives is due to the scope of each Plan as it was developed; i.e. the Towns and City of Rhinelanders had to examine the 9 elements required for a Comprehensive Plan with regard to the unique aspects of their Town and City and the County had to analyze the 9 elements required for a Comprehensive/Coordination Plan on a county-wide basis encompassing all of the Towns and City of Rhinelanders. The County will not have their Comprehensive Plan automatically supersede the Town or City Plan nor will the Town's or City's Plan automatically supersede the County's Plan in the event of a conflict during implementation. All Comprehensive/Coordination Plans that are in effect shall be considered when making decisions for the future of the Towns, City and Oneida County.

The two primary tools of implementation are zoning and subdivision. Procedures for addressing the Town, City – County relationship are outlined below:

Zoning:

The general procedures for site plans, conditional use permits, variances, and rezonings would be as follows:

1. Application submitted to the County Planning & Zoning (CP&Z).
2. CP&Z forwards application to Town (with timeframe for response).
3. Town reviews application for consistency to Town Comprehensive Plan and submits findings/recommendations to CP&Z.
4. CP&Z reviews application for consistency to County Comprehensive Plan.
5. CP&Z recommends approval/denial based on consistency or outlines actions to amend Comprehensive Plan.

Subdivision:

The general procedure for applications would be as follow:

1. Plat application is submitted to the CP&Z.
2. CP&Z reviews in Towns under County Subdivision Ordinance.

3. Where Towns have a Subdivision Ordinance in place the Town would also review.
4. CP&Z recommends approval/denial based on consistency or outlines actions to amend Comprehensive Plan.

9.8 Consistency Among Plan Chapters

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the Implementation Element describe how each of the required elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the Plan. Since the County completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist.

This Comprehensive Plan also references previous and current related planning efforts to ensure they are considered in the community's planning and development decisions. Recommendations from other county, towns and city plans have been summarized and incorporated in this Plan, as deemed appropriate, to foster coordination/cooperation and consistency between Plans.

9.9 Recommended Actions

This section outlines recommendations to implement the goals, objectives, and policies that are contained in the comprehensive plan. These recommendations are:

1. The County Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee should pass a resolution recommending adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. The County Board should adopt the Plan by ordinance and use it as a guide for decision-making.
3. The County should provide copies of the Plan to all communities within the County.
4. The County should incorporate changes to its Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, Subdivision Ordinance, and other implementation tools to establish consistency, as needed.
5. The County Planning and Development Committee should become knowledgeable of all Municipalities and the City's Plans and use them to review future land use recommendations.
6. The County's staff should incorporate the goals, objectives and policies of the Plan into annual work plans and budgets.

7. The County should encourage citizen awareness of the plan, as well as developers. Utilize various methods, including website and information materials.
8. The County should work with the Towns and City to ensure communication related to the comprehensive plan. Towns and the City of Rhineland are encouraged to submit any amendments or updates to their local Plans in a timely manner. The County should incorporate those changes to the County Plan from time to time, but at least annually.
9. The County Planning and Development Committee should review Town and City Plan amendments to the Future Land Use Map at least annually and make necessary amendment recommendations to the County Board.
10. The County should create a new standing committee to implement this Plan. The committee should include at least five or six members from various standing County committees, as well as members of municipalities and the public and other local groups.
11. The committee should develop a detailed Work Plan that identifies in detail the actions needed, the parties responsible, and the timeframe to accomplish the goals, objectives, and policies outlined in this Plan.
12. The committee should present a "Plan Status" Report to the County Board at least annually.
13. The County should formally review the Plan every five years, and update the Plan at least every ten years.

ONEIDA COUNTY
Public Participation Plan 8/09

I. Background

The County recognizes the need to engage the public in the planning process. This document sets forth the techniques the County will use to meet the goal of public participation. Therefore, this Public Participation Plan forms the basic framework for achieving an interactive dialogue between citizens, local decision makers, staff, and the NCWRPC.

The creation of the Public Participation Plan is a task required in meeting the requirements of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation (§66.1001 Wis. Stats.). As the planning process develops, it should be expected that deviations from the plan might occur.

II. Objectives

The following is a list of objectives for the Public Participation Plan:

- Notify residents, land owners, and other interested parties of the importance of participating in creating the Town Comprehensive Plan.
- Provide the public with opportunities to share their input with the County Plan Committee and the County Board.
- Allow public access to all Comprehensive Plan chapters and maps created throughout the planning process on a web page available on the Internet.
- Request input from residents and land owners to represent the broadest range of perspectives and interests in the community as possible.
- Solicit public comment through a variety of means (including a web page on the Internet), and in such a way that it may be carefully considered and incorporated into the comprehensive planning process.
- The process of public involvement shall strengthen the sense of community.

The goal will be to inform, consult and involve the public and the communities served during each phase of the planning process. Hopefully, this will help balance the issues related to private property rights.

III. Techniques

The public participation plan for the County's comprehensive planning process will incorporate the following:

1. All meetings for the comprehensive planning process will be posted by the County, and will be open to the public, and include time for public comment.
2. NCWRPC will create and maintain a web page on the Internet for the Comprehensive Plan. The chapters and maps created will be posted to this web page throughout the planning process.
3. Comprehensive plan meeting handouts will be maintained by County Planning & Zoning, and available for review by the public at the Courthouse.
4. When the draft comprehensive plan is prepared, it will be available at the Courthouse, the library, and on the Comprehensive Plan web page.
5. NCWRPC will distribute the draft Comprehensive Plan to all surrounding communities after the Plan Committee adopts a resolution in favor of the County Comprehensive Plan.
6. The Oversight Committee and County Staff will provide regular reports to the County Board.
7. Three informational "Open House" Meetings will held in the Spring.
8. County Board will hold a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan after the Plan Oversight Committee recommends adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

RESOLUTION # 83-2009

For Adoption of a Public Participation Plan

Resolution offered by the Supervisors of the Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee.

Resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Oneida County, Wisconsin:

WHEREAS, Oneida County is required to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan as outlined in Wisconsin Statutes; and

WHEREAS, public participation is critical for the development of a sound plan; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for Oneida County to approve a process to involve the public in the planning process; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Oneida County Board of Supervisors does approve and authorize the Public Participation Plan as attached.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Plan shall be implemented immediately upon passage and direct that the County Clerk shall distribute said plan to all twenty (20) Town Clerks and the City of Rhinelander Clerk within seven (7) days of passage.

Vote Required: Majority = _____ 2/3 Majority = _____ 3/4 Majority = _____

The County Board has the legal authority to adopt: Yes 26 No _____ as reviewed by the Corporation Counsel, [Signature], Date:

9/9/09

Approved by the Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee this 26th day of August, 2009.

Offered and passage moved by:

[Signature]
Supervisor
[Signature]
Supervisor
[Signature]
Supervisor
[Signature]
Supervisor

Supervisor

18 Ayes

0 Nays

3 Absent

0 Abstain

✓ Adopted

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by the County Board of Supervisors this 22nd day Sept., 2009.

 Defeated

Robert Brusco
Robert Brusco, Clerk

Andrew P. Smith
Andrew P. Smith, County Board Chair

Franklin Greb, Vice Chair