



Town of Crescent
Oneida County, Wisconsin
Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043



Acknowledgements

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This plan was developed by the Town of Crescent Plan Commission with assistance from North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC)

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Chapter 1: Demographics

This chapter explores potential issues that may impact the Town over the 20-year planning period. This chapter contains trends and forecasts with jurisdictional comparisons for basic demographics including population, households, employment, age, education, and income. Although forecasts should typically cover the 20-year planning period, in some cases, the only acceptable sources had lesser time periods for their forecasts. Official sources are used for data and forecasting, including the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) Demographic Service Center and the U.S. Census Bureau. The American Community Survey (ACS), a product of the U.S. Census Bureau, consists of estimates using five-year increments of data to “fill in” years between the Decennial Census, with 2021 having the most recent available data.

Background

The Town of Crescent is a six-mile by six-mile town with 36 sections located in the south-central part of Oneida County, Wisconsin west of the City of Rhinelander, which it partially surrounds. It is bordered by the Town of Newbold to the north, Town of Pelican to the east, Town of Woodboro to the west, and the Town of Harrison in Lincoln County to the south. It is one of twenty towns in the county. See **Map 1**.

Planning Process

In early 2023, the Town initiated a process to update its 2007 plan. The state planning law 66.1001 requires that a comprehensive plan be updated every ten years. A variety of Plan Commission meetings were held over the course of 2023 to prepare the plan. A final Plan Commission meeting was held in September 27, 2023 to review the final draft and recommend adoption of the plan by the Town Board.

Public Participation

An important part of any planning process is public involvement. Public involvement provides the citizens of the town an opportunity to express their views, ideas, and opinions on issues that they would like addressed regarding the future development of their town. Local officials use this input to guide policies and decisions with greater awareness of the public’s desires and consensus. See the adopted Public Participation Plan in **Appendix A**. The Town of Crescent posted all Plan Commission meetings to invite the public and held a survey to collect public input.

Issues and Opportunities

During the planning process for this plan update, the Town Plan Commission identified and discussed several issues/opportunities currently facing the Town, as follows:

- **Recreation.** The Town desires to enhance its outdoor recreation facilities that build of the existing natural environment and recreation trails and facilities that are already popular. The Town is particularly interested in new constructing new venues that residents can use with the goal of helping Town residents be better connected to one another. One type of such facility could house indoor recreation to provide the Town with year-round recreation. To assess which facilities are needed, the Town should inventory existing and potential recreation sites, promote community events and opportunities that use existing recreational resources, evaluate available funding sources, and create an interactive and comprehensive online outdoor recreation map. This would be facilitated by establishing a Town Recreation Committee which would collaborate with the Town Communications Committee.
- **Resources.** The Town desires to preserve its natural resources that provide recreation and scenery that residents and visitors enjoy year-round. Currently, the Town has no zoning ordinance and is interested in implementing zoning for residential, commercial, agricultural, forestry, multifamily, and potentially Tourist Rooming Houses (TRHs). The goal would be to balance property rights while preserving the Town's rural, scenic character.
- **Annexation** is a concern as tax base is lost when Town lands are incorporated into the City of Rhinelander. This has primarily occurred with Industrial Park expansion and other uses that desire water and sewer systems. In the past, there has been interest in pursuing a boundary agreement with the City of Rhinelander so the Town can anticipate when properties may be incorporated and how to prepare financially, which could include an agreement to receive tax revenue from the former Town parcels over a specified time.
- **Subdivisions** in the past were a concern due to minimum lot sizes. After public feedback, the Town revised its subdivision ordinance in 2006.
- **Lakefront Development.** The former comprehensive plan noted that hotels and other lakefront resort properties were being converted into condominium ownership. Condominiums are appeal to those who want to own their unit but not be responsible for upkeep of common areas like lawns and driveways. Although there is no issue with ownership type, new construction brought more units and density to the lakefronts, causing concern for their impact on the lakes.
- **Broadband internet service** is lacking and/or unreliable in many parts of the Town and dead spots in cell service still exist. This has implications for daily activities in an increasingly tech-based world as well as for emergency services.
- **Tourist Rooming Houses (TRHs)** have become popular in the Town, generating revenue, but also raising concerns with neighbors and reducing the supply of homes for year-round residents.
- **Housing affordability** is also a concern, and there is demand for more low-income, senior, and multifamily housing in the Town.

- **ADA-Accessible Transportation.** Due to the Town’s rural character, there is a desire to expand non-motorized and ADA-accessible transportation options and continue to promote all forms of outdoor recreation.
- **Utilities.** Concerns about sustaining reliable, affordable utilities and the Town’s dispersed population result in a desire to investigate alternative energy sources and a shelter for long-term power outages.

Town History

The Town of Crescent was a farming community at the end of the 19th century. A twice-weekly barge would haul supplies from Rhinelander into the Town using the Wisconsin River. When the Hat Rapids Dam and Trellis Bridge were constructed in 1904, the Town was soon able to access Rhinelander using this new road. Crescent’s Town Hall was built in 1925 and moved in 1979. Influential organizations include the now-defunct Crescent Women’s Club, which was founded in 1914, the Crescent Volunteer Fire Department, founded in 1971, and Crescent Lake Association.

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

Historical Trends

The 2021 population for the Town of Crescent is an estimated 2,308 people. As shown in **Table 1**, the Town population has increased by 26.8% since 1990. There was a dramatic increase in Crescent’s population from 1990 to 2000, after which point there was steady increase until 2010, followed by another increase between 2010 and 2021. This contrasts with Oneida County and the State of Wisconsin as a whole, which grew at rates of 18.3% and 20.5%, respectively, from 1990 to 2021. Since 1990, Crescent has had the second fastest increase in population among the surrounding towns, as only the Towns of Harrison and Woodboro tied for the fastest increase in population. The Town grew faster than all surrounding towns, the county, and the state between 2010 and 2021.

Table 1: Population Trends						
	1990	2000	2010	2021	1990-2021 % Change	2010-2021 % Change
Town of Crescent	1,820	2,071	2,033	2,308	26.8%	13.5%
Town of Pelican	3,202	2,902	2,764	2,791	-12.8%	1.0%
Town of Newbold	2,281	2,710	2,719	2,809	23.1%	3.3%
Town of Woodboro	673	685	813	855	27.0%	5.2%
Town of Harrison (Lincoln Co.)	660	793	833	838	27.0%	0.6%
City of Rhinelander	7,427	7,735	7,798	8,177	10.1%	4.9%
Oneida County	31,679	36,776	35,998	37,468	18.3%	4.1%
Wisconsin	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,871,661	20.0%	3.2%

Source: U.S. Census 1990, 2000, & 2010; American Community Survey (ACS) 2021

There were 863 households in the Town of Crescent in 2021, for over an eight percent increase from the number of households in 2000, as shown in **Table 2**. During the same period, the number of households in Oneida County also increased, but to a lesser degree, at 0.4 percent. Household growth in both Crescent and Oneida County was slower than the State which experienced over a 17 percent increase during the same time period. There was great variation among the surrounding communities, with the greatest growth in the number of households in the Town of Harrison (22.3 percent), and the slowest increase in the number of households in the City of Rhinelander (0.4 percent). In 2021, average household size in the Town was 2.67, up from 2.11 in 2010. In comparison, Oneida County’s average household size was 2.34 in 2021, up from 2.03 in 2010.

Table 2: Households					
	2000	2010	2021	2000-2021 % Change	2010-2021 % Change
Town of Crescent	797	857	863	8.3%	0.7%
Town of Pelican	1,167	1,183	1,190	2.0%	0.6%
Town of Newbold	1,126	1,176	1,206	7.1%	2.6%
Town of Woodboro	292	351	332	13.7%	-5.4%
Town of Harrison (Lincoln Co.)	314	356	386	22.9%	8.4%
City of Rhinelander	3,214	3,545	3,228	0.4%	-8.9%
Oneida County	15,333	16,003	15,724	2.6%	-1.7%
Wisconsin	2,084,556	2,279,768	2,401,818	15.2%	5.4%

Source: U.S. Census 2000 & 2010, ACS 2021

Projections

Figure 1 shows population projections for the Town of Crescent and **Table 3** compares projected population in the Town to Oneida County, based on projections made by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA). The Wisconsin DOA population projections are recognized as Wisconsin’s official population projections. These projections are based on historical population and household growth in each community, with more recent years given a greater weight. The Town of Crescent is expected to experience an 8.5% increase in population between 2021 and 2040, although the projections do indicate the potential for a slight drop off in population after 2035. In comparison, Oneida County is projected to increase by about 2.8% during this time. The Town of Crescent is expected to grow consistently with most surrounding communities.

The 2021 population estimate for the Town of Crescent is 2,308. **Figure 1** displays population trends in the Town of Crescent from 2000 to projected populations in 2040. According to WDOA, Population within the Town is projected to level off over time, decreasing to 2,215 residents in 2040, up from 2,071 residents in 2000 and from 2,033 residents in 2010. Note that, despite these projections, the sudden increase in 2021 could have been a result of more people working from home, resulting in a possible higher future population than what is projected.

Figure 2 and **Table 4** include household projections completed by the WDOA. The number of households in the Town of Crescent is projected to increase by 123 households, or a 14.3 percent

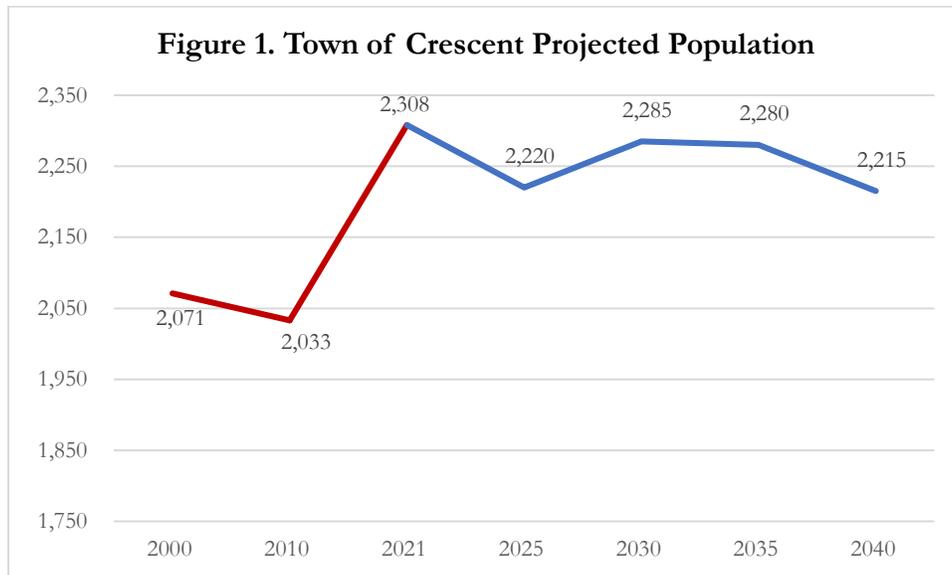
increase between 2021 and 2040. This is faster than both the County (13.8 percent) and the State (10.0 percent) in terms of a projected increase. Further analysis of housing unit change can be found in the Housing Chapter and Land Use Chapter of this comprehensive plan.

Table 3: Population Projections						
	2021	2025	2030	2035	2040	2021-2040 % Change
Town of Crescent	2,033	2,220	2,285	2,280	2,215	9.0%
Oneida County	37,468	38,905	39,985	39,745	38,500	2.8%

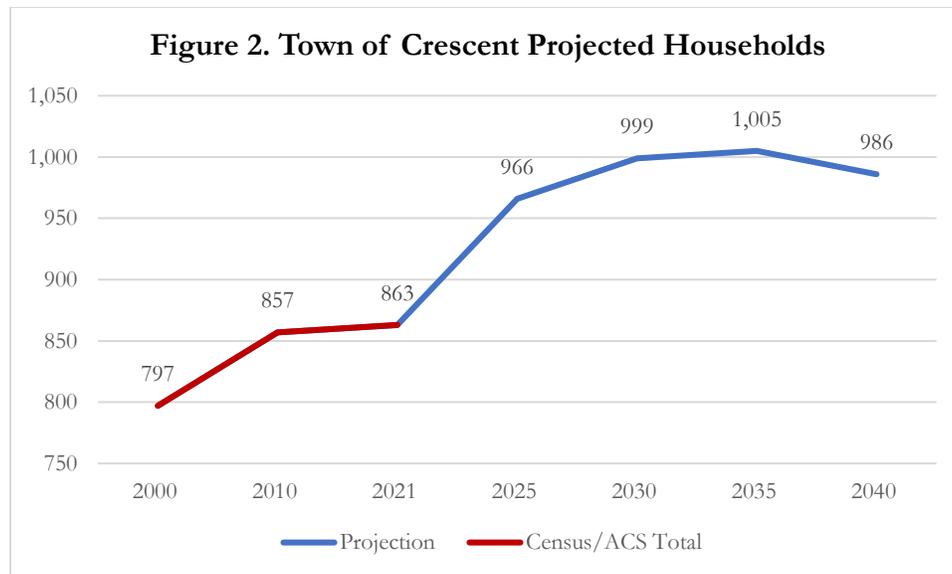
Source: Wisconsin DOA, ACS 2021

Table 4: Household Projections						
	2021	2025	2030	2035	2040	2021-2040 % Change
Town of Crescent	863	966	999	1,005	986	14.3%
Oneida County	15,724	17,796	18,344	18,346	17,892	13.8%

Source: Wisconsin DOA, ACS 2021



Source: Wisconsin DOA, U.S. Census 2000 & 2010, ACS 2021



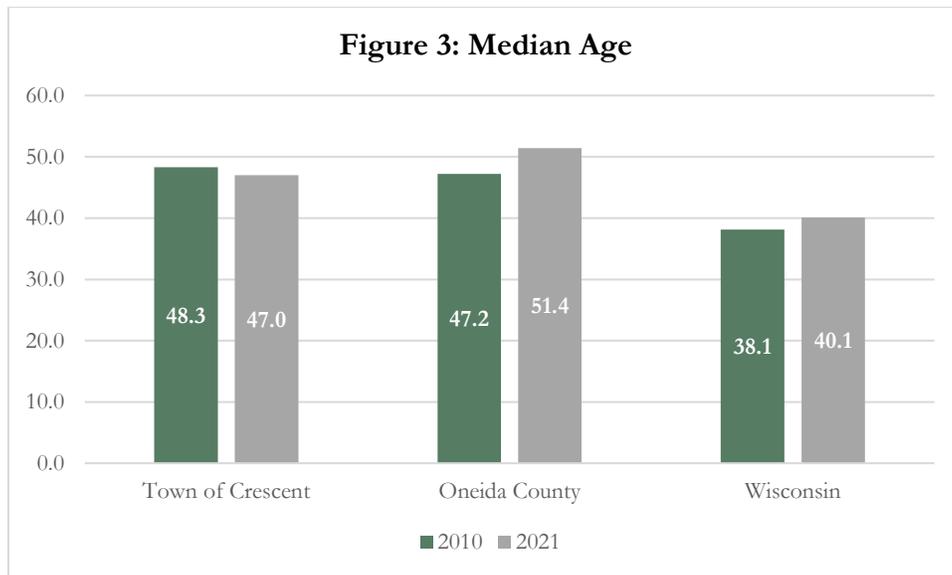
Source: Wisconsin DOA, U.S. Census 2000 & 2010, ACS 2021

AGE

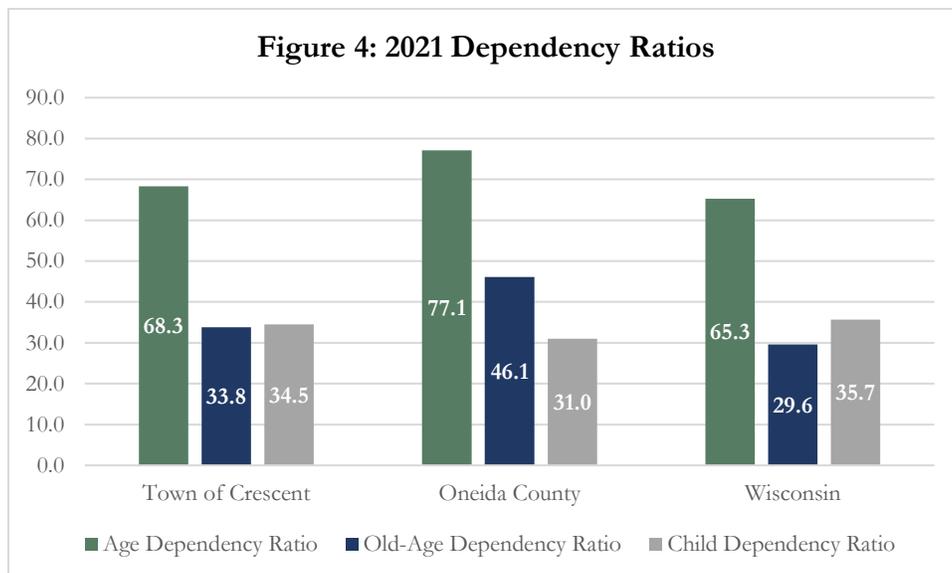
As shown in **Figure 3**, the median age in the Town of Crescent was 47.0 in 2021, down from 48.3 in 2010. This is lower than the county but higher than the state. Population distribution by age is important in the planning process. Two age groups are particularly significant, those 65 and over and those under 18. The population under 18 is a dependent population that requires more services including quality childcare, schools, and specialized health care needs. Those 65 and over may require access to healthcare, transportation, and community services. The U.S. Census provides an age dependency ratio, which is the ratio of dependents (people younger than 15 or older than 64) to the working age population (those ages 16-64). The old age dependency ratio is the number of those over 65 divided by the number working age population and the child dependency ratio is that ratio of those under 16 divided by the working age population.

As shown in **Figure 4**, the Town of Crescent has a somewhat high age dependency ratio, at 68.3, which is lower than 77.1 in Oneida County and higher than 65.3 in the State of Wisconsin. In other words, there are nearly seven dependents for every ten working aged adults. There are similar rates of dependent residents in the older and younger age categories. These numbers reinforce the importance of support services in the Town ranging from accessible healthcare, quality childcare, and social support systems.

Due to longer life expectancy and the size of the Baby Boomer generation, the 65 and older age group is expected to continue to increase in size. The trend is occurring at the state and national levels and to an even greater degree within the rural Wisconsin counties, especially in the northern one-third of the state. This population trend whereby older age categories increase significantly while younger age categories decline may impact the future labor supply, school system, and health care industry at the national, state, and local levels.



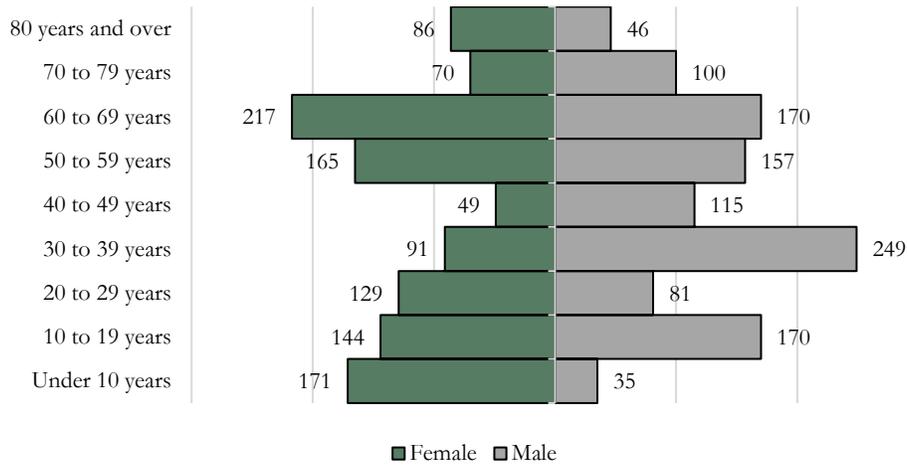
Source: ACS 2010 & 2021



Source: ACS 2021

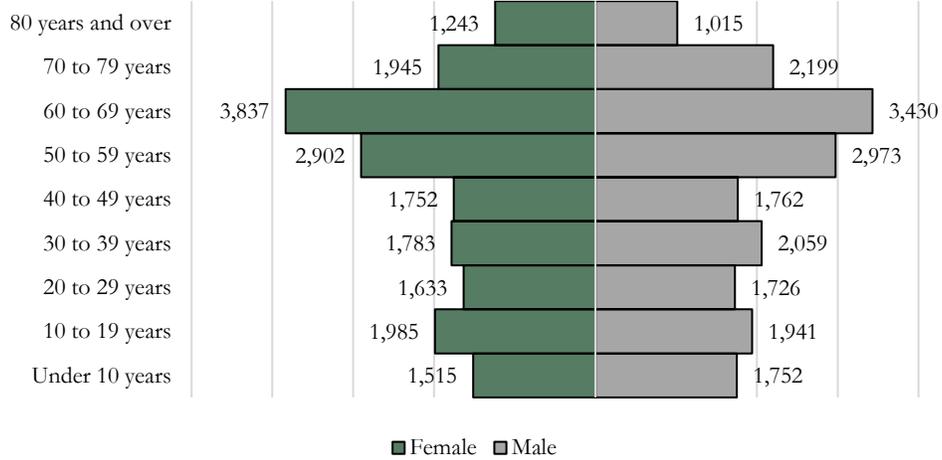
Figures 5 and 6 compare the distribution of age group for the Town of Crescent and Oneida County. Oneida County’s population pyramid is slightly constrictive showing an older population with limited growth. The Town of Crescent has a similar constrictive population pyramid, but with younger populations skewing towards more females. These pyramids are indicative of aging populations with slow population growth. Most males in the Town are in the 30- to 39-year-old age category, and most females are in the 60- to 69-year-old age category.

Figure 5: 2021 Town of Crescent Age-Sex Pyramid



Source: ACS 2021

Figure 6: 2021 Oneida County Age-Sex Pyramid

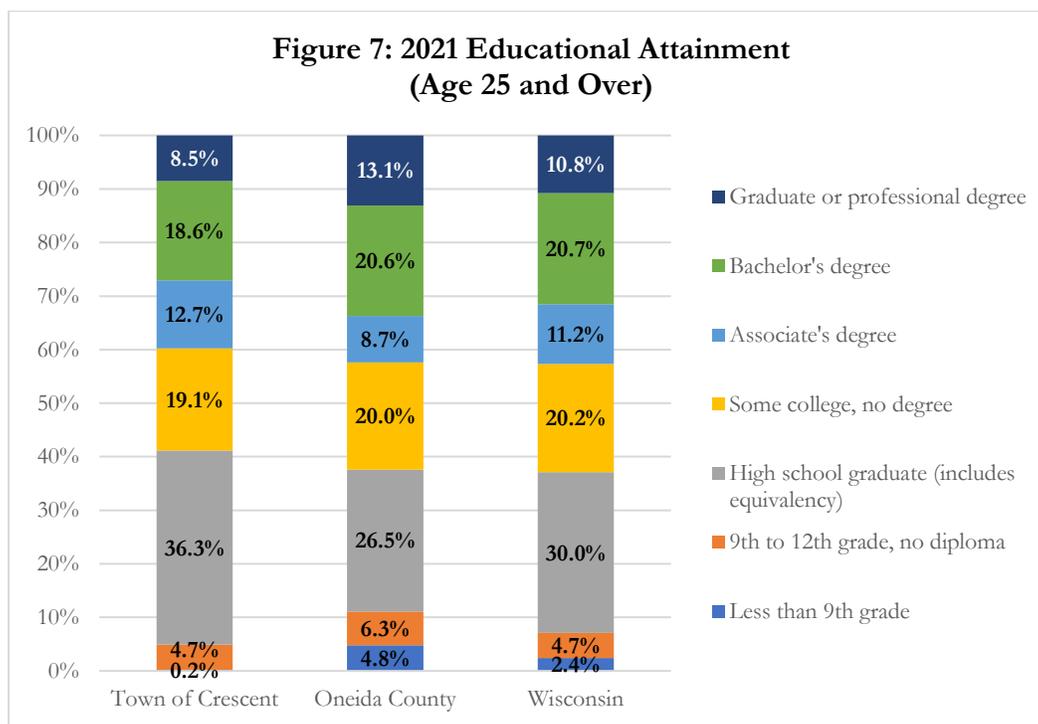


Source: ACS 2021

EDUCATION AND INCOME LEVELS

Education

Figure 7 compares educational attainment of those in the Town of Crescent to the County and the State. In 2021, 95.1 percent of town residents age 25 and older had a high school education or higher. This was higher than the County and State averages. In the Town of Crescent, 27.1 percent of the population held bachelor’s or other advanced degrees compared to 33.7 percent of County residents and 32.5 percent of State residents.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Income

Median household income and per capita income are two commonly used measures of income. Median household income is the income for the middle point of households, meaning half of all households fall below that income, and half are above. Per capita income is the measure of total income per person.

Median household income for Town of Crescent residents was \$58,056 in 2021. **Table 5** shows that median household income was considerably higher in Crescent than both Oneida County and the State of Wisconsin. Crescent household income was higher than the County and the State in 2010 but the gap has somewhat closed since that time. The Town and County median household incomes have exceeded the rate of inflation from 2000 to 2021, while the State’s median household income has fallen slightly.

Table 6 illustrates that income per capita in the Town of Crescent is slightly higher than the County and State, which are similar. In 2010, the per capita income in Crescent was much higher than the County and State, and the gap has narrowed considerably since then. Per capita income in Crescent rose 22.4 percent from 2000 to 2021 but declined by 15.2 percent between 2010 and 2021. The rate of change was slightly lower than the County or the State, which increased at a rate of 18.1 percent and 11.2 percent, respectively, when adjusted for inflation. Inflation rates were 72.9 percent between 2000 and 2022, 36.5 percent between 2010 and 2022, and 9.9 percent between 2021 and 2022 according to the U.S. Inflation Calculator. These inflation rates were used to calculate Tables 5 and 6 from U.S. Census and ACS data.

Table 5: Median Household Income (In 2022 Dollars)					
	2000	2010	2021	% Change 2000-2021	% Change 2010-2021
Town of Crescent	\$84,498	\$91,426	\$90,413	7.0%	-1.1%
Oneida County	\$65,038	\$62,608	\$68,844	5.9%	10.0%
Wisconsin	\$75,709	\$70,447	\$73,700	-2.7%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, ACS 2010 & 2021, U.S. Inflation Calculator

Table 6: Per Capita Income (In 2022 Dollars)					
	2000	2010	2021	% Change 2000-2021	% Change 2010-2021
Town of Crescent	\$35,782	\$51,614	\$43,793	22.4%	-15.2%
Oneida County	\$34,138	\$38,344	\$40,310	18.1%	5.1%
Wisconsin	\$36,775	\$34,758	\$40,381	9.8%	16.2%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, ACS 2010 & 2021, U.S. Inflation Calculator

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Tables 7 and 8 illustrate the breakdown of the labor force and employed population living in the Town of Crescent in 2010 and 2021. The “employed population” includes those that are 16 and older. There was an increase of 141 people in the labor force from 2010 to 2021 in the Town for an increase of 13.3 percent. This is likely due to the considerable increase in population since 2021. By comparison, the State’s labor force only increased by 0.9 percent and the County’s labor force decreased by 2.3 percent. The latter could be due to an aging countywide population entering retirement.

Labor force participation indicates the percent of those 16 years and over that are in the labor force. The labor force participation rate decreased 8.0 percentage points in the Town of Crescent from 2010 to 2021. There was a decrease in the county and state during this period also, but to a lesser degree. This could also be due to retirement or seasonal residents.

Table 7: Labor Force Characteristics					
	Labor Force			Labor Participation Rate	
	2010	2021	2010-2021 % Change	2010	2021
Town of Crescent	1,058	1,199	13.3%	70.6%	62.6%
Oneida County	17,802	17,393	-2.3%	58.3%	54.9%
Wisconsin	3,078,465	3,127,362	1.6%	69.0%	66.1%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

In 2010, the Town of Crescent had an employed population of 1,004 people; see **Table 8**. Employment within Crescent increased to 1,138 people by 2021, representing a 13.3 percent increase. Employment decreased in Oneida County during the same period, decreasing by 4.7 percent. The state experienced a 5.1 percent increase in employment from 2010 to 2021. The U.S. Census classifies individuals as unemployed if they are not working, actively seeking work, and available to accept a job. The unemployment rate in the Town was 5.1 percent in 2021. This was over double the County’s rate of 2.4 percent and 1.6 percent higher than the State.

Table 8: Employment				
	2010	2021	2010-2021 % Change	Unemployment Rate
Town of Crescent	1,004	1,138	13.3%	5.1%
Oneida County	17,802	16,968	-4.7%	2.4%
Wisconsin	2,869,310	3,014,612	5.1%	3.5%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 9: Resident Occupations 2010-2021		
Occupation Sector	2010	2021
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	383	423
Service occupations	182	203
Sales and office occupations	204	175
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	67	85
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	168	252
Total employed (16 years and older)	1,004	1,138

Source: ACS 2010 & 2021

As shown in **Table 9**, most residents were employed in Management, business, science, and arts occupations. The second sector most represented was the area of production, transportation, and material moving occupations, followed by service occupations. From 2010 to 2021, the most significant increase was seen in production, transportation, and material moving occupations, and the only decrease was observed in sales and office occupations.

Demographic Snapshot

- The population and number of households have steadily increased since 2000. While population and the number of households have both risen over the past two decades, there has been a notable reduction in average household size. This reduction in average household size paired with the steady increases in population and households increases the number of houses or apartments needed.
- The Town of Crescent’s population is expected to level off and decrease both in terms of the number of people and the number of households through 2040.
- There are many people in the older age categories and the median age is higher than the State, but lower than the County. Moreover, there is a slightly higher old-age dependency ratio than the State.
- The median age decreased 1.3 years from 52.3 in 2010 to 56.9 in 2021.
- The Town of Crescent has a lower proportion of residents with a high school diploma, bachelor’s degree, or graduate/professional degree than the County and State.
- The Town of Crescent’s median household income of \$90,413 and per capita income of \$43,793 is higher than the County and the State.

- The labor participation rate in the Town of Crescent is higher than the County, but lower than the State, and the unemployment rate of 5.1 percent in 2021 is considerably higher than the County and State.
- Most people in the Town of Crescent work in management, business, science, and arts occupations or in Service occupations.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of this plan is described in detail in Chapter 9. In summary, this plan's purpose is not to "sit on a shelf" but to guide decision making. The plan should be periodically reviewed and modified to maintain its relevance as conditions change over the next decade. The Town may continue to hold regularly scheduled Plan Commission meetings to focus on the following:

- Drilling down on the goals, objectives, and policies stated in this plan.
- Researching and developing ideas that can be transformed into a call to action to the Town Board
- Prioritizing work based upon feedback from citizen surveys.
- Recommending future policies to the Town of Crescent Board for consideration and potential implementation

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES (GOPs)

Each of the following chapters of this comprehensive plan includes a set of goals, objectives, and policies, which the Town Board could use to guide the future development of the Town over the next 20 years.

For the purposes of this plan, goals, objectives, and policies are defined as follows:

Goals: Broad statements that express general public priorities about how the Town 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 are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. Accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.

Policies: Rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Decision-makers use policies on a day-to-day basis.

Several chapters include a listing of possible programs that the Town might implement to advance the goals and objectives of the plan. The listing does not imply that the Town will utilize every program shown, but only that these programs are available to the Town and may be one of many possible ways of achieving the Town's goals.

Goal:

1. Retain a flow of current and relevant data regarding the Town of Crescent.

Objective:

1. Seek demographic changes and trends in state, county, and local data from appropriate sources.

Policies:

1. Annually track trend lines in town growth (new housing starts, new driveways, new septic, etc.).
2. Make updates available to all Town of Crescent residents.

Chapter 2: Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources

This chapter describes local land and water conditions in detail as well as agricultural resources and cultural heritage. It is important to consider the patterns and interrelations of natural resources on a broader scale because they do not follow geo-political boundaries. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administered at the county, state, or federal level. Thus, an overview of recent county-wide natural resource planning efforts is described below, followed by a description of local natural resource conditions. Of particular interest are geographic areas of the landscape encompassing valued natural resource features grouped below by resource type, including soil and biological resources.

PREVIOUS NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCE PLANS AND STUDIES

In the last decade, several plans were prepared specifically to address protection and management of natural resources. These plans may be used as resources to guide local policy and decision-making regarding resource management and protection.

[Oneida County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 2020-2029](#)

This plan provides a framework for local/state/federal conservation program implementation efforts. This plan aims to protect valuable water and soil resources within Oneida County. The plan identifies five goals: 1. Protect and enhance wetlands and surface water quality, 2. Increase the community's level of natural resource knowledge and stewardship, 3. Protect groundwater quality, 4. Protect native species, habitats, and landscapes from invasive species, and 5. Protect, enhance, and restore soil resources.

[Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan](#)

The primary focus of this recreation plan is to protect and promote the health, safety, prosperity, and general welfare of the community and to provide a quality county-wide recreation system. The plan aims to guide and coordinate a harmonious county recreation system and provides direction for recreation management and policy. This includes direction for short and long-term community recreation decisions, an inventory of existing recreation systems and services, and a practical action program for future improvements. The recommendations in this plan, which is being updated as of 2023, should be considered in addition to those found in any Town plans.

[Oneida County 15-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan \(2021-2035\)](#)

This Plan outlines the management of all aspects of the County Forest and Outdoor Recreation programs. It includes an inventory of species present in the County, trails in the County Forest System, land management goals, and more.

[NCWRPC Regional Livability Plan, 2015](#)

This regional plan for the 10-county North Central Wisconsin region identifies natural resources as both enhancing the local quality of life but also as an economic development tool as outdoor recreation attracts workers to the region.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Examining the natural environment is essential to the planning process. For instance, soils, topography, and geology can pose limitations to certain types of development, while an inventory of surface water resources, vegetation types, environmentally significant areas, and historical features identify those resources and areas which should be protected from over-development. This section of the plan identifies both the land and water resources of the town.

Land Resources

The Town of Crescent is located in the center of Oneida County, Wisconsin, which borders Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Price, and Vilas Counties. It is located among lakes and forests with recreational opportunities and partially surrounds the City of Rhinelander.

Topography and Geology

Oneida County lies in two ecological landscapes in Wisconsin. Most of the county is in the Northern Highland, with some areas around the eastern and western edges of the county being in the North Central Forest. The Town of Crescent lies almost entirely within the Northern Highland ecological landscape.

In general, both ecological landscapes are underlain by igneous and metamorphic rock, which is covered with between 5 and 100 feet of glacial till. The Northern Highland features rolling hills that are part of an outwash plain with kettle lakes, wetlands, bogs, moraines, drumlins, and outwash sands. The North Central Forest features similar land formations but steeper ridges are more common than in the Northern Highland.

Soils

Soils occur in an orderly pattern that is related to the physical geography, climate, and natural vegetation. Each kind of soil is associated with a particular kind of landscape or segment within the landscape. By observing the landscape within an area, by reviewing the soil map, and by understanding what is possible with each soil type, relationships can be created to determine the most productive use for an area.

Soils are an important natural resource. Knowledge of the potential uses and/or limitations of soil types is necessary to evaluate crop production capabilities or when considering construction of buildings, installation of utilities, or other uses of land. Problems that limit development on certain soils include poor filtration, slow percolation, flooding or ponding, wetness, slope, and subsidence. A "severe" limitation indicates that one or more soil properties or site features are so unfavorable or difficult to overcome that a major increase in construction effort, special design, or intensive maintenance is required. For some soils rated severe, such costly measures may not be feasible. It is important to note that this information should be used as a reference only while specific site testing is necessary to determine soil suitability for individual developments.

As with most areas in Northern Wisconsin, the Town of Crescent has a variety of soil types within the town. According to the 1993 USDA Soil Survey of Oneida County, Padus loam soils (PaB, PaC, PaD) predominate in the town, with slopes ranging from 0 to 25 percent. This soil in flat areas (PaB) is suited to corn, specialty crops, and small grain and to grasses and legumes for hay and pasture. This soil is poorly suited to septic tank absorption fields, because of the seasonal high water table, but is suited to buildings without basements. Wetland areas are primarily Greenwood, Loxly, and Dawson peats (Gr). In the northeast part of the town soils of the Kewaunee series (KeB, KeC, KeD, KnB, KnC, KrD) are more common. These soils tend to be rockier and are not well-suited to agriculture. They are poorly suited to septic tanks because of the large rocks that often occur there, and seasonal high water table. For the same reason they are only moderately suited to dwellings either on slabs or with basements, or to road construction. The soil patterns also include: Cable Muck (CaA), Carbondale, Lupton, and Markey mucks (Cb), Padus-Pense sandy loam (PeB), Worcester sandy loam (WoA), Saynor loamy sand (SaB, SaC, SaD), and Vilas loamy sand (VaB, VaC, VaD). These last soils, depending on slope, are suited to dwellings, septic systems, and roads.

Forests

Woodlands and forests cover approximately 14,087 acres, or about 68.2 percent of the Town. Forests play a key role in the protection of environmentally sensitive areas like steep slopes, shorelands, wetlands, and flood plains. Expansive forests provide recreational opportunities, aesthetic benefits, and economic development. All forests are dynamic, always changing from one stage to another, influenced by natural forces and human behavior. Changes can be subtle and occur over long period or can happen in shorts spans of time from activities such as timber harvest, a windstorm, or a fire.

Upland forest dominates the Town's landscape, followed by wetlands and lakes. Common species include sugar maple, basswood, red maple, hemlock, yellow birch, white pine, aspen, birch, spruce, white cedar, black ash, tamarack, and fir. Forested and non-forested wetlands and peatlands are common, as well as alder thicket, sedge meadow, and marsh, some of which are wild rice marshes.

Most forestland in the Town of Crescent is privately owned, including approximately 422 acres in Managed Forest Law (MFL) program that are open to the public as of 2022 and another 197.3 acres in the Forest Crop Law (FCL) program (FCL no longer enrolls new properties). Additional woodland that is not open to the public also exists on private land. This program has been established to preserve and protect woodlands through practicing proper management techniques in exchange for a reduction in property taxes.

Agricultural Areas

According to the Oneida County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, a short growing season limits crops to mainly forage crops, small grain, and vegetables or specialty crops. Wind and water erosion and soil drainage are management concerns in the County. According to the recent 2017 Census of Agriculture, there were 131 active farms in the county, covering about 34,670 acres of land. Forage crops, berries, and cranberries were the major products, followed by vegetables and potatoes. Approximately 15.6 percent of the Town is considered to have prime farmland soils according to the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

Metallic and Non-Metallic Mining

There are seven known non-metallic mines in the Town shown on Map 3. There are no known metallic deposits in the Town.

Environmentally Remediated Areas

Brownfields are commercial or industrial properties that contain or may contain hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. Expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of these properties can be especially difficult. The Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) is an online database that provides information about contaminated properties and other activities related to the investigation and clean-up of properties with contaminated soil and/or groundwater. Contaminated sites are not uncommon as all communities with commercial and industrial development have the potential for air emissions, groundwater contamination, soil spills, and surface water contamination. Contaminated sites originate when a property is used for such activities as a gas station, industrial processing facility, a landfill, or a laundromat. There are seven closed sites in the Town, three of which have continuing obligations, and one open site shown on the BRRTS map.

Rare Species and Natural Communities

Wisconsin's National Heritage Inventory Program (NHI) is responsible for maintaining data on the locations and status of rare, threatened, and endangered species, natural communities, and natural features throughout the State. The program's database, on the Wisconsin DNR website, identifies species and natural communities that are currently tracked by the NHI. As of February 2023, NHI tracked the following species in Oneida County with state endangered status:

- American Marten
- Black Tern

These threatened species are found in Oneida County:

- Algae-leaved Pondweed
- Calypso Orchid
- Large Water-starwort
- Little Brown Bat
- Red-shouldered Hawk

- Spruce Grouse
- Tufted Bulrush
- Upland Sandpiper
- Wood Turtle
- Yellow Rail

Several other species in Oneida County are of special concern. Wisconsin's biodiversity goals are to identify, protect and manage native plants, animals, and natural communities from the very common to critically endangered for present and future generations. Knowledge, appreciation, and stewardship of Wisconsin's native species and ecosystems are critical to their survival and greater benefit to society.

Water Resources

The Town of Crescent, as well as the whole of Oneida County, contains an assortment of natural surface water features, including creeks, lakes, and wetlands. This section discusses the characteristics of the major surface water features located within the Town.

Watersheds

A watershed is an area of land in which water drains to a common point. In Wisconsin, watersheds vary in scale from major river systems to small creek drainage areas and typically range in size from 100 to 300 square miles. River basins encompass several watersheds. There are 32 river basins in Wisconsin, which range in size from 500 to over 5,000 square miles.

The Town of Crescent is included in four watersheds:

- Lake Mohawksin-Wisconsin River
- Pelican River
- Lower Tomahawk River
- Rhinelander Flowage – Wisconsin River

Oneida County Shoreland Zoning is in effect. The county has authority over lands 300 feet from a river or stream and 1,000 feet from a lake. Actual shoreland jurisdiction measurements are coordinated through the County Planning and Zoning Department.

Surface Water

Lakes are the dominant surface water feature in the Town. They include Alice Lake, Bowles Lake, Cook Lake, Davis Lake, Emma Lake, Flag Lake, Green Bass Lake, Hanson Lake, Heal Lake, Hoist Lake, John Lake, Langley Lake, Lake Julia, Lily Lake, Long Lake, Loon Lake, Mirror Lake, Perch Lake, Prune Lake, Round Lake, Lake Samway, Shadow Lake, Spruce Lake, Spur Lake, Squash Lake, Townline Lake, Twin Lakes, and Vicks Lake. The Wisconsin River also crosses the Town and forms the Hat Rapids Flowage, a reservoir.

Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters

The Wisconsin DNR classifies major surface water resources. These classifications allow water bodies of particular importance to be identified because of their unique resource values and water quality. The DNR has two categories including Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) which have the highest quality water and fisheries in the state deserving of special protection, and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) which have excellent water quality and valued fisheries.

Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs) share many of the same environmental and ecological characteristics. The primary difference between the two is that ORWs typically do not have any direct point sources discharging pollutants directly to the water. In addition, any pollutant load discharged to an ORW must meet background water quality at all times. Exceptions are made for certain types of discharge situations to ERWs to allow pollutant loads that are greater than background water quality when human health would otherwise be compromised. There are two ERWs in the Town, and Unnamed Creek that flows into the Wisconsin River in the southwest corner of the Town, and Radke Creek.

Impaired Waters

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to develop a list of impaired waters, commonly referred to as the “303(d) list.” A water body is considered impaired if a) the current water quality does not meet the numeric or narrative criteria in a water quality standard or b) the designated use that is described in Wisconsin Administrative Code is not being achieved. A documented methodology is used to articulate the approach used to list waters in Wisconsin. Every two years, states are required to submit a list of impaired waters to EPA for approval. Emma Lake is listed as impaired due to mercury levels.

Invasive Aquatic Species

Surface water resources in Oneida County are threatened by the introduction of invasive aquatic species. Invasive species can alter the natural ecological relationships among native species and affect ecosystem function, economic value of ecosystems, and human health. It is recommended that the Town continue to work with the Oneida County Land and Water Conservation Department to develop public outreach education strategies.

Wetlands

Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle and local ecological systems. In terms of hazard mitigation, they act as water storage devices in times of high water. Like sponges, wetlands absorb excess water and release it back into the watershed slowly, preventing flooding and minimizing flood damage. As more impermeable surfaces are developed, this excess capacity for water runoff storage becomes increasingly important.

Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants ranging from pesticides to animal wastes. Calm wetland waters, with their flat surface and flow characteristics, allow particles of toxins and nutrients to settle out of the water column. Plants take up certain nutrients from the water.

Other substances can be stored or transformed to a less toxic state within wetlands. As a result, the lakes, rivers, and streams are cleaner. See the Natural Resources Map.

Wetlands that filter or store sediments or nutrients for extended periods may undergo fundamental changes. Sediments will eventually fill in wetlands and nutrients will eventually modify the vegetation. Such changes may result in the loss of this function over time. Eradication of wetlands can occur using fill material. This can destroy the hydrological function of the site and open the area to improper development. The DNR has promulgated minimum standards for managing wetlands.

Floodplains

A floodplain is generally defined as land where there is a one percent chance of flooding in any year. The primary value of floodplains is their role in natural flood control. Floodplains represent areas where excess water can be accommodated whether through drainage by streams or through storage by wetlands and other natural detention/retention areas. Specific areas that will be inundated will depend upon the amount of water, the distance and speed that water travels, and the topography of the area. If uninterrupted by development, the areas shown on a map as floodplains should be able to handle the most substantial (regional) flood, i.e., those that have a probability of occurring once every one hundred years. Due to the nature of the geography and hydrology of the area, floodplain mapping is also known to have accuracy issues in this area. The presence and exact location of floodplains must be verified by field survey, and applicable permits obtained prior to any land disturbing activity.

Groundwater

Groundwater is water that occupies void spaces between soil particles or cracks in the rock below the land surface. It originates as precipitation that infiltrated the ground. The type of soil and bedrock that a well is drilled into often determines the pH, saturation index, and the amount of hardness or alkalinity in water. The type of soil and bedrock in a region also determines how quickly contaminants can reach groundwater.

The source of most drinking water in Oneida County is groundwater, and it supplies some agricultural and industrial processes as well. Groundwater is a limited resource, and both its quality and quantity are important factors. These factors are primarily influenced by local geology and local land use. Groundwater in Oneida County is generally abundant and of good quality.

Susceptibility of groundwater to pollutants is defined here as the ease with which a contaminant can be transported from the land surface to the top of the groundwater called the water table. Many materials that overlie the groundwater offer good protection from contaminants that might be transported by infiltrating waters. The amount of protection offered by the overlying material varies, however, depending on the materials. Thus, in some areas, the overlying soil and bedrock materials allow contaminants to reach the groundwater more easily than in other areas of the state.

Many land use activities have the potential to impact the quality of groundwater. A landfill may leach contaminants into the ground that end up contaminating groundwater. Gasoline may leak from an underground storage tank into groundwater. Fertilizers and pesticides can seep into the ground from

application on farm fields, golf courses or lawns. Leaking fluids from cars in junkyards, intentional dumping, or accidental spills of paint, used motor oil, or other chemicals on the ground can result in contaminated groundwater.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

A cultural resource is a broad term that can encompass many aspects of heritage. Cultural resources may include archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to Native Americans or other cultural groups. Cultural resources are those elements that signify heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinctive. Cultural resources include buildings; sites and landscape that help communities retain their sense of identity in an increasingly homogenized society.

Resources

Historic structures and cultural areas provide a sense of place, enhance community pride, and reinforce social and cultural enrichment. The identification of existing historic structures and cultural areas are an important consideration in all town planning efforts, as these features are critical to defining a community's look and character. Several structures in the Town are on the Wisconsin Historical Society's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI). Most of them are part of the Rhinelander Nursery complex which is on U.S. Forest Service Land. The Crescent Town Hall and Wisconsin Public Service Dam at Hat Ridge Road are also included in the inventory. There are no properties in the State or National Register of Historic Places, but locals often acknowledge these properties as having historic value. Lands near surface water bodies may also contain artifacts as Native Americans and Europeans used them for settlements. Finally, in 1994, the Wisconsin State Fair recognized the Allen & Joyce Zorn farmstead as a Century Farmstead, meaning it had remained in a single family's ownership for at least 100 years.

NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS

There are a variety of programs available to the Town related to natural, agricultural, and cultural resources. Some of these are identified below. The following list is not all-inclusive. For specific program information, the agency or group that offers the program should be contacted.

Private Forestry

The WDNR's goal is to motivate private forest landowners to practice sustainable forestry by providing technical forestry assistance, state and federal cost-sharing on management practices, sale of state produced nursery stock for reforestation, enrollment in Wisconsin's Forest Tax Law Programs, advice for the protection of endangered and threatened species, and assistance with forest disease and insect problems. Each county has at least one Department forester assigned to respond to requests for private forestland assistance. These foresters also provide educational programs for landowners, schools, and the public. Both private and industrial forest landowners have enrolled their lands under the Managed Forest Law.

Managed Forest Law (MFL)

The purpose of the MFL is to promote good forest management through property tax incentives. Management practices are required by way of an approved forest management plan. Landowners with a minimum of 10 contiguous acres (80% must be capable of producing merchantable timber) are eligible and may contract for 25 or 50 years. Open lands must allow hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, and sight-seeing; however, up to 80 acres may be closed to public access by the landowner. There is a 5% yield tax applied to any wood products harvested. Contact the WDNR for further information.

Parks and Recreation Program

The WDNR gets its authority for administering the Parks and Recreation Program from Chapter 27 Wisconsin Statutes. This program provides assistance in the development of public parks and recreation facilities. Funding sources include: the general fund, the Stewardship Program, Land and Water Conservation fund (LAWCON), and program revenue funds.

Stewardship Grants for Nonprofit Conservation Organizations

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

Nonpoint Source Program (NSP)

Wisconsin's NPS Program, through a comprehensive network of federal, state, and local agencies working in partnership with other organizations and citizens, addresses the significant nonpoint sources in the state. This program combines voluntary and regulatory approaches with financial and technical assistance. Abatement activities include agriculture, urban, forestry, wetlands, and hydrologic modifications. The core activities of the program — research, monitoring, data assessment and management, regulation and enforcement, financial and technical assistance, education and outreach and public involvement — work to address current water quality impairments and prevent future threats caused by NPS pollution. Contact the WDNR for more information.

Drinking Water and Groundwater Program

This WDNR program is responsible for assuring safe, high quality drinking water and for protecting groundwater. This is achieved by enforcing minimum well construction and pump installation requirements, conducting surveys and inspections of water systems, the investigation and sampling of drinking water quality problems, and requiring drinking water quality monitoring and reporting. A team of specialists, engineers, hydrogeologists, and a program expert and program assistants staff the program. WDNR staff provide assistance to public and private well owners to help solve water quality

complaints and water system problems. They also provide interested citizens with informational or educational materials about drinking water supplies and groundwater.

The Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center allows residents in the Town of Crescent and other areas in central Wisconsin to determine the safety of their well water by providing the opportunity to have their well water tested. Residents can send in water samples of their well water to any state-certified testing laboratory, including the Water and Environmental Analysis Lab at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, which houses the Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center.

Aquatic Habitat Protection Program

The WDNR provides basic aquatic habitat protection services through their staff. Staff members include Water Management (Regulation) Specialists, Zoning Specialists, Rivers (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission-FERC) Specialists, Lakes Specialists, Water Management Engineers, and their assistants (LTEs). The program assists with water regulation permits, zoning assistance, coordination of rivers, lake management, and engineering.

Endangered Resources Program

The DNR's Endangered Resources staff provides expertise and advice on endangered resources. They manage the Natural Heritage Inventory Program (NHI), which is used to determine the existence and location of native plant and animal communities and Endangered or Threatened Species of Special Concern. The NHI helps identify and prioritize areas suitable for State Natural Area (SNA) designation, provides information needed for feasibility studies and master plans, and maintains the list of endangered and threatened species. All management activities conducted by Wildlife Management and Forestry staff must be reviewed to determine the impact on NHI-designated species. A permit for the incidental take of an Endangered or Threatened species is required under the State Endangered Species Law. The Endangered Resources Program oversees the permit process, reviews applications, and makes permit decisions. Funding for the Endangered Species Program comes from several sources, including tax checkoff revenue, license plates, general program revenues (GPR), gaming revenue, Natural Heritage Inventory chargebacks, wild rice permits, general gifts and Pittman Robertson grants.

Fisheries Management Program

The WDNR funds this program primarily through the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. The program assists with fishery surveys, fish habitat improvement/protection, and fish community manipulation. This program may also be used to fund public relations events and a variety of permitting and administrative activities involving fisheries.

Wildlife Management Program

The DNR's Bureau of Wildlife Management oversees a complex web of programs that incorporate state, federal and local initiatives primarily directed toward wildlife habitat management and enhancement. Programs include land acquisition, development and maintenance of State Wildlife Areas, and other wild land programs such as State Natural Areas. Wildlife Staff work closely with staff

of state and county forests to maintain, enhance, and restore wildlife habitat. Wildlife Management staff conduct wildlife population and habitat surveys, prepare property needs analysis's, develop basin wildlife management plans, and collaborate with other DNR planning efforts such as Park, Forestry or Fishery Area Property Master Plans to assure sound habitat management. Funding comes from the federal government in the form of Endangered Species grants and Pittman-Robertson grants and from state government in the form of hunting and trapping license revenues, voluntary income tax contributions, general program revenue and Stewardship funds.

NRCS Conservation Programs

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) natural resources conservation programs help people reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce damages caused by floods and other natural disasters. NRCS provides funding opportunities for agricultural producers and other landowners through these programs:

- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) by USDA's Farm Service Agency
- Healthy Forests Reserve Program
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program
- Small, Limited, and Beginning Farmer Assistance
- Working Lands for Wildlife

Wetlands Reserve Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program which was established to restore wetlands on lands which were previously altered for agricultural use. The program is administered by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service in consultation with the Farm Service Agency and other federal agencies.

Land is eligible for enrollment in the WRP if the landowner has owned that land for at least one year, and the land is restorable and suitable for wildlife benefits. Landowners may choose to restore wetlands with a permanent or 30-year easement or enter into a cost-share restoration agreement with the USDA. If a permanent easement is established, the landowner will receive payment up to the agricultural value of the land and 100% of the wetland restoration costs. The 30-year easement payment is just 75% of what would be provided for a permanent easement on the same site, and 75% of the restoration costs. Voluntary cost-share restoration agreements are generally for a minimum of 10 years, and 75% of the cost of restoring the land to wetlands is provided. In all instances, landowners continue to control access to their land.

Discovery Farms Program

Discovery Farms is a program administered by UW-Extension that works with over 40 farmers across the state of Wisconsin. The program’s mission is to “develop on-farm and related research to determine the economic and environmental effects of agricultural practices on a diverse group of Wisconsin farms; and educates and improves communications among the agricultural community, consumers, researchers and policymakers to better identify and implement effective environmental management practices that are compatible with profitable agriculture.” On-Farm projects fall under one the following categories: Nitrogen Use Efficiency, Tile Monitoring, Leachate Collection Systems, Watershed water quality, and Edge-of-Field Runoff Monitoring.

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants

The Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) provides funding to producer-led groups that focus on nonpoint source pollution abatement activities through the Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant Program (PLWPG). The goal is to improve Wisconsin's soil and water quality by supporting and advancing producer-led conservation solutions by increasing on the ground practices and farmer participation in these efforts.

Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Wisconsin Historical Society

This office is part of the Wisconsin Historical Society and serves as the principal historic preservation agency in the state. In partnership with communities, organizations, and individuals, the SHPO works to identify, interpret and preserve historic places for the benefit of present and future generations.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goals:

1. Update and identify the major natural areas outlined in this chapter.
2. Promote appreciation for the Town’s natural resources
3. Identify the Town’s cultural, historical, and archeological sites for potential future designations, markings, and/or preservation.

Objectives:

1. Review and maintain all available maps and records identifying our natural, agricultural, and cultural resources outlined in this chapter.
2. Promote and preserve the Town of Crescent’s natural, cultural, and historic resources.
3. Develop a long-term strategy for potential future mining projects.

Policies:

1. Rezone the township so that there are distinctions in areas that lend themselves to residential and commercial development from those areas where there needs to be some protection of the Town's natural resources as outlined in this chapter.
2. Continue to work with Oneida County government and other agencies on an ongoing basis with respect to septic systems and our ability to protect groundwater.
3. Promote collection events that provide our residents an opportunity to properly dispose of environmentally unfriendly goods, materials, and substances.

Chapter 3: Housing

Housing characteristics and trends are important components of comprehensive planning. The physical location of housing can determine the need of many public facilities and services. Furthermore, understanding dynamics in the market likely to affect housing development in the future provides a basis for the formulation of policy to coordinate transportation facilities with a sustainable pattern of residential development. Understanding the factors affecting people’s ability to meet their own housing needs provides a basis for reinforcing community ties, fostering economic development and environmental sustainability, and improving the quality of life.

PREVIOUS HOUSING PLANS AND STUDIES

[Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan](#)

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the states 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 (HOPWA).

“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.”

[Regional Livability Plan, 2015](#)

The 2015 Regional Livability Plan (RLP), written by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC), addresses issues of livability in the areas of housing, transportation, economic development, and land use. The RLP identifies several issues affecting community livability related to housing:

- Aging population;
- Smaller household sizes;
- Lack of housing options; and
- Increase in housing costs related to incomes.

[ALICE: A Study of Financial Hardship in Wisconsin, 2020](#)

This report, developed by the United Way, described the 24 percent of households in Oneida County that are above the federal poverty level, but still struggle to afford basic household necessities, or

“ALICE” households (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). These households are largely employed but do not earn enough in wages to meet the “household survival budget,” which does not allow for any savings. The report states that many ALICE households provide vital services, such as retail, health care, childcare, and security, but cannot make ends meet on the income provided from these jobs.

- The ALICE report shows that 27 percent of Crescent households are either below the federal poverty level or are considered ALICE households, indicating that the average household in Crescent is slightly less financially prosperous than the average Oneida County State of Wisconsin household at-large. This is based on 2018 data, so affordability is likely a larger challenge as housing prices and inflation have increased since then.

HOUSING ASSESSMENT

Housing Type and Tenure

In 2021, the Town of Crescent had approximately 1,317 occupied housing units, 83.7 percent of which were owner occupied, see Table 10. The Town of Crescent had a higher percentage of owner-occupied homes than both Oneida County and the State of Wisconsin, at 83.7 percent and 67.4 percent, respectively. The average household size of 2.67 was higher than the county (2.34) and state (2.39). In 34.5 percent of households the householder lived alone and 48.8 percent of households had an individual age 60 or older. Higher rates of owner-occupied housing are more common in rural communities like the Town of Crescent. The relatively high share of seasonal housing units reflects the area’s tourism-based economy and presence of seasonal homes.

Table 10: Housing Units by Type and Tenure, 2021			
	T. Crescent	Oneida County	Wisconsin
Total Housing Units	1,317	30,486	2,718,369
Total occupied housing units	863	15,724	2,401,818
Vacant Housing Units	454	14,762	316,551
Seasonal Housing Units	418	13,203	172,759
Owner occupied housing units	798	13,164	1,619,704
Renter occupied housing units	65	2,560	782,114
Average household size	2.67	2.34	2.39
% owner occupied	92.5%	83.7%	67.4%
% householder living alone	34.5%	32.2%	30.3%
% with individuals 60 or over	48.8%	55.9%	40.1%

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Structural Characteristics

Tables 11 and 12 detail the number and percentage of housing units by type. Housing in the Town of Crescent is overwhelmingly single-family detached housing, with relatively few multifamily or mobile home options. Oneida County is also comprised mainly of single-family housing but does have more

of a variety of multifamily housing types. This could be due to incorporated communities like the City of Rhineland having more multifamily housing, which is more feasible where public water and sewer utilities exist. In Oneida County, single-family detached homes account for 84.9 percent of housing units, followed by mobile homes, which account for 5.4 percent of housing. A greater variety of housing styles would better accommodate those at various income levels and from different economic backgrounds.

Table 11: Housing Units by Structural Type, 2021								
Community	1- Detached	1- Attached	2	3 or 4	5 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total
T. Crescent	1,220	0	17	45	4	31	0	1,317
Oneida County	25,876	409	727	374	1,434	1,661	5	30,486
Wisconsin	1,808,977	115,708	170,039	97,856	438,357	86,592	840	2,718,369

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Table 12: Housing Units by Structural Type (Percentage), 2021								
Community	1- Detached	1-Attached	2	3 or 4	5 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total
T. Crescent	92.6%	0.0%	1.3%	3.4%	0.3%	2.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Oneida County	84.9%	1.3%	2.4%	1.2%	4.7%	5.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Wisconsin	66.5%	4.3%	6.3%	3.6%	16.1%	3.2%	0.0%	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Age Characteristics

The age of a community’s housing stock typically reflects several important factors including size, offered amenities, and overall maintenance costs. Age of the home often also reflects different regional and national trends in housing development. Housing predating the 1960s for example, was typically smaller and built on smaller lots. In subsequent decades, both average lot and home sizes have increased. For example, average homes constructed in the later part of the previous century and the first decade of the millennium are typically much larger than housing built in previous decades. This can be seen in both the rural and more urban environments of Oneida County. Additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and attached garage space are among the amenities found in newer housing units. With smaller households and higher construction and land costs, this trend could reverse to a greater variety of smaller units in the future. Finally, energy efficiency has improved greatly in newer construction, meaning an older home typically has higher utility bills, affecting what households can afford.

Table 13: Year Structure Built, 2021									
Community	1939 or earlier	1940 to 1949	1950 to 1959	1960 to 1969	1970 to 1979	1980 to 1989	1990 to 1999	2000 to 2009	2010 or later
T. Crescent	57	68	8	70	323	94	310	221	86
Oneida County	2,515	1,578	2,609	2,800	5,122	4,882	5,165	4,276	1,539
Wisconsin	508,867	149,150	288,415	263,031	394,778	262,162	372,427	331,651	147,888

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Table 14: Year Structure Built (Percentage), 2021									
Community	1939 or earlier	1940 to 1949	1950 to 1959	1960 to 1969	1970 to 1979	1980 to 1989	1990 to 1999	2000 to 2009	2010 or later
T. Crescent	4.3%	5.2%	6.7%	5.3%	24.5%	7.1%	23.5%	16.8%	6.5%
Oneida County	8.2%	5.2%	8.6%	9.2%	16.8%	16.0%	16.9%	14.0%	5.0%
Wisconsin	18.7%	5.5%	10.6%	9.7%	14.5%	9.6%	13.7%	12.2%	5.4%

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Tables and 13 and 14 outline build dates of housing units throughout the Town, county, and state based on 2021 American Community Survey data. Most housing stock was constructed in the Town of Crescent between 1970 and 1979 (24.5 percent). The next most significant periods of housing construction in the Town were from 1990 to 1999 (23.5 percent) and from 2000 to 2009 (16.8 percent). Fewer housing units have been constructed within the Town since 2010 (6.5 percent). Construction in the county increased significantly after 1970, perhaps due to the rise in popularity of vacation homes. Statewide home construction occurred more consistently throughout the decades, with most occurring between 1970 and 1979 (though a higher share of housing was built in all decades before 1940 combined). There is a greater share of construction since 2010 in the Town compared to statewide figures, but a smaller share in the county. Nationwide, home supply has not been constructed to meet demand since the Great Recession of 2008, leading to increased competition and higher prices.

Value Characteristics

Table 15 details housing values in owner-occupied homes throughout the Town, county, and state. In 2021, the median housing value was \$207,500 in the Town of Crescent. This is considerably higher than the state, at \$200,400 and lower than the county, at \$220,700. The largest concentration in home values (28.0%) is in the over \$300,000 range, with declining availability the more affordable the price range.

Table 15: Housing Values Owner Occupied, 2021							
Community	Less than \$50,000	\$50,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 to \$199,999	\$200,000 to \$299,999	\$300,000 or more	Median Value
T. Crescent	2.1%	5.9%	15.3%	23.9%	24.8%	28.0%	\$207,500
Oneida County	5.7%	14.1%	15.8%	19.3%	21.6%	23.6%	\$186,600
Wisconsin	4.3%	10.2%	16.7%	18.7%	25.2%	24.9%	\$200,400

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

Housing Affordability

Several factors contribute to the affordability of housing in Crescent. These factors include rent and mortgage payments., maintenance expenses, lot size, and required or desired amenities for the dwelling. Household size and income are key factors contributing to what housing options are available and accessible to residents.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban (HUD) development recommends that housing costs do not exceed 30 percent of monthly income. If housing costs exceed 30 percent of monthly income, a household is considered cost burdened. HUD also indicates that lenders are more willing to make loans if the scheduled mortgage payment is no greater than 31 percent of the monthly household income. Low-income households that pay more than 30 percent of their income toward rent may have difficulty affording other household necessities such as food, childcare, and healthcare costs. Severely cost-burdened households are at risk of becoming homeless.

Table 16 shows that the percentage of households in the Town of Crescent that pay more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs is lower than both the county and state for those that have a mortgage as well as those without a mortgage. Table 17 shows that the proportion of renter-occupied households that are cost burdened was 78.2 percent, which is substantially higher than the county or the state.

Table 16: Owner-Occupied Housing Affordability (Median Selected Owner Costs)				
Community	With mortgage	% Cost burdened	No mortgage	% Cost burdened
T. Crescent	\$1,351	18.5%	\$471	8.7%
Oneida County	\$1,255	24.8%	\$442	10.6%
Wisconsin	\$1,491	21.8%	\$578	11.9%

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

*Cost burdened means a household is paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs

Table 17: Renter-Occupied Housing Affordability (Median Selected Renter Costs)		
Community	Median Gross Rent	% cost burdened
T. Crescent	\$608	78.2%
Oneida County	\$828	43.9%
Wisconsin	\$916	42.6%

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

*Cost burdened means a household is paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs

Specialized Housing

Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Oneida County is based in Eagle River. The ADRC supports seniors, caregivers, and adults with disabilities. The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services and the Northwoods United Way (based in Rhinelander in Oneida County) maintain information about specialized housing options throughout the county. As the number of elderly persons increases in the coming years, there will most likely be a greater need for a wider variety of housing options, especially with accessibility features that benefit seniors.

Senior Housing

Housing for seniors typically consists of a range of housing options that provide a spectrum of assistance starting with individual units or homes with little or no assistance, independent living communities for seniors that remain independent, assisted living facilities for those who are no longer able to live on their own, and nursing homes for those that need skilled medical care.

According to research by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, most seniors prefer to “age in place,” or remain in their home throughout retirement. This can be difficult for those in rural areas such as Crescent, as the ability to access medical care and necessary goods and services can become burdensome. This highlights the importance of senior transportation services and universal design (home design that creates access for all people). Most senior housing units within the county are located in Rhinelander. The area surrounding the Town of Crescent will likely need additional housing options for seniors in upcoming years.

Summary of Housing Characteristics

The Town of Crescent is abundant with single-family homes, and many residents work in sales, office, management, business, science, and arts occupations. The Town has a rural character, consisting of wooded areas near lake- and forest-based outdoor recreation and tourism.

Most housing consists of single-family detached housing that is owner occupied. Most housing was constructed since 1970, and the greatest share of housing falls into high-valuation ranges. Some growth in the number of households is expected in upcoming years, and the community would benefit from a wide range of housing options. Consistent with statewide trends, new housing construction over the past decade has stalled, as only 6.5 percent of homes in the Town have been constructed since 2010. There is a need for construction of additional housing units to accommodate demand. It

would be desirable to construct housing in a variety of styles to create affordability and more adequately meet the needs of those at various income levels and desiring a range of amenities. Affordability is an issue for most renters and some homeowners within the Town. Seasonal residents and tourist rooming houses may be competing for housing with locals who live and work in the Town year-round, increasing prices and reducing availability.

There are many residents in older age categories in the Town. Seniors typically desire housing that is smaller, accessible, and near needed healthcare services and amenities. This need will continue throughout the upcoming decades. These are important considerations when looking at future housing policy and planning.

HOUSING PROGRAMS

There are a variety of state and federal housing programs geared at addressing a variety of housing issues. Grants and low interest loans are available for counties, communities, or individual homeowners and renters. The following are some housing resources administered through the state using state or federal funds that are available to participants.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

- Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)
- Rental Assistance (Section 8) Programs
- Multifamily Loan Fund
- National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling
- WHEDA Advantage
- FHA Advantage
- First-Time Home Buyer Advantage
- WHEDA Tax Advantage
- WHEDA Foundation Grant Program

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

- Single Family Direct Home Loans
- Single Family Home Loan Guarantees
- Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants
- Rural Housing Site Loan
- Housing Preservation & Revitalization Demonstration Loans & Grants
- Housing Preservation Grants
- Multi-Family Housing Direct Loans
- Multi-Family Housing Loan Guarantees
- Multi-Family Housing Rental Assistance

State of Wisconsin Department of Administration Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR)

- Housing Grants and Loans
- Homelessness Assistance and Prevention
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)
- HOME Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program
- HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD)
- Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program
- Housing Cost Reduction Initiative Program (HCRI)
- CDBG – Small Cities Housing and Revolving Loan Program

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

- The HUD Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program
- The HOME Investment Partnership Program
- Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers
- CDBG – Small Cities Program

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goals:

1. Promote adequate housing.
2. Gather and research Tourist Rooming House information, data, and existing properties.
3. Plan for infrastructure to support future housing.

Objectives:

1. Create zoning that accommodates all types of housing.
2. Retain and promote single-family residences as the preferred type of housing supply in the Town of Crescent.
3. Plan for housing beyond single family homes, including low income, multi-family units, senior living units, special needs facilities, condominiums, and mixed-use development.
4. Review and update the current subdivision requirements of the Town of Crescent.
5. Review and make a determination regarding manufactured housing.
6. Draft supplements to Oneida County requirements of Tourist Rooming Houses that focus on preservation of current character and culture of the Town of Crescent.
7. Establish a Town of Crescent strategy that addresses the spread of Tourist Rooming Houses.

8. Collaborate with neighboring communities to review existing infrastructure.
9. Determine needs relative to diverse housing types.
10. Develop a master plan that might include future sewer and water expansion and broadband.

Policies:

To be determined: The Plan Commission intends to gather more data and perform research on housing and housing issues to use in making future recommendations for policy consideration by the full Town Board.

Chapter 4: Utilities and Community Facilities

Utilities and community facilities, provided by either public or private entities, are critical for community development. Utilities include things such as electrical service, natural gas, telephone, cable, and internet. Community facilities include local government buildings, libraries, educational facilities, and maintenance and storage facilities, as well as services like police, fire protection, and emergency medical services.

The efficient utilization of these resources is one of the basic principles of comprehensive planning. Existing infrastructure is a public asset that must be safeguarded for the future, both to conserve and protect environmental values and to maximize the benefits of economic growth. Development that does not acknowledge or integrate existing infrastructure resources is wasteful of the public investment that they represent. Development patterns that require the extension of utilities and the expansion of public facilities while existing facilities go unused at other locations is likely not the best use of public resources. The Utilities and Community Facilities Map provides detailed information about the inventory throughout the Town.

PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

[Oneida County All Hazards Mitigation Plan, 2023](#)

This plan examines general conditions, including an inventory of utilities, community facilities, and emergency services throughout Oneida County. Risk assessment is at the heart of the all-hazards mitigation program. To mitigate the risks, it is necessary to assess their relative importance. The report looks at a series of mostly weather-related disasters; how they have affected the county in the past and how future instances are likely to affect the county and how local government should respond to such occurrences.

The report concludes with suggested mitigation measures that might be taken by local governments to reduce the risk from identified hazards. Counties and incorporated municipalities are required to adopt such plans with updates every five years.

[Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2019-2023](#)

The primary purpose of the Oneida County Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan is to guide and accomplish a coordinated and harmonious county recreation system. It serves as a guide for the decision making of recreation providers, elected officials, and stakeholders for the five-year planning period. This enables the highest and best use of county resources, including natural resources, manufactured resources, and financial resources. The Plan is being updated as of 2023.

UTILITIES

Water Service

The Town of Crescent does not have a public water supply system. Instead, private wells supply the water for public and private facilities within the Town. Concerns exist over water quality as properties continue to develop, and the Town has lost land as properties interested in water and sewer service are annexed by the City of Rhinelander. Overall, there are 6 high-capacity well locations and 1 surface water withdrawal location in the Town.

Wastewater

There is no public sewer system in the Town of Crescent. Therefore, all development in the Town uses on-site septic systems that discharge to underground drainage fields and may include conventional (underground), mound, pressure distribution, at-grade, holding tank, or sand filter systems. There is growing concern about water quality and the ability to site new septic systems on limited lots as older systems are phased out. Wisconsin Administrative Code regulates these on-site wastewater treatment systems. The Oneida County Planning and Zoning Office administers the program locally and issues permits, as well as inspection.

Solid Waste and Recycling

Private haulers provide curbside pickup of garbage and recyclables for residents and businesses located in the Town, and customers contract directly with these companies. Garbage may also be transported to the Oneida County Solid Waste Transfer Facility at 7450 Hwy K in the Town of Woodboro, which borders the Town of Crescent to the West. The County Facility accepts paper, containers, scrap metal, appliances, tires, batteries, fluorescent bulbs, and electronics for recycling; building materials for reuse; yard waste and vegetable waste for composting; construction and demolition waste for disposal; and garbage and hazardous waste for collection and transportation to an approved facility.

Energy and Telecommunications

Electric and Natural Gas

Wisconsin Public Service Corporation provides electric and natural gas service. There is one known communication tower located within the Town.

Solar Farm

As part of its goal to become carbon-neutral by 2050, Wisconsin Public Service recently brought a 7.5 Megawatt, 21,000 panel solar farm online known as the Hodag Solar Park. Located near Lake Julia, it has the capacity to power 2,000 homes and uses bi-facial panels to reflect and absorb light even when it is cloudy or snowy.

Cable/Internet

AT&T Mobility, Cellcom, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon Wireless provide mobile coverage, and Charter – Spectrum, Frontier Communications, HughesNet, Northwoods Connect, Viasat, Inc., and VSAT Systems, LLC provide internet and cable service.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Town Operations

Town Hall

The Crescent Town Hall is located at 3231 Golf Course Rd, Rhinelander, WI 54560. The Town Board consists of a Chair, two supervisors, a clerk, a treasurer, an assessor, a fire chief, and a road crew member. The Town Board meets once per month.

Post Office

There are no Post Office facilities in the Town. The nearest one is located at 156 S. Courtney Street in Rhinelander.

Public Safety

Law Enforcement

The Oneida County Sheriff's Department provides police protection in the Town of Crescent. They patrol all county roads and respond to 911 calls. In addition, the Wisconsin State Highway Patrol provides some patrol, mainly on state and federal highways.

Fire

The Town has a volunteer fire department stationed at 3231 Golf Course Rd in the Town. The Town contracts with the Towns of Pelican and Newbold (Oneida County) and the Towns of Woodboro and Harrison (Lincoln County) and the City of Rhinelander to provide fire services. There is an additional fire department facility on South River Road.

Ambulance

Emergency medical services and first responders are provided by the Town, and the Town contracts with the City of Rhinelander to provide ambulance services.

Medical Services

The nearest hospitals include Aspirus Hospital in Rhinelander, Marshfield Clinic in Rhinelander, Aspirus Rhinelander Walk-in Clinic, Veterans Administration Clinic, and DaVita Dialysis Center in Rhinelander.

Cemeteries

Wisconsin Statute 157.70 provides for the protection of all human burial sites, including all marked and unmarked burials and cemeteries. There are no known actively managed cemeteries in the Town. Minimum acreage requirements exist for cemeteries established on or after November 1, 1991, unless a cemetery is owned by a religious association, or the Town enacts an ordinance allowing new cemeteries of less than 20 acres to be constructed.

Childcare Facilities

There is one licensed childcare facility located within the Town of Crescent at the Crescent Lake Bible Camp, 2750 Bible Camp Rd.

Education

Primary and Secondary Schools

The School District of Rhinelander serves the entire Town, and the district has approximately 2,300 students. Crescent School is located in the Town at 3319 Boyce Drive, and it had a total of 409 students enrolled for the 2021-2022 school year. Other schools in the district include Central Elementary, James Williams Middle, Northwoods Community Elementary, Pelican Elementary, and Rhinelander High Schools.

Post-Graduate Education

The nearest college campus is Nicolet College in Rhinelander, Oneida County, which offers one- and two-year degree programs.

Libraries

The Rhinelander District Library is located nearby at 106 N. Stevens St in Rhinelander. Library services are also available at Crescent School. There is a director, associate director, adult services manager, children's services manager, and nine Library Board members.

Recreation

Parks

Oneida County operates Townline County Park on CTH K. This 21-acre park has a beach, boat launch ramp, restrooms and changing area, playground equipment, picnic area and grills, nature trails, and parking lots. There is a state-owned boat landing on Crescent Lake. The Town owns three boat landings on Lake Julia, Emma Lake, and Squash Lake. The United States Department of Agriculture has its Forestry Genetics Laboratory in association with the Hugo Bauer Nursery along CTH K across from Townline Park.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES: BROADBAND FACILITIES

Goal:

1. Ensure all residents have access to affordable broadband in their homes.

Objective:

1. Identify areas and barriers where there is weak to no access.

Policies:

1. The Town of Crescent may engage in communication with broadband service providers to address underserved areas.
2. The Town could secure provider(s) to build broadband infrastructure.
3. The Town may develop a recoverable fund to provide start-up cost-sharing to meet providers with a minimum customer county to install a relay tower.
4. The Town may consider requiring developers to include broadband service in new subdivisions.
5. The Town may consider relay tower opportunities if rezoning transpires.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES: EMERGENCY SERVICES

Goal:

1. Ensure emergency services to all Town of Crescent residents and businesses.

Objectives:

1. Services should be scaled to projected population changes.
2. The Town should continue to evaluate future needed services.
3. The Town may generate funds to support emergency services through grants, fundraisers, and donations, etc.
4. The Town may consider developing an emergency plan for Town Residents to have a shelter in place in case of prolonged power outages.
5. The Town may consider procuring alternative emergency power at Town Hall by using a fuel-powered generator or similar equipment.

Policies:

1. The Town may establish a fundraising committee.
2. The Town may consider maintaining mutual services with surrounding communities.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES: ELECTRICITY AND GREEN ENERGY

Goals:

1. The Town may consider seeking affordable and reliable energy sources for Town residents.
2. The Town may research green alternatives appropriate for its geography and dispersed population.

Objectives:

1. The Town may hold periodic public hearings and/or solicit information to learn more about electric and gas reliability and Town resident level of satisfaction.
2. The Town may consider whether underground power lines are needed in certain areas of the Town.
3. The Town may consider holding periodic educational sessions, including mail surveys, for available and practical green or other alternative energy sources.

Policies:

1. The Town may consider reviewing energy options that can be provided to residents.
2. The Town may periodically educate and communicate with Town residents regarding their energy options.
3. The Town may consider enacting energy initiatives if reasonable and affordable alternative solutions are determined to be practical and able to be implemented.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES: WATER AND SEWER FACILITIES

Goal:

1. The Town may consider potential water and sewer infrastructure.

Objective:

1. The Town may update zoning maps to include special zoning for multifamily, commercial, and large lake shoreline properties.

Policy:

1. The Town may biannually evaluate the potential to install water and sewer infrastructure.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Goal:

1. The Town may consider updating and maintaining existing Town-owned properties.

Objectives:

1. The Town may create an inventory of all Town-owned structures.
2. The Town may assess the needs of existing Town-owned structures.
3. The Town may determine if new or expanded structures are needed.

Policies:

1. The Town may consider holding a referendum and/or create a sinking fund for future needed infrastructure projects.
2. The Town Board could consider evaluating all Town-owned structures annually and maintaining a record of current and future structural needs.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES: PARKS AND RECREATION

Goals:

1. The Town could consider establishing venues for community use (events, etc.).
2. The Town may build upon and support future development of a wide range of silent and motor sports activities that utilize the Town's vast natural resources.
3. The Town could develop a plan for potential indoor recreation facilities.

Objectives:

1. The Town may inventory existing and potential recreation site locations.
2. The Town could consider actively promoting community events and opportunities that make use of the Town's recreational resources.
3. The Town may evaluate funding opportunities and options.
4. The Town could consider developing and maintaining an interactive and exhaustive recreation map to be posted on the Town's website, available in a format that can be downloaded.

Policies:

1. The Town may establish a Town of Crescent Recreation Committee.
2. The Town may ensure that the Town of Crescent Communications Committee promotes the Town's recreational opportunities. This committee is further discussed in Chapter One of this Plan, Issues and Opportunities.

Chapter 5: Transportation

A community's transportation system consists of a variety of roads; some are owned and maintained by local officials, others are part of the county or state road systems. In addition to roads, the transportation system includes separate facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, railroads, airports, and public transit. This section describes the transportation system in the Town of Crescent and related improvements or issues affecting the system.

PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES RELATED TO TRANSPORTATION

[The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act\)](#)

This current federal transportation program authorizes up to \$108 billion to support federal public transportation programs, including \$91 billion in guaranteed funding. It also reauthorizes surface transportation programs for FY 2022-2026 and provides advance appropriations for certain programs. Major goals include improving safety, modernizing aging transit infrastructure and fleets, investing in cleaner transportation, and improving equity in communities with limited transportation access.

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.

[Connect 2050: Let's Connect Wisconsin](#)

Connections 2050 is the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) long-range transportation plan for the state. Adopted in 2022, the plan addresses all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit. It replaces Connections 2030.

[Regional Livability Plan, 2015](#)

Transportation is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Plan (RLP), adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Transportation Assessment Report, a component of the plan, looks in detail at the transportation network throughout the ten-county region and identifies trends and issues facing transportation.

The Regional Livability Plan addresses three issues: the modes of transportation to work, the age of drivers in the region, and the high transportation maintenance cost. The three transportation goals of the RLP are as follows:

- Provide and improve transportation access to people of all ages and abilities to ensure lifelong mobility and accessibility.
- Fund the maintenance and expansion of the transportation system.
- Enhance the regional economy by supporting airports and freight rail.

Locally Developed, Coordinated Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Plan, 2019-2023

Oneida and Vilas Counties developed this five-year plan that was facilitated by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The plan analyzes service gaps and needs in public transit and human services transportation and proposes strategies to address the gaps and needs.

Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 2018

This plan is a region-wide effort to improve bicycling and walking across communities within North Central Wisconsin. The plan assesses existing conditions related to bicycling and walking, identifies other potential trail and route user groups, identifies routes, and describes policies and programs to assist local governments in improving bicycling and walking to promote connectivity between communities and destinations throughout North Central Wisconsin.

State Trails Network Plan

This 2001 document (revised in 2003) 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.

ROAD NETWORK

Classification

Functional

A functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. At the upper limit of the system (i.e. principal arterials), are facilities that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel), while at the lower limits are local roads and streets that emphasize access over speed and efficiency.

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

- Principal Arterials serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate of interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban

areas greater than 5,000 population or connect major centers of activity and the highest traffic volumes and the longest trip desires.

- Minor Arterials, in conjunction with principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators, providing intracommunity continuity and service to trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials.
- Collectors provide both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. The collector system distributes trips from the local streets and channels it onto the arterial system.
- Local Streets comprise all facilities not on one of the higher systems. They serve primarily to provide direct access to abutting land and access to the higher order of systems. Local streets offer the highest level of access, but the lowest level of mobility for automobiles.

Jurisdictional

Roads are commonly classified in one of two ways: by ownership or by purpose. Jurisdictional responsibility refers to ownership or a particular road, while functional classification, as described above, identifies the road by the level of service it provides.

Jurisdiction refers to government ownership, not necessarily responsibility. For example, some state-owned roads are maintained by local jurisdictions. Additionally, the designation of a public road as a “federal-aid highway” does not alter its ownership or jurisdiction as a state or local road, only that its service value and importance have made that road eligible for federal-aid construction and rehabilitation funds.

Ownership is divided among the federal, state, and local governments. States own over 20 percent of the national road network. The federal government has responsibility for about 5 percent, primarily in national parks, forests, and Indian reservations. Over 75 percent of the road system is locally controlled.

In some cases, local municipalities are responsible for conducting routine maintenance and minor repairs on state and federal highways within their jurisdictional boundaries. In return, the state generally provides financing to those jurisdictions. However, major repairs and reconstruction are generally still the responsibility of the State Department of Transportation.

The road system within the Town of Crescent is a network of state highways, county highways and local roads. The jurisdictional and functional breakdown is shown in Table 18.

Table 18: Road Mileage by Jurisdictional and Functional Class				
Jurisdiction	Functional Classification			Totals
	Arterial	Collector	Local	
State*	11.30	0.00	0.00	11.30
County	1.39	5.61	0.47	7.47
Town	0.00	15.01	34.44	49.45
Totals	0.00	6.26	39.12	68.22

Source: WisDOT

Major Road Facilities

The following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in the Town of Crescent. All major roads are summarized by functional classification, jurisdiction, and annual average daily traffic (AADT), when available. Map 4 Transportation provides detailed transportation information for the Town. See Table 19.

Looking at AADT over time can provide some insight into roads that may need upgrading or increased maintenance in the future. Table 19 shows AADT in 2010 and 2022. Locations with the highest increase of AADT are Wausau Road south of USH 8 (120 percent), USH 8 west of South River Road (49.2 percent), and River Road south of USH 8 (38.2 percent). Locations with the biggest decrease in AADT include Boyce Road Between Lake Julia Rd and STH 17 (-63.2 percent), CTH K west of CTH N (-30.0 percent), and STH 17 between South 17th and Boyce Roads (-29.7 percent).

Table 19: Road Network AADT			
Traffic Count Location	2009	2022	% Change
CTH K W of CTH N	2,000	1,400	-30.0%
CTH N S of CTH K	520	460	-11.5%
USH 8 Between CTH N North & Wausau Rd	6,100	7,400	21.3%
USH 8 SW of STH 47	7,400	7,800	5.4%
USH 8 W of S River Rd	6,100	9,100	49.2%
STH 17 Between S 17th & Boyce Rds	3,700	2,600	-29.7%
STH 17 N of Lincoln Co. Line	2,500	2,300	-8.0%
Boyce Rd Between Lake Julia Rd & STH 17	1,900	700	-63.2%
Boyce Dr E of STH 17	280	210	-25.0%
Crescent Road S of USH 8	940	920	-2.1%
Fire Tower Rd W of S River Rd	240	260	8.3%
Lassig Rd E of STH 17	210	170	-19.0%
Hatrapids Rd W of STH 17	410	340	-17.1%
River Rd S of USH 8	340	470	38.2%
Wausau Rd 0.5 Mi S of USH 8	100	220	120.0%

Source: WisDOT

County Highway K

CTH K is an east-to-west collector across the northern boundary of the Town. AADT has decreased by 30 percent since 2009 on this road west of CTH N.

County Highway N

CTH N is a north-to-south collector between CTH K and STH 8, which both run east-to-west. AADT has decreased by 11.5 percent since 2009 on this road.

U.S. Highway 8

USH 8 is an arterial that runs east and west between the City of Rhinelander and USH 51 farther to the west. Three traffic counts show an overall increase in AADT since 2009, growing by 21.3 percent, 5.4 percent, and 49.2 percent in the three locations, respectively.

State Highway 17

STH 17 is an arterial that runs north-to-south, connecting Eagle River and Merrill. It merges with USH 8 to form a bypass around the City of Rhinelander. Two traffic counts in Table 19 show an AADT decrease of 29.7 percent and 8.0 percent since 2009 in these locations.

Other Town Roads

WisDOT has traffic counts for several Town roads throughout the Town, all of which are collectors or local roads. While most of them saw an AADT decrease since 2009, Wausau Road saw a considerable increase of 120.0 percent. River Road (38.2 percent) and Fire Tower Road (8.3 percent) also saw increases in AADT.

In general, traffic generated and attracted by any new land use can increase congestion on the roadway system. Even without creating new access points, changes in land use can alter the capacity of the roadway. Uncontrolled division of land tends to affect highways by increasing the amount of turning traffic into and out from intersecting driveways, therefore impairing safety, and impeding traffic movements. Future population growth may impact traffic counts in the Town's roads.

Road Maintenance

The Town of Crescent uses the Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) system, which was designed by the Transportation Information Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The PASER system is the rating system used by most Wisconsin communities. The PASER system rates road surfaces on a scale of 1 to 10.

- “1” and “2” = very poor condition
- “3” = poor condition
- “4” and “5” = fair condition
- “6” and “7” = good condition
- “8” = very good condition
- “9” and “10” = excellent condition

Table 20 shows a summary of Town road pavement conditions in the Town of Crescent. Note that these totals only include local roads, so County and State Highways are excluded. Town roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below “fair” must be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary. The roads that display a surface rating of “good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to promote safe travel conditions. Most Town roads are in relatively good condition, as over 85 percent are rated “fair” or better. Monitoring these ratings allows the Town to anticipate when construction may have to occur.

Table 20: Summary of Pavement Conditions, 2021		
Surface Condition Rating	Miles	Percent
Unimproved	0.19	0.4%
Gravel	0.31	0.6%
Sealcoat	0	0.0%
Asphalt	48.96	99.0%
Total	49.46	100.0%
Surface Condition Rating	Miles	Percent
Very Poor	0.09	0.2%
Poor	0.56	1.1%
Fair	6.56	13.3%
Good	27.07	54.7%
Very Good	12.42	25.1%
Excellent	2.77	5.6%
Total	49.46	100.0%

Source: WisDOT

Trucking

USH 8 and STH 17 are WisDOT-designated long truck routes. 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. Local issues such as safety, weight restrictions, and noise impacts play significant roles in the designation of local truck routes.

Rail

The Fox Valley and Lake Superior Railroad serves Oneida County according to the 2021 DOT Wisconsin Railroads and Harbors Map. It forms an east-west connection through the Town of Crescent that ends in the City of Rhinelander, along with existing out-of-service tracks extending to the east of Rhinelander.

Air Transportation

Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport, which borders the Town, provides commercial passenger service. There are no known private airstrips in the Town of Crescent. Delta provides direct flights to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

Transportation Services for Specialized Populations

The Aging and Disability Resource Center provides information on volunteer transportation services for those that are elderly and for those with disabilities. Rides are provided for shopping, medical appointments, or to other locations as needed.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goals:

1. Develop a multi-modal transportation infrastructure network throughout the Town.
2. Consider the long-term maintenance needs of the County's transportation plan on Town roads.

Objectives:

1. Link various key destination points within the Town for easier and varied access. There shall be a minimum of two modes of transportation (motorized and non-motorized) in these new connections, which shall be accessible to all, including individuals with special needs. When implementing these new facilities, the Town shall explore funding options, especially those found in the State's most recent statewide transportation plan.
2. The Town shall communicate with transportation clubs and associations such as the ATV club, the Snowmobile Club, Rhinelander Area Silent Trails Association (RASTA), and more.
3. Coordinate with state and local regulations.
4. Engage each stakeholder group for input on maintenance requirements for their individual needs and consider potential cost-sharing.
5. Plan for long-term maintenance and improvements.

Policies:

1. The Town may contract with a qualified planner to develop and incorporate a Town multi-modal plan.
2. The Town could contact the State of Wisconsin regarding funding programs, particularly those found in the most recent statewide transportation plan (Connect 2050).
3. The Town Plan Committee may hold hearings with any potential stakeholder as well as state and local transportation officials.
4. The Town could consider updating and publishing trail maps at least every 5 years to identify trail locations and associated facilities. Maps shall be posted to the Town's website.

Chapter 6: Economic Development

The economic base of the community serves as an important driver for current and future land use. Economic characteristics include such components as the size of the civilian labor force, comparative employment growth, employment by industry, unemployment rates, and commuting patterns. Employment patterns and economic trends generally occur on a regional scale. Residents of one community often work in another. Similarly, changes in a major industry can impact jobs and growth far beyond the community where the business is physically located. It is therefore important to understand a local community's economy considering its regional context.

Assessment of these components of the economic base provides an important historical perspective on current land use patterns and provides insights that help to predict possible future directions and opportunities for growth of the local economy.

PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

[Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\), 2021](#)

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 NCWRPC is the agency responsible for maintaining that designation. As part of the designation, the NCWRPC annually prepares a CEDS. This report summarizes and assesses economic development activities over the past year and presents new and modified strategies to promote growth.

[Regional Livability Plan \(RLP\), 2015](#)

Economic Development is one of four elements included in the RLP, adopted by the NCWRPC in 2015. The Economic Development Assessment Report within the RLP observes in detail the economic health of the ten-county region and identifies trends and issues facing the local economy. The RLP addresses three economic development issues:

- Available Labor Force and Employment – Businesses need a workforce with the proper education to meet the demands of an ever-changing job market. High labor needs combined with an older workforce preparing for retirement will result in a labor force shortage and inability to meet the workforce needs of area businesses. The future availability of a quality labor force is a major concern for the business community.
- Living Wage – over the past ten years, the region's cost of living (i.e. home prices and rent) have increased faster than per capita and household incomes. Consequently, many working adults must seek public assistance and/or hold multiple jobs to meet the basic needs of their families.

Occupations paying a living wage provide families resources for savings, investments, education, and the purchasing of goods which improves the local economy and increases the quality of life of the region's population.

- Broadband – High-speed broadband connections are crucial for government services, healthcare, education, library systems, private businesses, and residents. Improving the region's telecommunication network can assist existing businesses, attract new businesses, and allow residents to access education opportunities.

[ALICE: A Study of Financial Hardship in Wisconsin, 2020](#)

This report, developed by the United Way, described the 24 percent of households in Oneida County that are above the federal poverty level, but still struggle to afford basic household necessities, or "ALICE" households (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). These households are largely employed but do not earn enough in wages to meet the "household survival budget," which does not allow for any savings. The report states that many ALICE households provide vital services, such as retail, health care, childcare, and security, but cannot make ends meet on the income provided from these jobs.

The ALICE report shows that 27 percent of Crescent households are either below the federal poverty level or are considered ALICE households, indicating that the average household in Crescent is more financially strained than the average Oneida County (24 percent) and State of Wisconsin household (23 percent).

[Oneida County Comprehensive Plan, 2013](#)

The Oneida County Comprehensive Plan analyzes labor patterns, the economic base, employment projections, and existing facilities. The plan outlines the following goals:

- Maintain, diversify, and expand the economy, while maintaining the rural character and environmental integrity of the county.
- Conserve and enhance the quality of life in the county by promoting the infrastructure and human resources that may foster economic development compatible with Oneida County's rural Northwoods character.
- 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.

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

County Economic Environment

Oneida County's economic base centers on a variety of sectors including manufacturing, retail, transportation, warehousing, trade, education, information, professional services, tourism, and other natural resource-based businesses. The City of Rhineland serves as a regional hub for Oneida and surrounding counties due to the presence of jobs, an airport, higher education, and other characteristics. The county is predominantly rural, with extensive wooded lakefront properties, making it attractive for retirees and seasonal residents. There are no industrial parks in Crescent, but several nearby in the City of Rhineland.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Economic Sectors

Table 21 details employment by sector for the Town of Crescent. In 2021, there were 1,138 persons employed in the ten basic economic sectors in the Town, up 13.4 percent since 2010. Between 2010 and 2021, there were several dramatic shifts throughout most of the sectors. The three fastest growing sectors were:

1. Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing (215.4 percent)
2. Transportation and warehousing, and utilities (150 percent)
3. Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services (150 percent)

In terms of total employment, the manufacturing sector is the largest segment of the economy, followed by educational services, health care, and social assistance. In Oneida County there were 16,968 persons employed in 2021, down 4.7 percent since 2010. Most people were employed in educational services, health care, and social assistance, followed by retail trade. The area that experienced the most significant downward trend was information.

Table 21.: Employment by Sector						
Sector	Town of Crescent			Oneida County		
	2010	2021	% Change	2010	2021	% Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	18	16	-11.1%	383	377	-1.6%
Construction	54	35	-35.2%	1,843	1,138	-38.3%
Manufacturing	226	361	59.7%	2,028	2,450	20.8%
Wholesale trade	20	41	105.0%	428	483	12.9%
Retail trade	88	91	3.4%	2,613	2,328	-10.9%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	6	15	150.0%	780	503	-35.5%
Information	40	11	-72.5%	435	229	-47.4%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	13	41	215.4%	802	1,002	24.9%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	60	150	150.0%	1,228	1,391	13.3%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	301	225	-25.2%	4,080	3,777	-7.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	57	51	-10.5%	1,851	1,747	-5.6%
Other Services, except Public Administration	30	33	10.0%	652	880	35.0%
Public Administration	91	68	-25.3%	679	663	-2.4%
Total	1,004	1,138	13.3%	17,802	16,968	-4.7%

Source: ACS 2021

Labor Force Analysis

Labor Force

Labor force is defined as the number of persons, sixteen and over, employed or looking to be employed. Consistent with the Town’s total population increase from 2010 to 2021, the number of people in the labor force has increased. There were 141 more people in the labor force from 2010 to 2021, for a gain of 13.3 percent. Oneida County lost workers, with a net decrease of 1,443 individuals in the labor force, for a 7.7 percent increase. The State of Wisconsin had a marginal increase in the labor force from 2010 to 2021, at a rate of 1.6 percent.

Table 22: Labor Force			
	2010	2021	% Change
Population 16 years and over	1,498	1,916	27.9%
Labor Force	1,058	1,199	13.3%
Employed	1,004	1,138	13.3%
Unemployed	54	61	13.0%
Unemployment Rate	5.1%	5.1%	0.0%
Participation Rate	70.6%	62.6%	-8.0%

Source: ACS 2021

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 part of the labor force. In both 2010 and 2021, the Town’s unemployment rate was 5.1 percent. The unemployment rate was higher than both Oneida County (2.4%) and the State of Wisconsin (3.5%) in 2021.

Workforce Participation

Workforce participation is a measure expressed in terms of a percentage of persons actively seeking employment divided by the total working age population. People not participating in the labor force may not seek employment due to a variety of reasons including retirement, disability, choice to stay home with children, or are simply not looking for work. In 2010, 70.6 percent of Crescent’s population over the age of 16 was in the labor force. By 2021, that percentage decreased to 62.6 percent. The state participation percentage was 65.1 percent in 2021, while Oneida County’s participation rate was 54.9 percent. A decrease in participation rates since 2010 is likely a result of more retirements.

Laborshed

A laborshed is an area or region from which an employment center draws its commuting workers. In 2020, approximately 35 of the 411 total jobs within the Town of Crescent were filled by Crescent residents. About 376 workers traveled to Crescent during the average workday. There were 991 Crescent residents that commuted to locations outside of the Town for work, indicating that Crescent’s laborshed extends beyond its municipal boundaries. Figure 8 shows the inflow-outflow patterns of the Town of Crescent’s laborshed.

Figure 8: Inflow/Outflow Analysis Town of Crescent, 2020



Source: U.S. Census on the Map 2019

In-Migration

In-commuters come to Crescent from all over, with 75.1 percent of commuters being the only person commuting from their respective location. The City of Rhinelander supplies the highest number of commuters (about 73), followed by the City of Wausau in Marathon County (about 6). Over 58 percent of workers live in Oneida County, followed by Forest (3.9 percent) and Lincoln (3.9 percent) Counties. Seasonal homeowners also may occasionally work from a cabin rather than their primary residence far from the Town.

Out-Migration

Similar to In-Migration patterns, most out-migrating commuters work in the City of Rhinelander (33.3 percent) and the City of Wausau (Marathon County, 3.4 percent). Over 48 percent of residents commute to another location in Oneida County, followed by Marathon and Lincoln Counties as top commute destinations.

Occupations

Table 23 identifies the five main occupational categories by number and percentage and provides a comparison with the Town, county, and state. Management, business, science, and arts workers are the largest component of the labor force in the Town of Crescent, followed by production, transportation, and material moving workers. In both the county and the state, most workers in the fields of management, business, science, and arts occupations, followed by sales and office

occupations. In Crescent, the smallest number of residents work in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations, like Oneida County and statewide.

Table 23: Resident Occupations, 2021						
Occupation	Town of Crescent		Oneida County		Wisconsin	
	Management, business, science, and arts occupations	423	37.2%	5,609	33.1%	1,180,744
Service occupations	203	17.8%	3,008	17.7%	443,972	14.8%
Sales and office occupations	175	15.4%	3,624	21.4%	569,596	19.0%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	85	7.5%	1,892	11.2%	265,809	8.9%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	252	22.1%	2,835	16.7%	531,015	17.8%
Total	1,138	100.0%	16,968	100.0%	2,991,136	100.0%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2021

Economic Development Strengths and Weaknesses

Economic development is an organized process to expand the number and types of businesses, increase employment levels and opportunities, and increase the tax base. A part of the process to prepare for economic development is to identify local strengths and weaknesses and develop strategies to promote strengths and address weaknesses.

Residential Strengths and Weaknesses

The Town’s strength for attracting and retaining residential development is its rural atmosphere. In addition, the Town provides the basic services needed to support residential growth, such as emergency services and roadways.

The most significant weaknesses with attracting residential development include the lack of infrastructure such as water, sewer, and broadband. It is also important to balance residential development with existing woodland uses and natural resources, such as lakes and wetlands.

Business Strengths and Weaknesses

The Town is dominated by residential, outdoor recreation, and some home occupation related businesses. Other assorted uses are present, such as the Hodag Solar Park.

Weaknesses in attracting commercial or industrial uses are lack of municipal sewer and water, broadband, and lack of suitable land. Though the Town hasn’t historically pursued commercial and industrial development, development on the outskirts of the City of Rhinelander has converted former Town lands into these uses.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

There are several economic development programs available to businesses and local governments in Oneida County. The following is a partial list of those programs.

County

Oneida County Economic Development Corporation

The Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC) The Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC) was founded in 1989 as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) Corporation to act 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 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.

Oneida County Revolving Loan Fund

A Wisconsin Department of Commerce Economic Development Grant was awarded to Oneida County, which enabled the county to establish a revolving loan fund to assist local businesses. The fund is managed and administered by the OCEDC.

Regional

Grow North

Grow North is a non-profit organization whose mission is to assist area counties and communities in their efforts to recruit and retain businesses, stimulate new job creation and to foster an environment conducive to entrepreneurial growth. It was created to foster cooperation among economic development partners and foster economic growth efforts in Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas Counties.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The Town is a member of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, as are all local governments in Oneida County based on county membership. Membership brings with it a variety of planning benefits and services. Benefits include participation in the Economic Development District, including eligibility for a variety of grants administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. In addition, resulting in membership with the NCWRPC, the county is a member of the North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation which manages a revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed-rate, low down payment, low interest financing.

Central Wisconsin Economic Development (CWED) Fund

Revolving loan funds are available to entrepreneurs and their lenders to structure financing packages for start-up and expanding businesses to encourage economic growth in the area. CWED manages a revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed rate, low down payment, low-interest financing.

State

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) is the state's primary department for the delivery of integrated services to businesses. Their purpose is to 1) foster retention of and creation of new jobs and investment opportunities in Wisconsin; 2) foster and promote economic business, export, and community development; and 3) promote the public health, safety, and welfare through effective and efficient regulations, education, and enforcement. WEDC manages a variety of programs intended to assist businesses and communities. These include:

- Brownfield Program
- Capacity Building Grants (CB)
- Certified Sites
- Historic Preservation Tax Credit
- Business Opportunity Loan Fund
- Workforce Training Grants
- Idle Industrial Sites Redevelopment Program
- The Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) Program
- Community Development Investment (CDI) Grant Program
- Fast Forward Program

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.

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.

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.

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.

Wisconsin Small Cities Program

The Wisconsin Department of Administration 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.

Federal

Economic Development Administration (EDA)

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

US 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.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goals:

1. Consider holding a hearing with the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC) to determine what their long-term plans for the area and what, if any, development may be desirable for the Town of Crescent.
2. Integrate Economic Development considerations with the potential Township-wide rezoning (see Chapter 7 for more information).
3. Determine water and sewer availability and/or options regarding the infrastructure owned by the City of Rhineland.
4. Encourage the Town Board to be open to economic development by reaching out to certain commercial and/or service industry trade groups for potential business opportunities within the Town of Crescent and/or serve as a draw for future businesses.
5. Work with the Rhineland-Oneida County Airport Commission to determine how their facilities may enhance business opportunities within the Town of Crescent and/or serve as a draw for future businesses.
6. Encourage more home-based businesses by expanding broadband within the geographic borders of the Town of Crescent. See information in Chapter 4: Utilities and Community Facilities regarding the Town's existing communication infrastructure.

Objectives:

1. Work with the OCEDC to hold a listening session to discuss relevant goals, objectives, and policies of this chapter.
2. Rezone the Town of Crescent and identify areas that would be ideal for future economic development opportunities.
3. Work with Rhineland-Oneida County Airport management to better develop aesthetics, wayfinding, and general awareness of the airport's services and gather useful information to promote its usefulness to new businesses.
4. Reach out to industry and/or service trade organizations to determine if there are opportunities to attract new businesses to the Town of Crescent that would be compatible with our greater long-term goals and mission.
5. Pursue broadband expansion.

Policies:

1. Consider developing a new Township-wide rezoning plan.
2. Hold a special meeting focused on pursuing new business opportunities for the Town.
3. Invite a member of the Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport Commission to a Town Board meeting to share the airport's long-term plans and mission.
4. Support the expansion of broadband access following the recommendations in Chapter 4: Utilities and Community Facilities in this plan and seek grants for broadband service expansion.

Chapter 7: Land Use

Land use analysis is a means of broadly classifying how land is used. Each type of use has its own characteristics that can determine compatibility, location, and preference to other land uses in the Town. The land use plan brings together consideration for both the physical development as well as the social characteristics of the town. Land use mapping and related information is used to analyze the current pattern of development and serves as the framework for formulating how land may be used in the future.

To arrive at an optimum plan that is both effective and implemented, the plan must account for past development activity as well as current market factors and conditions that shape where and how land may be developed. This chapter discusses uses of land in the Town of Crescent. The existing land use types are defined, current land uses are analyzed, and existing and potential land use conflicts are identified.

PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

[Regional Livability Plan, 2015](#)

Land use is one of the four elements included in the RLP, adopted by NCWRPC in 2015. The Land Use Assessment Report, a component of the plan, looks in detail at the land uses throughout the ten-county region and identifies issues and trends related to land use: housing density and farmland preservation. The two land use goals of the plan are as follows:

- Preserve and protect the Region’s landscape, environmental resources and sensitive lands while encouraging healthy communities.
- Manage and reduce vacant land and structures.

[Oneida County Comprehensive Plan, 2013](#)

The Oneida County Comprehensive Plan chapter on land use analyzes patterns of development, existing land use, and future land use. The plan sets the following land use goals:

- 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.
- 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.

- Maintain and update the County Comprehensive Plan.

EXISTING LAND USE

The Town of Crescent covers 20,669 acres in the south-central portion of Oneida County. The Town is bounded by the Town of Newbold to the north, the Town of Pelican to the east, the Town of Harrison (Lincoln County) to the south, and the Town of Woodboro to the west.

Knowledge of the existing land use patterns within a town is necessary to develop a desired “future” land use pattern. The Existing Land Use Map was developed using air photos from a countywide flight in 2020, with updates by residents in 2023. Twelve basic categories were used to classify the various existing land uses. The categories include Agriculture, Commercial, Governmental/Institutional, Industrial, Open Lands, Outdoor Recreation, Quarry, Residential, Transportation, Utility, Water, and Woodlands.

Land use classifications are groups of land uses that are compatible, and that separate conflicting uses. The classifications are not zoning districts and do not have the authority of zoning but are intended for use as a guide when making land use and zoning decisions.

Existing Land Use Classifications

Map 5 outlines the existing land use pattern throughout the Town. The intent of an existing land use map is to illustrate the location of existing land use categories within the Town for planning purposes. Land use classifications are grouped by the use most central to each parcel. For example, lands classified as residential may also have a barn or home-based business on site.

Existing land use classifications and acreage totals are presented in Table 24. As can be observed, woodlands are the largest land use category, with over 68 percent or 14,087 acres in the Town. Agriculture follows with a total of 1,665 acres or 8.1 percent. Residential property constitutes 1,564 acres, or 7.6 percent of the total Town area. Most residences are spread throughout the town, mainly in low density, consisting of seasonal and secluded homes. There is a very limited amount of commercial and industrial development scattered throughout the Town, and 78 out of the 79 acres of land used for utilities is occupied by the Hodag Solar Park.

Table 24: Land Use by Area		
Land Use Type	Acres	Percentage
Agriculture	1,665	8.1%
Commercial	98	0.5%
Governmental/Institutional	10	0.0%
Industrial	104	0.5%
Open Lands	468	2.3%
Outdoor Recreation	46	0.2%
Quarry	101	0.5%
Residential	1,567	7.6%
Transportation	305	1.5%
Utility	79	0.4%
Water	2,140	10.4%
Woodlands	14,087	68.2%
Total	20,669	100.0%

Source: NCWRPC

Managed Forest Law (MFL) & Public Lands

There are 4,406 acres enrolled in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program, which are subject to a substantial reduction in property taxes. Additionally, there are 286 acres of national forest, 81 acres of state forest, and 62 acres of county forest in the Town.

Land Supply and Demand

The population in the Town of Crescent decreased during the 2000s but increased considerably between 2010 and 2021, possible due to an influx of retirees. The number of households has risen steadily since 2000 and is continuing to increase. The increase in households during the 2000s as population decreased is a result of decreased household size, meaning there are more households relative to the population. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) population and household projections predict an increase in households until 2035, with an expected decrease by 2040 that is still higher than the number of households in 2021. Although DOA population projections are all lower in the future than the estimated 2021 population, DOA’s 2020 projection of 2,120 was below the ACS 2021 estimated population of 2,308. Therefore, the Town grew faster than expected. Because the Town’s 2021 population was 188 people more than what was projected for 2020, this land use demand analysis adds 188 people to the Wisconsin DOA projections for 2025-2040. These “adjusted” projections ensure that enough land is available for development should the Town continue to have a higher population than DOA projections.

There are a limited number of commercial and industrial uses throughout the Town, and this is not expected to change significantly. As shown by the existing land use inventory, a substantial portion of the Town is either “undeveloped” woodlands or agriculture, so the supply of land “available” for development appears to be adequate. However, the Town must balance long-term development and growth against priorities for preservation of agricultural and woodland properties, determining the most desirable residential parcel sizes, and appropriate development patterns for both residential and commercial uses.

Table 25 shows the estimated land demand in acres over the next 20 years. Based on the DOA’s projections in Chapter 1 of this plan and using the current residential density of 0.68 acres per person, an expected 112 acres are needed for residential development altogether by 2030, when the population is expected to peak. Using the same projections and 0.04 existing acres of commercial development per person, an expected 7 acres of commercial and another 7 acres of industrial land are needed by 2040. Since it is likely development may occur on lands that are currently agriculture, open lands, or woodlands, a cumulative total number of acres that are expected to be developed are in Table 25. Infill or redevelopment is a strategy the Town could use to preserve these undeveloped lands while allowing for development. Infill is when development takes place on an undeveloped site already served by infrastructure, and redevelopment is when a formerly developed site is demolished and developed.

Table 25: Land Use by Area				
Category	2025	2030	2035	2040
Additional Residents	100	165	160	95
Agriculture/Open Lands/Woodlands	-77	-126	-122	-73
Residential (0.68 acres per person)	68	112	108	64
Commercial (0.04 acres per person)	4	7	7	4
Industrial (0.04 acres per person)	4	7	7	4

Source: Wisconsin DOA, NCWRPC

Land Values

Table 26 displays the assessed land values in the Town of Crescent according to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR). Overall, land value per acre for non-tax-exempt land in the Town is valued at about \$20,760 per acre based on assessed land values from Oneida County tax information. Residential properties have the highest value per acre, followed by commercial land.

Table 26: Town of Crescent Land Values, 2022			
Land Classification	Total Value of Land and Improvements	Total Acres	Average Value per Acre
Residential	\$240,586,500	2,489	\$96,660
Commercial	\$12,109,500	271	\$44,685
Manufacturing	\$0	0	N/A
Agricultural	\$251,300	1,569	\$160
Undeveloped	\$1,002,100	3,187	\$314
Ag - Forest	\$636,900	623	\$1,022
Forest	\$9,975,700	4,643	\$2,149
Other	\$1,504,000	34	\$44,235
Total	\$266,066,000	12,816	\$20,760

Source: Wisconsin DOR, NCWRPC

Opportunities for Redevelopment

Most of the Town currently consists of woodlands, all of which has experienced very little development. Hence the need for “redevelopment” is negligible. Some developed areas may not meet current development standards or may have fallen into disrepair since they were initially developed. Some of these properties may need rehabilitation rather than needing a comprehensive redevelopment strategy. Revitalizing existing developed properties minimizes the need for new infrastructure to serve new development while retaining the Town’s rural character.

Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts

There are few existing and potential land use conflicts in the Town of Crescent. There is an abundance of undeveloped land and much stable land ownership. The most likely potential land use conflicts would be between existing woodland uses and the pressure to convert to residential use. The Town generally values maintaining its woodland character.

FUTURE LAND USE

Map 6 is the Future Land Use Plan Map, which illustrates the desired arrangement of preferred land uses for the future of the Town of Crescent. The Future Land Use Map is general in nature and was developed as a guide for future development in the Town. Although the future land use plan map indicates appropriate future land uses, it is not a zoning map. In many areas the existing zoning districts already reflect the desired future land uses; while in other areas, zoning map or text changes may be required to meet some desired future land use.

The identification of desired future land use types through the map does not imply that an area is immediately appropriate for rezoning. Given service demands and a desire for controlled growth, careful consideration of the timing of zoning decisions is essential. In some places, it may be

appropriate to rezone land to reflect the planned land use designations, while in other cases, it may be desirable to wait to rezone the area until an actual development proposal is brought forward.

Future land use planning assists local governments with balancing individual property rights and community goals, minimizing conflict between different land uses, and maximizing use of public expenditures. It is essential that future land use planning is ongoing and flexible. Periodic plan updates ensure that the plan continues to reflect future community preferences.

Future Land Use Map Classifications

Agriculture

Identifies areas designated to foster the preservation and use of agricultural land and related uses including the associated farmsteads.

Commercial

Identifies areas that are recommended for commercial and business development, varying in scale and intensity, as well as existing commercial establishments located throughout the Town.

Forestry

Identifies areas of large woodlands within the Town.

Governmental

Identifies existing or planned governmental facilities within the Town.

Industrial

Identifies areas recommended for industrial development, as well as existing industrial uses.

Preservation

Identifies those areas to be maintained as permanent or semi-permanent open space.

Recreation

This category differs from forestry and preservation/open space in that it is used for active, developed recreational facilities such as a baseball diamond or golf course.

Residential

Identifies areas recommended for residential development typically consisting of relatively smaller lot sizes.

Rural Residential

The rural residential classification is designed to provide for low-density, single-family residences located in natural forested, rural settings using larger lot sizes. Development may be clustered which could preserve longer stretches of forested shoreline and reduce the amount of infrastructure needed to serve lakefront properties.

Transportation

Identifies the existing road network along with the recommendations for safe and improved traffic movement within the Town.

Water

Surface waterbodies

LAND USE PROGRAMS AND TOOLS

The principal land use program in Wisconsin is the comprehensive planning program. The primary land use tools are zoning, subdivision ordinance, and official mapping.

Zoning

Under Wisconsin Statutes, counties and local units of government are authorized to adopt zoning ordinances. Zoning is a method for implementing or carrying out the land use plan by predetermining a logical pattern of land use development.

A zoning ordinance consists of a map and written text. The zoning map divides the community into districts or zones, such as agriculture, residential, commercial, or industrial. Within each of these districts, the text of zoning ordinance specifies the permitted land uses, the size of buildings, yard/lot dimensions, and other prerequisites in obtaining permission to develop. The goal of the zoning ordinance is to set a reasonable development pattern by keeping similar and related uses together and separating dissimilar, unrelated, incompatible uses, particularly in relationship to transportation facilities, utilities and public services and facilities.

The Town of Crescent does not have its own Zoning Ordinance. Zoning for the Town is administered by Oneida County.

Shoreland Zoning

All counties are mandated by Wisconsin law to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates development in shoreland and floodplain areas for the entire county outside of villages and cities in accordance with state shoreland zoning standards. Towns may apply their own zoning in shoreland areas as long as it does not impose requirements on matters regulated by a county.

Farmland Preservation Zoning

Farmland preservation zoning is a voluntary zoning classification that is intended to minimize fragmentation of farmland by imposing development limitations consistent with or more restrictive than the provisions listed in Chapter 91 of WI Statutes. To adopt farmland preservation zoning, a municipality must be enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program. The Town of Crescent does not have a certified ordinance.

Land Division

At present, land division within the Town of Crescent is regulated by Chapter 13 of the Town's Code of Ordinances, the Subdivision Ordinance. Subdivision regulation relates to the way in which land is divided and made ready for development. A community can control the subdivision of land by requiring a developer to meet certain conditions in exchange for the privilege of recording a plat. While imposing conditions restricts the use of private property, the cumulative effect of land subdivision on the health, safety, and welfare of a community is so great as to justify public control of the process.

There is some overlap between zoning and subdivision codes in terms of standards. Both ordinances, for example, can set lot sizes. Both can deal with the suitability of land for development. Implementing important plan techniques such as rural cluster development often requires use of the zoning ordinance and the subdivision ordinance.

A town land division code can provide the town the means to review and regulate new divisions of land to ensure consistency with the vision, goals, objectives, land protection criteria, and other recommendations of an adopted plan. The ordinance would require administration and enforcement by the town. Therefore, local control of divisions of land would require town funding. It also adds a layer of government involved in regulating proposals for land divisions.

Other Tools

Additional tools and approaches can be utilized by the Town to achieve the goals of the plan. These include but are certainly not limited to the following: fee simple land acquisition, easements (purchased or volunteered), deed restrictions, land dedication, and ordinances or programs regulating activities such as impact fees, land division, building permits, and erosion control.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goals:

1. Respect all Town of Crescent resident property rights and property values and balance them with the Town's planning for future growth.

Objectives:

1. The Town could consider providing a resident education and feedback resource regarding zoning.
2. The Town may consider planning more thoroughly for projected population growth while preserving the natural resources in the Town.
3. The Town could consider creating zones such as Residential, Industrial, Commercial, Agricultural, Forestry, Multifamily, and potentially Tourist Room Housing.
4. The Town may consider where potential water and sewer construction or expansion could benefit the Land Use Plan.
5. The Town shall consider creating and improving recreational space and opportunities that support healthy lifestyles and promote a more social community. Examples include playgrounds, destination trails for cycling, motorsports facilities, silent sport trails, walking paths, boat landings, and others.

Policy:

1. Adopt and implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 8: Intergovernmental Cooperation

The issue of intergovernmental cooperation is increasingly important; since many issues cross over political boundaries, such as watersheds, labor force, commuter patterns, and housing. Communities are not independent of each other, but rather dependent on each other. The effects from growth and change on one spill over to all surrounding communities and impact the region.

OVERVIEW

Wisconsin Statute §66.30, entitled "Intergovernmental Cooperation", does enable local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Unfortunately, there is little public policy in Wisconsin law that encourages, let alone requires, horizontal governmental relationships such as town to town and municipality to county or town. The result is that towns, municipalities, and counties act more as adversaries than as partners.

Statewide, Wisconsin has more than 2,500 units of government and special purpose districts. The significant number of governmental units allows for local representation, but also adds more players to the decision-making process. In general terms, intergovernmental cooperation is any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. It can be as simple as communication and information sharing, or it can involve entering into formal intergovernmental agreements and sharing resources such as equipment, buildings, staff, and revenue.

As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them. Intergovernmental cooperation makes sense for many reasons including trust, cost savings, consistency, and ability to address regional issues. Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions. It can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. It can lead to consistency of goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities. Finally, by communicating and coordinating their actions and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities can address and resolve issues that are regional in nature.

The major beneficiary of intergovernmental cooperation is the local resident. They may not understand, or even care about, the details of a particular intergovernmental issue, but residents can appreciate their benefits, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

A variety of factors, some long-standing and others more recent, have brought the issue of intergovernmental cooperation to the forefront. Some of these factors include:

- A local government's financial situation
- Opportunity to reduce costs by working together
- Elimination of duplication of services
- Population settlement patterns and population mobility
- Economic and environmental interdependence

In addition, as more jurisdictions create and implement comprehensive plans and share them with surrounding communities, new opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation are identified.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

School Districts

Primary and Secondary Schools

The Town of Crescent is served by the School District of Rhinelander and has a good standing relationship with the district. Crescent Elementary School is located within the Town.

Post-Secondary Educational Facilities

Nicolet College is a public two-year technical college based in Rhinelander, with outreach centers in Carter, Crandon, Eagle River, Forest County Potawatomi Community, Lac du Flambeau, Minocqua, Mole Lake, and Tomahawk. The main form of interaction with both school and college districts are through payment of property taxes, which help to fund district operations. The Town has had no participation in issues pertaining to administration or siting of new facilities. All school and college board meetings are open to the public.

Town Services

The Town of Crescent provides Fire and EMS services. See Chapter 4: Utilities and Community Facilities for more details.

Adjoining Units of Government

There are no known issues concerning adjoining units of government currently.

Oneida County

Oneida County directly and indirectly provides several services to the Town, and the Town enjoys a good working relationship with many of the responsible departments. These departments include law enforcement through the Sheriff's Office, 911 dispatch services, maintenance, and improvement of county highways, planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation, and private sewage system regulation.

In many cases where state and federal agencies require area-wide planning for various programs or regulations, Oneida County sponsors a county-wide planning effort to complete these plans and include each individual local unit in the process and resulting final plan. Examples of this include the County Outdoor Recreation plan which maintains the eligibility for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources administered park and recreation development funding of each local unit that adopts it, and All Hazard Mitigation Plans which are required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, in order for individual local units of government to qualify for certain types of disaster assistance funding. Other plans, though not required by law, may apply to the whole County, such as bicycle-pedestrian plans or economic development plans.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) was formed under §60.0309 Wis. Stats. as a voluntary association of governments within a ten-county area. Oneida County is a member of the NCWRPC, which qualifies the Town of Crescent for low-cost local planning assistance. Typical functions of the NCWRPC include (but are not limited to) land use, transportation, economic development, intergovernmental, and geographic information systems (GIS) planning and services.

State and Federal Government

The Wisconsin departments of Natural Resources and Transportation are the primary agencies the Town might deal with regarding development activities. Many of the goals and objectives of this plan may require continued cooperation and coordination with these agencies.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources takes a lead role in wildlife protection and sustainable management of woodlands, wetland, lakes, and other wildlife habitat areas, while Wisconsin Department of Transportation is responsible for the planning and development of state highways, railways, airports, and other transportation systems. State agencies make a number of grant and aid programs available to local units of government like the Town of Crescent. Examples include local road aids, the Local Roads Improvement Plan (LRIP) and the Priority Watershed Program. There are also a number of mandates passed down from the state that the Town must comply with, such as the biannual pavement rating submission for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). Most federal programs are administered by the states, so the Town would be dealing with the responsible state agency with regard to federal programs and regulations.

EXISTING OR POTENTIAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFLICTS

The Town has a good working relationship with other governmental agencies. The process for resolving these conflicts may in part be a continuation of past practices as new mechanisms evolve and take shape. The Town of Crescent may continue to meet with governmental entities when significant issues of mutual concern arise.

PROGRAMS

66.0301-Intergovernmental Cooperation: Wisconsin Statute §66.0301 permits local agreements between the state, cities, villages, towns, counties, regional planning commissions, and certain special

districts, including school districts, public library systems, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, sanitary districts, farm drainage districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and sewer utility districts, Indian tribes or bands, and others.

Intergovernmental agreements prepared in accordance with §66.0301, formerly §66.30, are the most common forms of agreement and have been used by communities for years, often in the context of sharing public services such as police, fire, or rescue. This type of agreement can also be used to provide for revenue sharing, determine future land use within a subject area, and to set temporary municipal boundaries. However, the statute does not require planning as a component of any agreement and boundary changes must be accomplished through the normal annexation process.

66.0305-Municipal Revenue Sharing: Wisconsin Statute, §66.0305, Municipal Revenue Sharing, gives authority to cities, villages, and towns to enter into agreements to share revenue from taxes and special charges with each other. The agreements may also address other matters, including agreements regarding services to be provided or the location of municipal boundaries.

Boundaries of the shared revenue area must be specified in the agreement and the term of the agreement must be for at least ten years. The agreement must specify the formula or other means for sharing revenue, the date of payment of revenues, and the means by which the agreement may be invalidated after the minimum ten-year period.

DRAFT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goal:

1. The Town may communicate and cooperate with surrounding and nearby units of government.

Objective:

1. The Town could be proactive in communications and cooperation with neighboring government entities.

Policy

1. The Town could participate in the “Township Association” meetings when practical.

Chapter 9: Implementation

This chapter is designed to be a conclusion, functioning as a mission statement that serves as a call to action. It builds off the recommendations from the previous comprehensive plan but adds a new set of goals, objectives, and policies at the end.

A primary reason for a community to prepare a comprehensive plan is to establish a framework for the future, especially as it relates to decisions regarding growth and regulation of development to protect and maintain the health, safety, and welfare of the community. A plan also helps to set priorities for public expenditures. To be effective, this plan should be actively used as a tool to guide decisions concerning:

- The implementation and enforcement of regulatory ordinances based on the goals and objectives identified in this plan.
- The development of programs and support systems that further the goals and objectives set forth in this plan.
- The location of specific land uses as identified in the comprehensive plan and based on goals and objectives.
- The establishment and support of a continued planning process providing for periodic review and updates to this plan and other land use control measures.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. Zoning ordinance and subdivision (or land division) regulations are used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development as identified in this comprehensive plan. There are also non-regulatory approaches to implementing the comprehensive plan. These generally involve decisions about how the community may spend its limited funding resources on capital improvements, staffing and maintenance. These decisions affect the development demand and the location of development in the Town.

The state planning law requires certain programs and/or actions that affect land use must be consistent with the locally adopted comprehensive plan. Following the adoption of this comprehensive plan update, the Town of Crescent should evaluate and update, as necessary, its related ordinances to ensure meeting this requirement.

Zoning Ordinance and Map

The Oneida County Zoning Ordinance and Map are the primary land use regulations for the Town. Zoning is used to manage and control how land is used and developed. The County Zoning Ordinance establishes detailed regulations concerning how land may be developed, including setbacks, the density or intensity of development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose of zoning is to minimize undesirable externalities from development by segregating and/or buffering incompatible uses and by maintaining standards that ensure development does not negatively impact the community's character or environment. The Zoning Ordinance also controls the scale and form of development, which heavily influences how people interact with their environment and their neighbors.

The establishment of zoning districts and the zoning map indicates where specific types of development can and should be located. Zoning districts shown on the zoning map should be coordinated with the land use plan and 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 serves as a guide indicating how the property should eventually be zoned. Therefore, indiscriminate zoning changes may result in weakening of the comprehensive plan. In fact, changes to zoning district boundaries should only be made if they are consistent with the adopted land use map and the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance

Land division within the Town of Crescent is regulated by the Town's Subdivision Ordinance. Subdivision regulations are an important tool ensuring the orderly development of unplatted and/or undeveloped land. These regulations may regulate lot sizes, road access, street design, public utilities, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be a public asset.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

This is an ongoing financial planning program that allows local communities to plan for capital expenditures and minimize unplanned expenses. A capital improvement plan consists of a list of proposed projects according to a schedule of priorities over a four-to-six-year period. It identifies needed public improvements, estimates their costs, and identifies financing methods and sources. Public improvements or expenditures typically considered in a CIP include:

- Public buildings (i.e., fire stations)
- Park and trail acquisition and development
- Roads and highways (maintenance and new construction/paving)
- Fire and law enforcement protection equipment

A CIP is 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 should be reviewed and extended one year to compensate for the previous year that was completed. This keeps the improvement program current and allows for modifications to meet the community's changing needs.

The preparation of a CIP is normally a joint responsibility between the town board, plan commission, staff, and citizen commissions. The preparation of a capital improvement program may vary from community to community depending on local preferences, the local form of government and available staff. The proposed capital improvement plan should be reviewed considering the priorities outlined in the comprehensive plan.

Annual Operating Budget

The Town prepares a budget each year and it is one of the most important policy documents prepared. It is a statement of the prioritization and allocation of financial resources to achieve certain objectives over a specific time. The budget is based on the needs of Town residents and priorities set by the Town Board. The budget and the services provided by that budget are instrumental in achieving the goals and objectives of the plan.

Brownfield Redevelopment

Pursuing funding from state agencies for redevelopment of contaminated sites can reduce the uncertainty that otherwise prevents contaminated properties from being redeveloped. Action by the Town to evaluate contaminants or begin remediating the property is often necessary before the private sector is willing to invest in redevelopment. This may require some upfront investment from the community. However, as sites are improved and reused, they generate tax revenue.

CONSISTENCY AMONG PLAN CHAPTERS

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the Implementation Chapter describe how each of the required chapters will be integrated and made consistent with the other chapters of the plan. Since the Town of Crescent completed all planning chapters simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap naturally exists between the nine plan chapters. Where deemed appropriate, goals, objectives, and policies have been repeated under all applicable chapters to reinforce their importance.

PLAN ADOPTION, AMENDMENTS, UPDATES, AND MONITORING

While this comprehensive plan provides a long-term framework to guide development and public spending decisions, it must also respond to changes that occur in the community and region that were not foreseen when the plan was initially adopted. Some elements of the plan are rarely amended while others need updating on a more regular basis. Plan maps should also be updated periodically. In general, key maps, such as the future land use map, should be reviewed annually to make sure they are still current.

Plan Adoption

The first step in implementing this plan involves adoption of the plan by local officials. The formal review and adoption process involves plan review by the Plan Commission which must recommend the plan to the Town Board via resolution. The Plan Commission recommendation is forwarded to the Town Board who must adopt the plan by ordinance. A public hearing is required to allow public comment on the ordinance during a 30-day review period prior to final action to adopt the plan. Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local development decisions over the next 20 years. The adopted plan should also be recognized as a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and goals and objectives regarding coordination of growth and development.

Plan Amendments

The Town of Crescent Comprehensive Plan may be amended at any time by the Town Board following the same process described above for initial Plan adoption, regardless of how minor the proposed amendment or change. Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change. These amendments typically consist of minor changes to the plan text or maps. Large-scale changes or frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided or the plan loses integrity.

The following criteria shall be considered when reviewing plan amendments:

- The change corrects an error made in the original plan.
- The change is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Town of Crescent Comprehensive Plan.
- The change does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated.
- Development resulting from the change does not create an undue impact on surrounding properties. Such development shall be consistent with the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood or would upgrade and improve its viability.
- The change allows a more viable transition to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current land use.
- The change does not have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment that cannot be mitigated by improvements on the site or in the same vicinity.
- There is a change in town actions or neighborhood characteristics that would justify a change.
- There is a community or regional need identified in the comprehensive plan for the proposed land use or service.

- The change does not adversely impact any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties unless mitigated through relocation, commemoration, or dedication.
- The change does not adversely affect water quality and the overall health of residents.

Proposed amendments must be reviewed by the Plan Commission prior to final action and adopted by the Town Board. The public should be notified of proposed Plan changes and allowed an opportunity for review and comment. For major amendments, the Town might consider soliciting public opinion through surveys and/or community meetings prior to the official public hearing.

Plan Updates

According to the State 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 often involve rewriting of whole sections of the plan document and significant changes to supporting maps. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community's goals and objectives based on 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.

Plan Monitoring

The adopted plan should be used as a tool by the Town when making land use and development decisions. Decisions concerning private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions should be consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations outlined in this plan.

Although this plan describes policies and actions for future implementation, it is impossible to predict the exact future condition. As such, the goals, objectives, and actions in this plan should be monitored on a regular basis to maintain concurrence with changing conditions and respond to unanticipated events.

This plan should be evaluated at least every five years and updated at least every ten years. Members of the Town Board, Planning Commission, and any other local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated. The evaluation should involve first reviewing the goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires. Then the strategies and actions should be reviewed and refined to eliminate completed tasks and identify new approaches if appropriate.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goal:

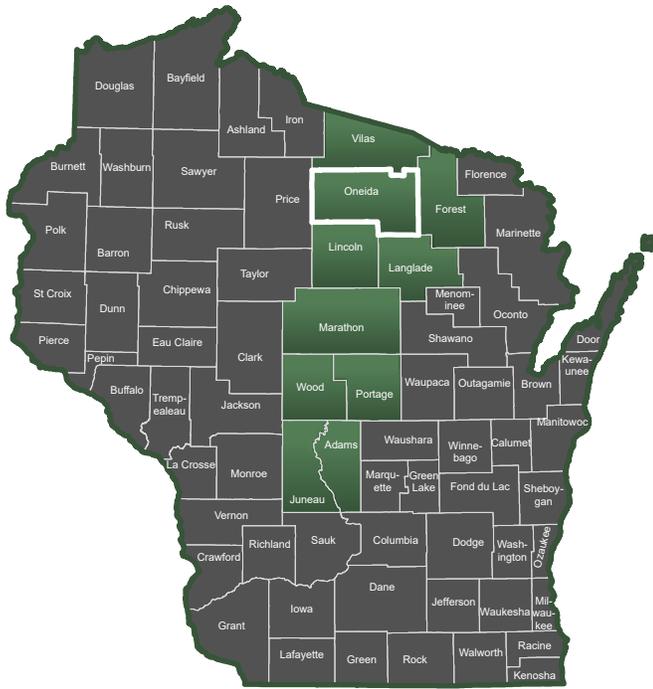
1. The Town of Crescent Town Board adopts this Comprehensive Plan followed by approval by the Wisconsin Department of Administration.

Objectives:

1. Hold a public hearing and possible “listening sessions” with the Town of Crescent residents to review a draft of this proposed comprehensive plan.
2. Pursue the Town of Crescent Town Board’s adoption of the final draft of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Submit the Board-approved final plan to the Wisconsin Department of Administration.

Policies:

1. The Planning committee shall continue to meet on a regular basis, addressing priorities within the final plan, and working to complete each of the goals, objectives, and policies contained in the final draft of the plan.
2. The Town Board may continue to make the Town’s Land Use Plan a priority item for their regular meetings and to hold the Town Planning Committee accountable for future performance and achievement.
3. This plan should be evaluated at least every five years and updated at least every ten years.



The Town of Crescent is located in the southern part of Oneida County Wisconsin, just southwest of the City of Rhinelander. The Town measures approximately six miles by six miles square and is bounded by the Towns of Newbold, Pelican, Woodboro, and the Town of Harrison (Lincoln County).

The Town of Crescent had its origins as a farming community at the end of the 19th century. Most of the agricultural land was concentrated in the area south of Crescent and Emma Lakes. The Crescent School located on Boyce Drive was built in 1961.

Until the Hat Rapids Dam and power plant was built in 1904 the only access that residents had to Rhinelander was by following a narrow footpath along the Wisconsin River. A trellis bridge was constructed as part of the dam project that gave Crescent residents access to the road into the city. In the early days a twice-weekly barge hauled supplies from Rhinelander to the Hat Rapids area.



Population:
Total: 2,308
Median Age: 47.0



Housing Units:
Total: 1,317
Occupied: 863
Seasonal: 418



Employment Data:
Employed: 1,138
Unemployment: 3.2%



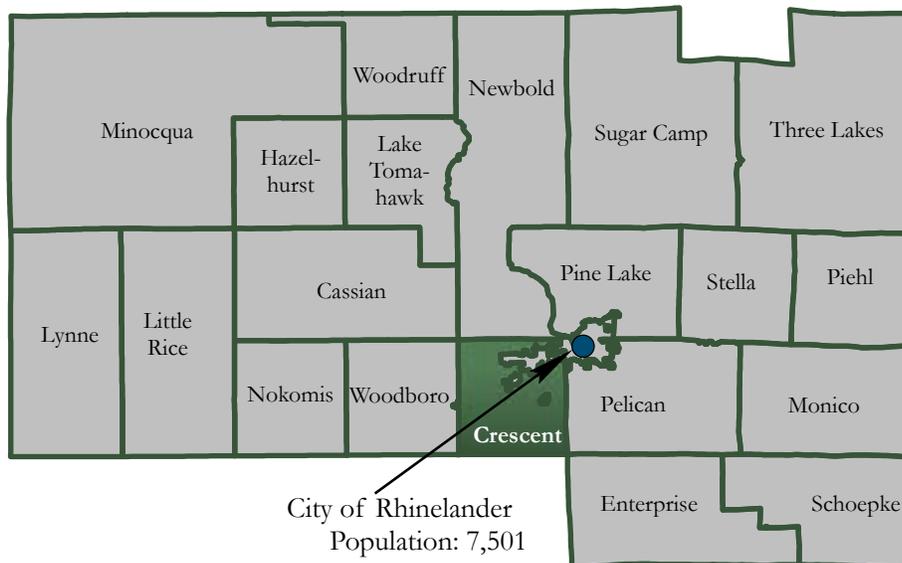
Woodlands:
Acres: 14,284
% of Town Area: 69%



Major Waterbodies:
Wisconsin River
Crescent Lake
Lake Julia



Major Roadways:
US Highway 8
State Highway 17
County Highway N

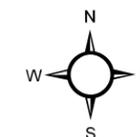


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Planning Area

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Water



Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Oneida Co
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North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

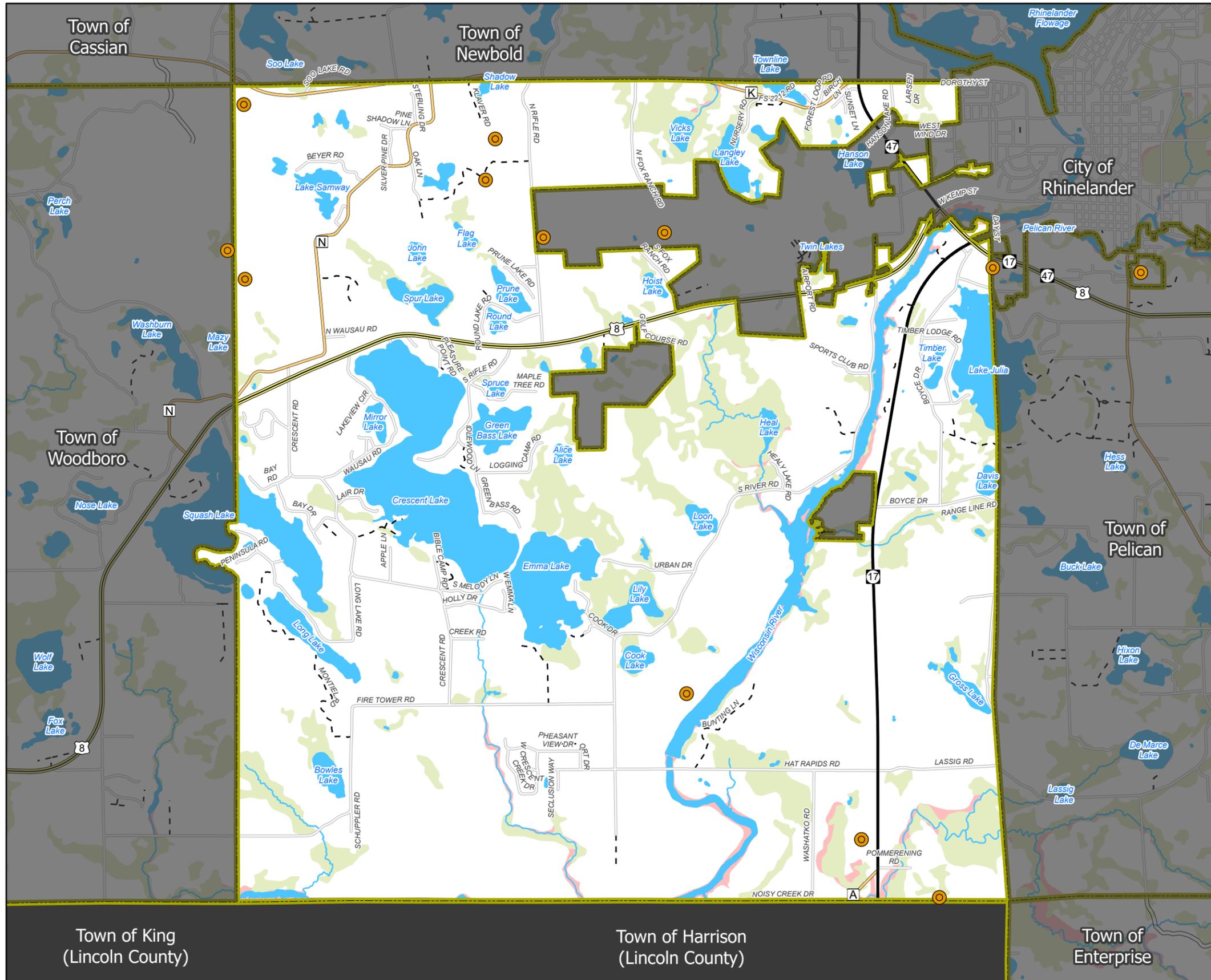
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 715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org

Town of King (Lincoln County)

Town of Harrison (Lincoln County)

Town of Enterprise

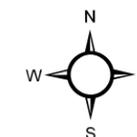
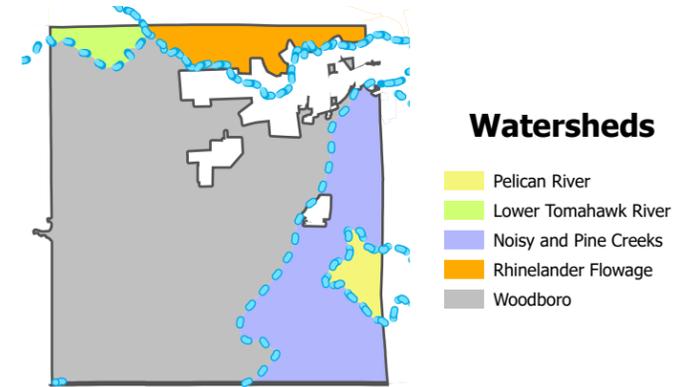
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Natural Resources

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Non-Metallic Mines
- Floodplain
- Wetlands
- Water

Town of Crescent Watersheds



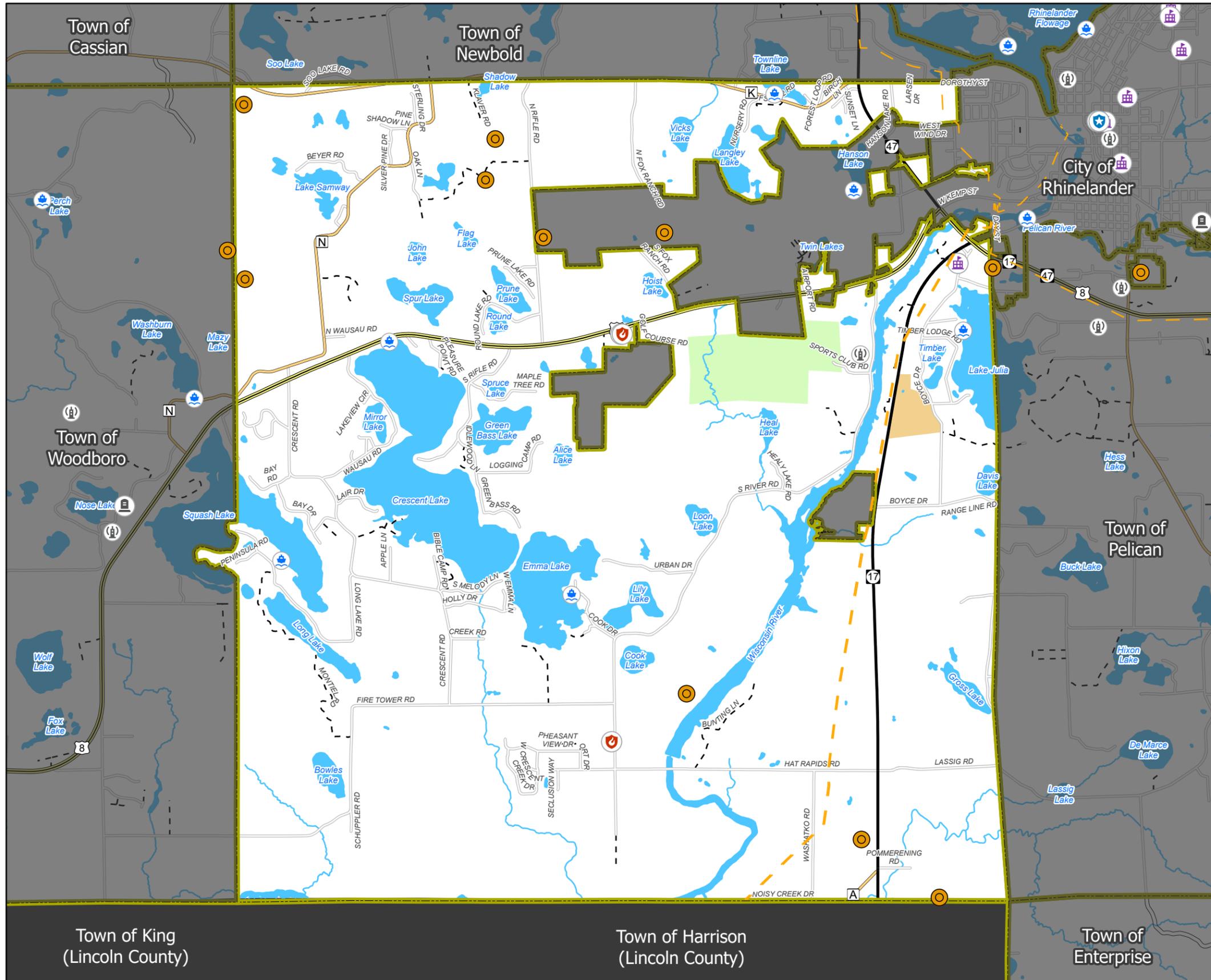
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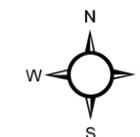
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Utilities & Community Facilities

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- High Voltage Powerline
- Cemetery
- Non-Metallic Mines
- Fire Station
- Police Station
- School
- Town Hall
- Boat Launch
- Communication Towers
- Hodag Sports Club Property
- Solar Farm
- Water



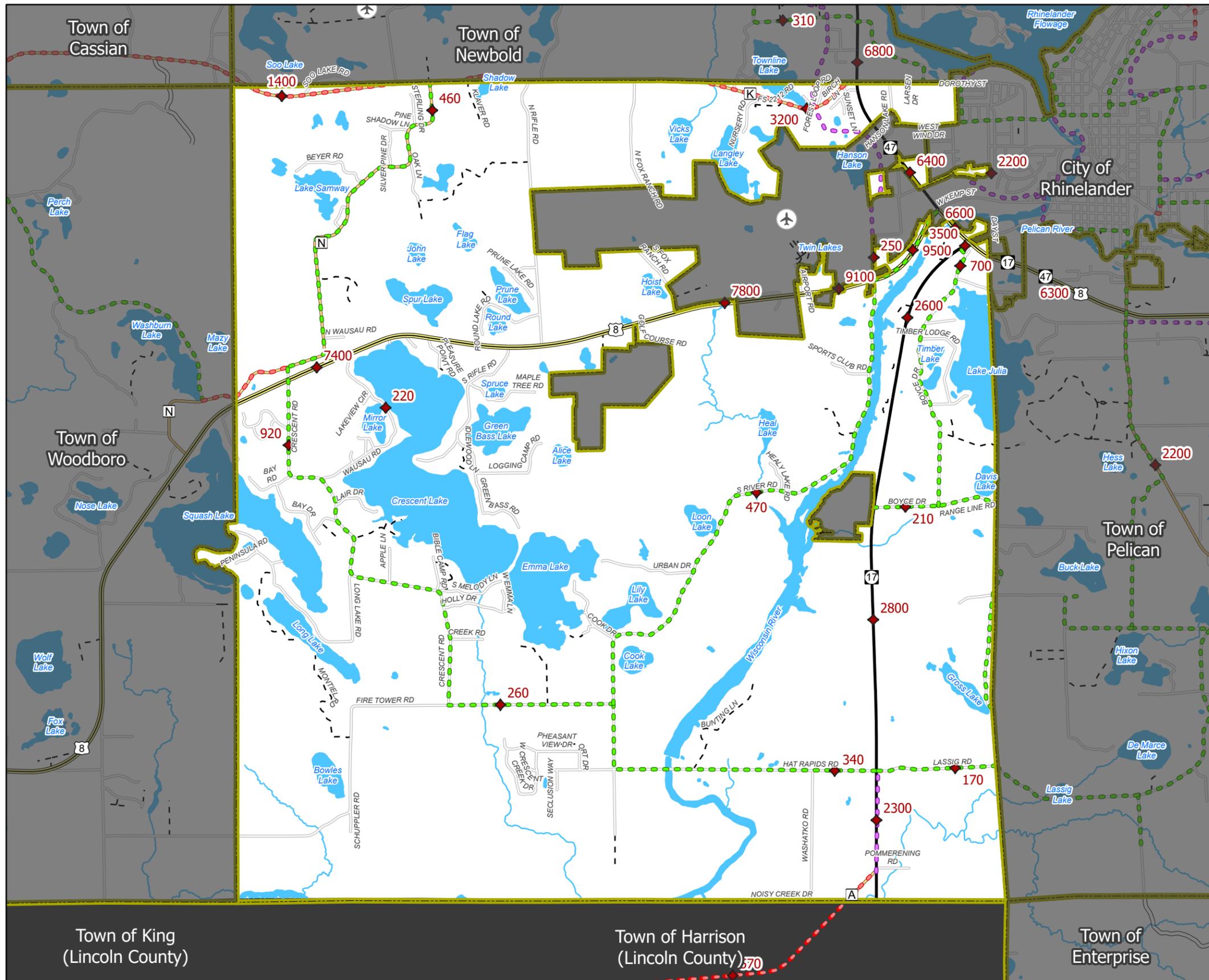
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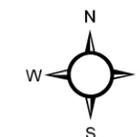
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Transportation

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Airports
- Traffic Counts
- Existing On Road Bike Route
- Proposed On Road Bike Route
- Proposed Off Road Bike Route
- Water



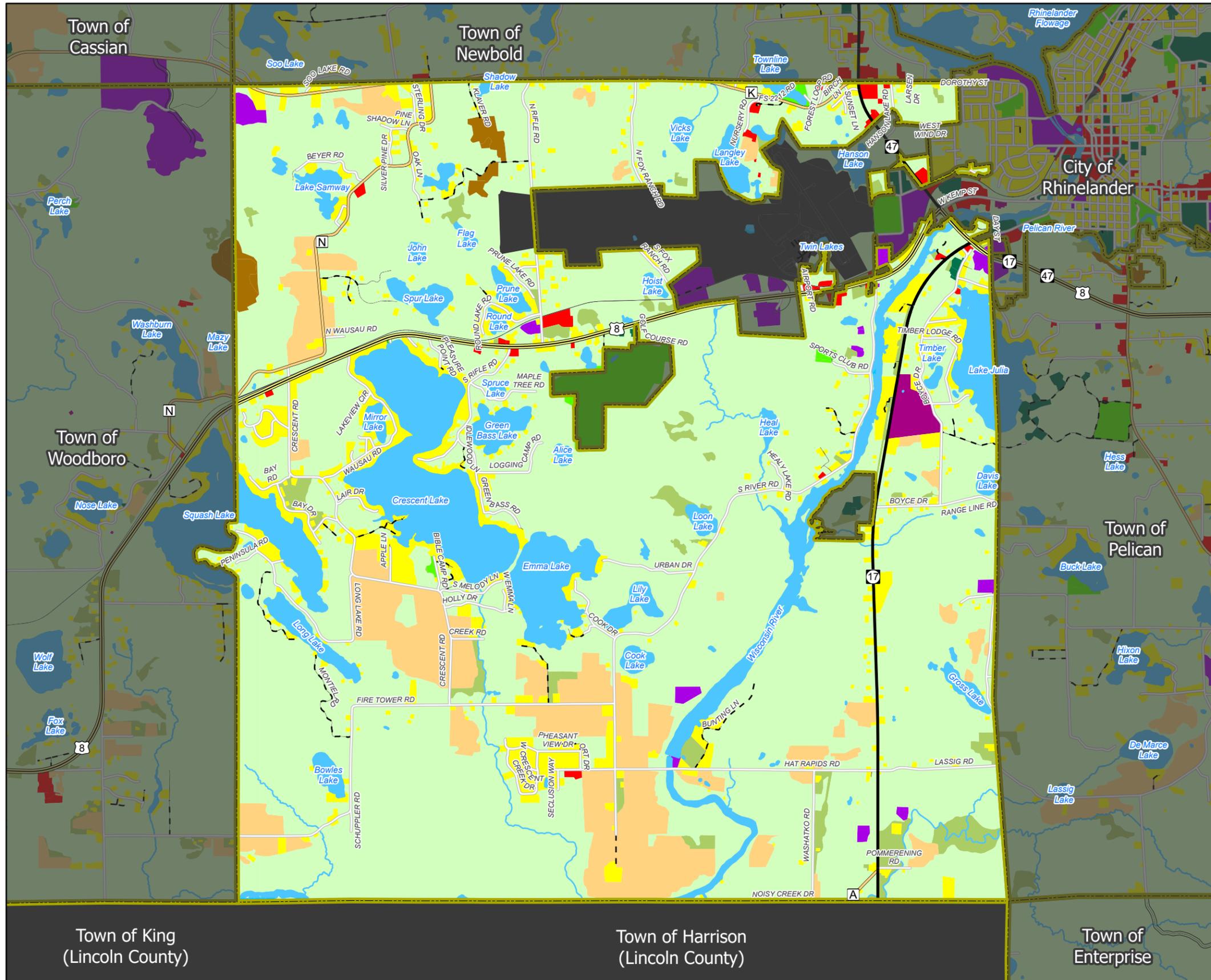
Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Oneida Co
 This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



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Existing Land Use

- Minor Civil Division
 - U.S. Highway
 - State Highway
 - County Highway
 - Local Roads
 - Private Roads
 - Forest Roads
- Existing Land Use 2020
- Agriculture
 - Commercial
 - Governmental / Institutional
 - Industrial
 - Open Lands
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Quarry
 - Residential
 - Transportation
 - Utility (Solar Farm)
 - Woodlands
 - Water



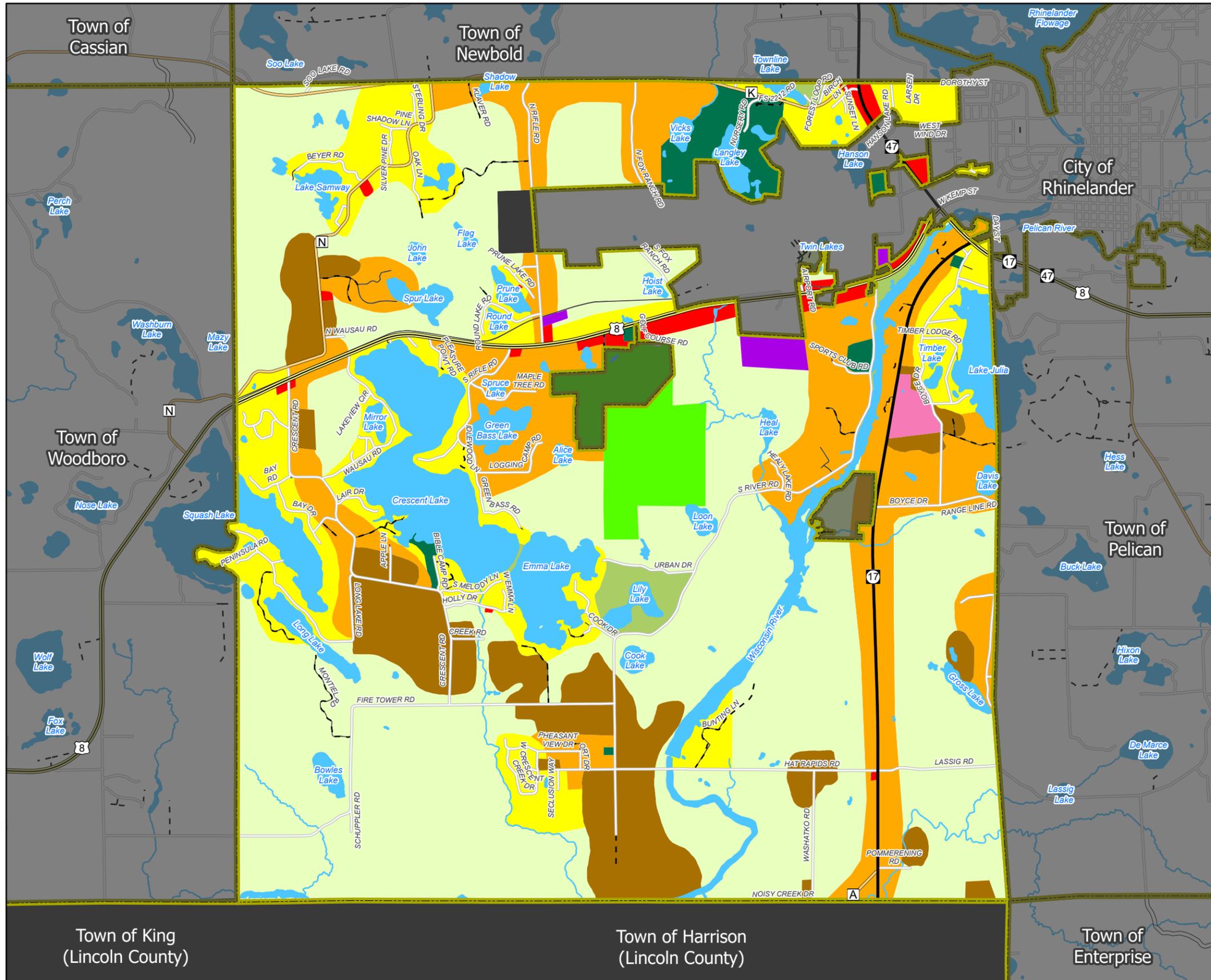
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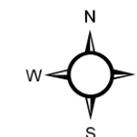
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Future Land Use

- Minor Civil Division
 - U.S. Highway
 - State Highway
 - County Highway
 - Local Roads
 - Private Roads
 - Forest Roads
- Future Land Use**
- Agricultural
 - Commercial
 - Forestry
 - Governmental
 - Industrial
 - Preservation
 - Recreation
 - Residential
 - Rural Residential
 - Solar Farm
 - Transportation
 - Water



Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Oneida Co
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Town of Crescent
Comprehensive Plan
Public Participation Plan (PPP)

The Town of Crescent recognizes the importance of public participation in the planning process. As such, a goal during the comprehensive planning process will be to inform and involve the public in the planning process.

I. Plan Development:

Throughout the plan process, the Plan Commission will provide oversight to the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Commission will also recommend adoption of the Public Participation plan to the Town Board.

The public participation plan will incorporate the following:

- All meetings for the planning process will be posted and open to the public.
- Comprehensive Plan related materials will be available at the Town Hall and on the website for review by the public.
- A public hearing will be held at the end of the process.
- The Plan Commission will review and recommend adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by Resolution.
- The Town Board will adopt the plan by Ordinance.
- Upon adoption links to the Comprehensive Plan will be distributed to surrounding communities and other interested parties.

II. Implementation, Evaluation & Update:

The Comprehensive Plan will be used as a general guideline for redevelopment in the Town. The plan will support the existing zoning and other regulations that the Town has in place. As with all plans, it is critical for the Comprehensive Plan to be maintained and updated on a regular basis to keep it current as things change.

Any planning process is subject to change, and this public participation plan is no different. Over the planning period the process may vary from that presented.

**Town of Crescent – Town Plan Commission
Resolution # 03-2023**

Town of Crescent, Oneida County, Wisconsin

The Plan Commission of the Town of Crescent, Oneida County, Wisconsin, by this resolution, adopted on proper notice with a quorum and by a roll call vote of a majority of the Town Plan Commission present and voting resolves and recommends to the Town Board of the Town of Crescent as follows:

Adoption of the Town Comprehensive Plan.

The Town of Crescent Plan Commission, by this resolution, further resolves and orders as follows:

All maps and other materials noted and attached as exhibits to the Town of Crescent Comprehensive Plan are incorporated into and made a part of the Town of Crescent Comprehensive Plan.

The vote of the Town Plan Commission in regard to this resolution shall be recorded by the clerk of the Town Plan Commission in the official minutes of the Town of Crescent Plan Commission.

The town clerk shall properly post or publish this resolution as required under s. 60.80, Wis. stats.

*Resolution approved / rejected on this 5th day of October, 2023 on a vote of 5 ayes,
0 nays and 0 abstentions.

Connie Anderson Connie Anderson
Jonathan Jacobson Jonathan Jacobson

Niina Threlfall-Baum Niina Threlfall-Baum
David Holperin, town plan commission clerk; DAVID HOLPERIN

Michael E. Paydernik Chairman

* The vote of the Plan Commission shall be by roll call with the results of such vote being recorded in the minutes of the meeting during which the vote was taken.

DRAFT

Attachment C: Ordinance

(Insert after adoption)

Town of Crescent

Summary of Survey Responses

During late summer and early fall of 2023, NCWRPC administered a survey for Town of Crescent residents to assist with the development of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. As of September 21, 2023, 218 responses had been received. Below is a summary of these responses:

- Most residents indicated that the Town has a high quality of life, and residents are generally satisfied with existing recreational opportunities, schools, and police, fire, and EMS services. The top reasons why respondents choose to live in the Town of Crescent are the "Northwoods" atmosphere, recreational facilities and opportunities, and proximity to family. Most residents prefer to communicate with the Town by electronic newsletter, followed by printed newsletters, or by using the Town's website.
- Top planning issues over the next 20 years involve keeping taxes low while balancing new development with Crescent's rural, "Northwoods" feel. Over 82 percent of respondents valued the preservation of open space and farmland, though some responses indicated that a 5-acre minimum lot size makes it harder for younger families to move to the Town.
- Infrastructure that needs improvement includes STH 8, CTH N, and the reliability of electric, internet, and cellular phone service. There are also concerns about PFAS and other contaminants, especially in drinking water.
- Services that could be improved include snow plowing, street sweeping, speed limit enforcement, and code enforcement on properties that have junk areas visible from main roads. Some Town roads do not currently have speed limits posted, leading to excessive speeding near residences.
- There were mixed responses on the types of development the Town should encourage or discourage, especially for housing styles. While most residents wanted to primarily support single-family home development, others indicated a lack of senior-friendly or low-income housing units. But overall, there is a sense that the Town Government should not actively pursue new development, nor should it be a barrier to those who want to develop their properties. There was not a strong desire to develop additional Tourist Rooming House (TRH) regulations or temporary storage unit regulations. Several responses indicated a desire for fewer, rather than more regulations, although others had mixed opinions regarding the solar farm.
- Responses indicated that there are many existing recreational opportunities available, and tax dollars should be primarily spent on maintaining existing infrastructure rather than expanding recreational opportunities. Many residents were in favor of grant- or donation-funded recreational facilities. For those who support adding facilities, walking/hiking trails, bicycle infrastructure, and cross-country skiing/snowshoeing trails were the top amenities that were most desired.

Overall, 85 percent of responses were from Town of Crescent residents, and over 73 percent of respondents were between ages 41 and 75. One-third of respondents have lived in the Town of Crescent more than 30 years.