

Feasibility Study for Former School Site

Town of Argonne

Forest County, Wisconsin



Prepared by

**North Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Demographics.....	4
3. Comprehensive Plan Review.....	7
4. Site Analysis	8
5. Public Input.....	11
6. Alternatives Criteria	12
7. Alternatives	12
8. Evaluation of Alternatives	14
9. Evaluation Scorecard.....	17
10. Recommendation ...	17

List of Tables:

Table 1: Population Trends	4
Table 2: Housing Units.....	5
Table 3: Housing Tenure	6
Table 4: Household Income.....	6
Table 5: Traffic Counts	8
Table 6: Current Real Estate Value	9

List of Maps:

Map 1: Area Map	2
Map 2: Site Map	3
Map 3: Option A Layout	19
Map 4: Option B Layout	20

Attachment:

A. Fiscal Impact Analysis

1. Introduction

The Town of Argonne was founded in 1887 when the Soo Line railroad built a depot. Today, the community has a population of just over 500 people. The center of the community is located at the intersection of State Highway 32 and 55. The community's town hall, fire department, post office, community building and major business area is located within blocks of the intersection. The rail line is no longer active. See Map 1: Area Map.

In 1894 a two-story school was built in the town which served the community. It was located on Maple Street between Bailey Avenue and Blackbear Avenue and is located near the Main Street district and one block from State Highway 32. The school was closed in 1991 and the building was destroyed by fire in 2005. Students now travel 7 miles south to Crandon for school. Currently, the 4 acre site is blighted and is an eye sore for residents in the neighborhood.

In 2013 the Town of Argonne purchased the 4 acre former school site for the price of \$36,500 in an effort to redevelop and repurpose the land. The town has committed an additional \$46,202 (\$82,702 total) to remove asbestos, clear the site, and expand the existing Town Hall parking lot to the west for additional parking. Expanding the parking lot will take about half an acre or so depending on layout. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) awarded a community development grant totaling \$29,234 to assist this effort.

The purpose of this study is to identify the best possible reuse for the former school site, minus the area taken for the parking lot expansion. The site is a key redevelopment opportunity for the community due to its location. This property is adjacent to the Town of Argonne's Town Hall which consists of a 5,000 square foot one story building and parking lot on a 1 acre site. See Map 2: Site Map

The study identifies and evaluates key demographics to help identify trends and opportunities the site can address. Population projections, housing and income trends provide insight on current and future needs for the town. The study incorporates the town's comprehensive plan including land use, goals and objectives and future zoning recommendations. Site analysis researches traffic counts, trail connections (both existing and future), property access, existing uses, parking, and access to utility services. Analysis and discussions with the residents help identify necessary criteria that result in the best recommended use of the former school site.



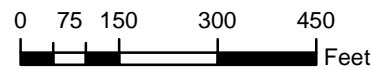
Prepared By:

**North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission**

210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
715-849-5510 - www.ncwrpc.org

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC

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.



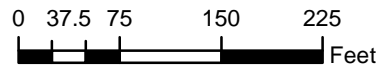


Prepared By:
**North Central
 Wisconsin Regional
 Planning Commission**

210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
 715-849-5510 -www.ncwrpc.org

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC

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.



Legend

 Parcel Lines

2. Demographics

A. Population

In 2010, 512 people lived in the Town of Argonne. Between 2000 and 2010 Censuses, the Town of Argonne’s population decreased 3.76 percent (see table 1). The largest decrease in population occurred in people under 17 years of age. From 2000 to 2010 this age group decreased nearly 15 percent from 147 people to 125 people. However, the Town of Argonne did experience a growth in population aged 18 to 64 increasing roughly 1 percent over the ten year period. The 18 to 64 age group is a key group as people between these ages are typically active in the labor force. In comparison, Forest County’s population declined at a faster rate than the Town of Argonne, decreasing 7.2 percent over the same time period. Unlike the town, Forest County experienced a 3.2 percent decrease in people aged 18 to 64. The County also experienced a faster decrease in people ages 17 and under, decreasing 19.4 percent over the 10 year period.

Future projections show total population decreasing from 512 people in 2010 to 473 people in 2025. A majority of that decrease will be those under 17 years of age resulting in a population of 80 people under the age of 17 in 2025 compared to a population of 125 people in 2010. The decrease in population, especially those under 17, will result in smaller household sizes as those people age 18-64 choose to delay or to not have children.

Table 1: Population						
Town of Argonne	2000	2010	2015 (projected)	2020 (projected)	2025 (projected)	2000 to 2010 % Change
17 and under	147	125	116	100	80	-14.97%
18 to 64	315	318	320	323	327	0.95%
65 and over	70	69	69	68	66	-1.43%
Total	532	512	505	491	473	-3.76%
Forest County	2000	2010	2015 (Projected)	2020 (Projected)	2025 (Projected)	2000 to 2010 % Change
17 and under	2,536	2,043	1,852	1,522	1,134	-19.4%
18-64	5,553	5,373	5,286	5,118	4,874	-3.2%
65 and over	1,935	1,888	1,865	1,820	1,755	-2.4%
Total	10,024	9,304	8,975	8,350	7,495	-7.2%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, U.S. Census 2010, NCWRPC

B. Households

In 2010, 512 residents formed 202 households in the Town of Argonne resulting in an average household size of 2.53 people per unit. The total number of housing units increased from 314 units in 2000 to 407 units in 2010, a 29.62 percent increase. The largest increase in housing units was in the unoccupied category. Unoccupied homes increased by a total of 85 units over the ten year period, 81 of which became seasonal or recreational homes. Seasonal homes increased 81 percent from 2000 to 2010, which accounted for 86 percent of the increase in housing units. The Town of Argonne has more unoccupied homes than occupied homes. While total population decreased 3.76 percent from 2000 to 2010, occupied housing units (households) increased 4.12 percent. This increase in households is the result of household sizes reducing, decreasing from 2.74 in 2000 to 2.53 in 2010. Based on the 10 year growth rate from 2000 to 2010 the Town of Argonne will increase the number of occupied housing units to 215 units in 2025.

	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
Argonne			
Occupied housing (Households)	194	202	4.12%
Unoccupied housing	120	205	70.83%
Total housing units	314	407	29.62%
For seasonal or recreational use	100	181	81.00%
Ave. Household Size	2.74	2.53	-7.66%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, U.S. Census 2010, NCWRPC

C. Housing Tenure

In the past two years (2012 and 2013), 4 new homes have been built in Argonne at an estimated average value of \$100,000 to \$125,000 per home. A total of 3 homes were built in 2012 and 1 home was built in 2013.

In 2010, fewer than half of the housing units in the Town of Argonne were occupied units. Over 90 percent of the occupied housing units in the town are owner occupied, slightly down from 2000 when over 92 percent of the occupied housing units were owner occupied (see table 2). Owner occupied housing units increased 1.7 percent over the 10 year period while rental occupied units increased 35.7 percent (see table 3). The Town experienced an increase of 5 new rentals from 2000 to 2010 resulting in just fewer than 10 percent of the housing stock being used as rentals. On average, 2.26 people live in rental properties, compared to the average owner occupied household size of 2.53. In 2010, the 205 unoccupied housing units in the Town included 181 seasonal or vacation homes, many of which may be available for rent on a weekly or monthly basis and would not be documented as a rental property. Seasonal homes increased 81 percent from 2000 to 2010 accounting for 86 percent of the increase in housing units.

Table 3: Housing Tenure			
Argonne	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2012
Occupied housing units	194	202	4.1%
Owner-occupied housing units	180	183	1.7%
Renter-occupied housing units	14	19	35.7%
Average household size of renter-occupied units	n/a	2.26	

Source: U.S. Census 2000, American Community Survey 2008-2012

D. Household Income

Median household income in the Town of Argonne exceeded the median household income for Forest County by \$4,080 in 2012. The median income in Argonne has consistently exceeded the County's median income. In 2000 the town's median income was \$40,909 compared to the county's median income of \$32,023 (see table 4). However, the county's is closing the gap growing its median income at a 25.58 percent rate compared to the town's growth of 8.06 percent. In the past 12 years the county has decreased the gap in median income in half, from \$8,886 in 2000 to \$4,080 in 2012. With a projected population growth in the key working demographic of persons aged 18-64 and a decrease in non-working age groups ages 0-17 and 64 plus (see table 1), the Town of Argonne should continue to experience a growth in household income over the next 10 years.

Table 4: Household Income							
Argonne	2012	2000	2000-2012 % Change	Forest County	2012	2000	2000-2012 % Change
Median household income (dollars)	\$44,205	\$40,909	8.06%		\$40,215	\$32,023	25.58%

American Community Survey 2008-2012

3. Comprehensive Plan Review

In 2010, the Town of Argonne adopted a comprehensive plan to help guide the town's future growth. A comprehensive plan is an instrument used by community leaders to establish policies and make decisions regarding physical development. The plan reviewed existing conditions and identified future trends, goals, objectives, and policies. The Town of Argonne's Comprehensive Plan includes nine chapters. The Housing, Utilities and Community Facilities, Economic Development and Land Use chapters various goals were examined as they relate to the best use of the former school site.

Housing

The Town of Argonne has not historically played a role in housing. However, it supports equal opportunity housing and understands the importance of sound housing stock for its residents and the community as a whole. As a result of the comprehensive plan adopted in 2010, the Town of Argonne promotes housing development that provides a variety of housing choices for residents of all income levels, age groups, and people with special needs. The town will encourage residential developers to provide a variety of housing types for all income and age groups. Further, the town will direct residential development to areas designated on its Future Land Use Plan Map.

Utilities and Public Facilities

The Comprehensive Plan's Utilities and Public Facilities chapter, recommends that development patterns that require the extension of utilities and the expansion of public facilities while existing facilities go unused at other locations is probably not the best use of scarce public resources. The town will consider the cost effectiveness of future development proposals in covering required services, utilities and community facilities. It is the town's goal to provide adequate public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Economic Development

The Comprehensive Plan also supports efforts to stabilize and expand the economic base and employment opportunity for its residents and the community as a whole. The town encourages new retail, commercial and industrial development to locate adjacent to county or state highways. In addition, the town encourages businesses that are compatible with a rural setting and accommodates home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.

Land Use

Current land use of the surrounding areas includes governmental (Town Hall, Fire Station and Post Office), commercial on State Highway 32 and residential. The future land use map adopted in the Comprehensive Plan recommends mixed use for this area. Mixed use includes residential and/or commercial uses.

4. Site Analysis

Site analysis involves the evaluation of an existing site in relation to the impacts on the community and adjacent properties. Research and analysis of basic data identifies the opportunities and challenges of a specific site. The site analysis for the former school site includes a variety of variables: traffic counts, trail connections, access to the site, parking, public utilities, real estate values, adjoining uses, land division ordinance and zoning. A well-executed site analysis forms the essential foundation for a cost-effective, environmentally sensitive and rational approach to identifying the best use of the former school site.

Traffic Counts

State Highway 32, State Highway 55 and County Highways G serve the Town of Argonne, which are the town's primary traffic arteries. WisDOT provides traffic counts on local and county roads classified as collectors. Traffic has decreased at three of the four count sites between 2003 and 2009 (see table 5).

Traffic north of the town has decreased 13 percent since 2003 and traffic in town on State Highway 55 has decreased 16.67 percent. The only area where traffic increased was south of Argonne on State Highway 55. However, based on the decrease in traffic north of County Highway N, traffic is not continuing through to Argonne. Traffic adjacent to the former school site (STH 55, N of CTH N) decreased considerably between 2003 and 2009, decreasing 42.35 percent.

Table 5: Traffic Counts				
Argonne	1994	2003	2009	2003-2009 % Change
STH 55, S of Old HWY 55	270	230	200	-13.04%
CTH G, E of Peshtigo River Rd	340	900	750	-16.67%
STH 55, N of CTH N	1,500	1,700	980	-42.35%
STH 55, S of CTH N	1,500	1,800	1,900	5.56%

Source: WisDOT, NCWRPC

Trail Connections

There are two potential trails that cross the Town of Argonne, Segment 13 and Segment 56. Segment 13 is a rail corridor from Dresser to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan that could become a trail. Segment 56 is a rail corridor from Crandon to White Lake that could become a trail. The Nicolet National Forest which covers a large portion of the Town of Argonne provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities for town residents and visitors. The town is included in the network of snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle trails throughout Forest County. Blackbear

Sportsman Club snowmobile trail runs through Argonne 3 blocks east of the former school site. Access to these trails brings new visitors to the area on an annual basis.

Currently, a public-private organization, Wisconsin Off-Road Vehicle Park, Incorporated has developed a business plan and feasibility study with the goal of developing and operating a major Off-Road Vehicle Park in Forest County. It is likely that Argonne will become a major entry point for the park if a site is selected on STH 32/55 and Forest County Highway G.

Public Utilities

The site has access to both electrical and natural gas service as these amenities were run to the former school and are currently used at the Town Hall. Electrical service is provided by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation. Natural gas service is available through the town of Argonne, or liquid petroleum (LP) is available for home and business delivery from several vendors. Water supply is accessed via individual private wells. The disposal of wastewater is handled by private on-site septic systems that discharge wastewater to underground drainage fields and which may include: conventional (underground), mound, pressure distribution, at-grade, holding tank, and sand filter systems. The soil at the site has been tested and certified by a certified soil tester.

Real Estate Values

Based on estimates from Zillow¹, the median home value in the surrounding blocks of the former school site is \$96,185. The highest real estate value is \$102,000 and the lowest value is \$94,000. Based on a current combined mill rate of .014231296, the median property tax per year is \$1,369. The Town of Argonne makes up roughly 9.3 percent of the mill resulting in a town mill rate of .0013235105280. Based on the town mill rate, the town receives \$127.32 in annual tax revenue per parcel.

# of Homes	Home Price	Taxes generated per year	Mill Rate
1	\$102,000	\$135.00	0.001323511
2	\$98,000	\$130.23	0.001323511
4	\$96,000	\$127.06	0.001323511
4	\$95,000	\$125.73	0.001323511
2	\$94,000	\$124.41	0.001323511

Source: Zillow, Forest County, NCWRPC

¹ Zillow is a home and real estate marketplace providing value estimates of homes, it offers several features including value changes of each home in a given time frame (such as one, five, or 10 years), aerial views of homes, and prices of comparable homes in the area.

Adjoining Uses

Single family residential is located north, west and east of the site featuring various sizes of residential lots. Located southeast of the former school site is the current Town Hall which is used for a variety of government related functions (i.e. elections and town hall meetings) and is rented out for personal use (i.e. weddings and receptions). The Town Hall center is used for various events by both the Town and the community. On average, the facility is in use a third of the year. Events include Town Hall meetings, weddings and dances, rummage sales, elections, and the center is used as an emergency shelter should the community suffer a power outage or other disaster. Parking on the site consists of one .30 acre parking lot. Although the lot is not striped for parking, there is enough room for 30 parking spots. Parking is also available on the shoulder of Maple Street and Blackbear Avenue. According to town officials, parking is often an issue during larger events like weddings, dances and elections. Parking will be expanded to the west of the current lot.

Land Division Ordinance

The town is under the Forest County Land Division Ordinance. If the parcel is divided into smaller lots it would need to comply with the regulations outlined in ordinance. If the 4 acre parcel is divided into four or less lots it would be done as a Minor Subdivision with a Certified Survey Map or CSM. If the parcel was split into five or more parcels it would be considered a Subdivision and require a more detailed process. In addition, because the site is less than 5 acres a planned residential unit development is not an approved option.

Zoning

The Town of Argonne defers zoning to the Forest County zoning ordinance. Currently the former school site is zoned General Rural (GR), as is most of Argonne. The minimum lot size is two acres and the lot must have at least 200 feet of road frontage, and rear and side yard setbacks must be at least 20 feet. Under General Rural use, a wide range of allowable and conditional uses are possible, including residential. However, any higher density use would likely require a rezoning. The zoning that most closely matches the recommendation from the Comprehensive Plan would be Village Residential (VR). This district is for more compact development than in rural areas.

5. Public Input

On March 10, 2014 residents of Argonne had the opportunity to provide insight, feedback and ideas for the reuse of the former school site. A total of 14 residents attended the meeting and offered recommendations for the reuse of the site.

Residents mentioned the need for new rental properties for future residents looking to relocate from Crandon to Argonne.

A representative from the Argonne Fire Department introduced the possible relocation of the town's fire station to the former school site. In this proposal, the town would invest in a new town hall and fire department to accommodate future additions to the fire departments truck inventory. The town board explained the overall cost associated with a new fire department and informed the residents the difficulty of obtaining a grant due to the town's high median income. The Town Chair estimated the total price of a new fire house being around \$300,000 to \$400,000. Overall, residents agreed that the construction of a new station and town hall would be costly and not the best use of the site or the town's funds.

Commercial use of the lot was discussed and was determined that future commercial development should be directed to existing parcels on Highway 32 or on Main Street to maintain the community's character per the economic development section of the comprehensive plan.

Residents also discussed using the current site as a park or open space area. Residents agreed that the former school site is in close proximity (3 blocks) to the existing park area and that this location would not be the best use for an additional park.

Overall, residents recommended the town be fiscally responsible and recommended a housing option that would recuperate the current costs in purchasing the site and would result in additional tax revenue for the town. Residents agreed that the site should not create a burden on future residents and should adhere to the comprehensive plan. Many of the lots in the area are around 7,500 square feet which was determined to be too limiting with septic and well needs. Residents would like to see an option that further increases their existing housing and land values while adding to the community character. Residents discussed an option that would split the existing lot into 6 residential lots. Lots would be at least 15,000 square feet and allow for 2 or 3 bedroom homes to be constructed by property owners.

6. Alternatives Criteria

The following criteria were chosen to find the best use of the 3 plus acre former school site. Each alternative will be examined looking at these three criteria in an effort to address future growth in the Town of Argonne.

Return on Investment (ROI): The preferred alternative must generate revenue equaling 100 percent of the initial land purchase of \$36,500 within 20 years.

Rationale: The Town of Argonne has spent \$36,500 to acquire the former school site. This investment is in addition to the \$46,202 the town has committed for site clean-up and parking lot extension and a \$29,234.11 grant awarded through the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) totaling \$116,936 invested in the former school site. The preferred alternative should recuperate the town's initial investment for the land through land sales and property taxes on the site in a timely manner to allow the town to invest in future projects and not create a financial burden on future residents.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency: The preferred alternative must be in compliance with the Town of Argonne Comprehensive Plan adopted in March of 2010.

Rationale: The Town of Argonne created the future vision of their community with their comprehensive plan creating specific guidelines for land use and lot sizes in their community. The comprehensive plan should be used as a guide for future development to ensure the community achieves the goals set out in the plan.

Additional Investment: The preferred alternative must not require more than minimal new costs by the town. A threshold of \$5,000 was established.

Rationale: The Town of Argonne has invested over \$87,000 to acquire, remove asbestos contamination, and expand the parking lot for the Town Hall at the former school site. The preferred alternative should not require substantial additional investment which will either reduce the town's current savings or result in an increase in property tax on town residents.

7. Former School Site Alternatives

Four alternatives were identified for this site. Two relate to single residential development, one to Multifamily residential and the other examines a new fire station/town hall.

Alternative 1: Residential Development- Lower Density (6 lots)

This alternative requires that the town divides the site into 6 separate lots for future single family residential development. In addition, the land directly to the west of the existing parking lot would be developed into additional parking and space for the septic system for the Town Hall.

The 6 residential lots would be at least 15,000 square feet and should include 2 to 3 bedroom homes to accommodate the median household size of 2.53 persons. These homes can be owner occupied or used as rentals. The quality of the homes should result in a price range between \$90,000 and \$100,000 to support existing home values and to attract buyers in line with the median household income of \$44,205.

Alternative 2: Residential Development- Higher Density (13 lots)

This alternative requires that the town divides the site into 13 separate lots for future single family residential development. In addition, the land directly west of the Town Hall parking lot would be developed into an additional 50 parking spaces with space for the septic system. The 13 residential lots would be no larger than 7,500 square feet and should include 2 to 3 bedroom homes to accommodate the median household size of 2.53 persons. These homes can be owner occupied or used as rentals. The quality of the homes should result in a price range between \$90,000 and \$100,000 to support existing home values and to attract buyers in line with the median household income of \$44,205. The Town of Argonne would extend Vanzile Street onto the site connecting it to Bailey Avenue to provide access to the homes after the first 6 homes are built on Maple Street.

Alternative 3: Multifamily Complex

This alternative includes using the site lot for a multifamily complex. The lot would be sold to a private developer for the current assessed value of \$20,500 according to the Forest County land evaluation. The developer would identify the necessary number of units to maximize their investment. A private developer could also determine that an assisted living center is a necessary use of the parcel. The town will test the soil to identify that the soil can accommodate septic service for a multifamily complex and test the water table to identify that a sufficient amount of water exists to accommodate the needs of a multifamily complex. Ensuring the site is “shovel ready” for a developer will better market the parcel to potential buyers. A multifamily rental complex should offer 2 to 3 bedroom apartments to accommodate the average rental household size of 2.26. The value of the multifamily complex should be between \$550,000 and \$600,000 (based on 6 homes at \$100,000 from alternative 1) to provide the necessary tax base to the community and ensure that surrounding home values are strengthened. This alternative would provide additional rental opportunities for the growing 18-64 population over the next 12 years providing key affordable workforce housing options in the community.

Alternative 4: Construction of New Fire Station and Town Hall

This alternative includes construction of a new fire station and larger town hall to replace the existing fire station built in the 1980’s. The town fire station would relocate from their existing location on Main Street. The old location would then be available for private business ownership resulting in property tax and potential sales tax to the town. The new fire station would include a fire department office/ meeting room, conference rooms and additional parking. The new facility

would also accommodate the need for future purchases, like a pumper truck and an all-terrain vehicle for trail rescue. The new town hall would allow for the facility to host larger events. A preliminary investigation into the cost of a new station and town hall is between \$300,000 and \$500,000 according to the town chair. The town would be responsible for septic and well water infrastructure and the necessary road to the station from Black Bear Avenue to Bailey Avenue.

8. Evaluation of Alternatives

Using the established criteria each alternative was reviewed.

Alternative 1: Residential Development - Low Density (6 lots)

Return on Investment: The construction of 6 new single family residences at \$96,500 per residence (average price of homes in surrounding neighborhood) would result in \$754.42 in property tax (.0013235105280 mill rate) per year. The purchase and construction of 6 new single family residential units in one year is unlikely. The construction of one unit per year in year two and three and then the construction of one unit per year in years five through eight is more realistic. Average land value for .5 acre to 2 acre sites in Argonne is \$7,387. A 15,000 square foot site is roughly .3 acres with an estimated average value of roughly \$5,000. Based on a timeframe that includes marketing the full site for one year to private developers, the sale of individual lots for \$5,000 in year two and three and five through eight, a current discount rate of .75% (Federal Reserve), one home being built and purchased in year two and three and year five through eight at a value of \$96,500.00, a town mill rate of .0013235105280, a \$3,000 cost for surveying with an initial investment of \$36,500, this alternative would recover the initial investment in 20 years. This alternative meets the criterion.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency: The Town of Argonne Comprehensive Plan's recommended land use for this parcel is mixed use. The land is currently zoned as General Rural use by Forest County and would require a rezoning for this alternative. Lots that are at least 15,000 square feet allow land owners more options and flexibility in building their homes. The town encourages a variety of housing types for all income and age groups and the town supports home based businesses. This alternative meets this criterion.

Additional Investment: The construction of 6 new units on the former school lot will be at the cost of private developers or land owners. The town will break the former school site into 6 lots and sell them individually. This will result in roughly \$30,000 in new revenue and will require minimal additional town investment as the utility services are already run to the site. The only additional costs required will be for surveying to divide the land into smaller parcels. Estimated costs for surveying are \$3,000. This alternative meets the criterion.

Alternative 2: Residential Development - Higher Density (13 lots)

Return on Investment: The construction of 13 new single family residences at \$96,500 per residence (average price of homes in surrounding neighborhood) would result in \$1,634.57 in property tax (based on the .0013235105280 mill rate) per year. The purchase and construction of 13 new single family residential units in one year is unlikely. The construction and purchase of one unit per year is a more realistic scenario. Based on a timeframe that includes one year to market the entire site to private developers, the sale of each lot for \$5,000 to a developer (estimated value by the town's treasure), a current discount rate of .75% (Federal Reserve), one home being built and purchased per year at a value of \$96,500.00, a town mill rate of .0013235105280, a cost of \$3,000 for surveying, and an initial investment of \$36,500, this alternative would recover the initial cost in 9 years. This alternative meets the criterion.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency: The Town of Argonne's Comprehensive Plans recommended future land use for this parcel is mixed use. The land is currently zoned as general rural use by Forest County. Therefore residential is an accepted use of the land. In addition, the surrounding parcels of land are also used as residential. This alternative would require land lots of 7,500 square feet which would limit land owners options in building a home on the lot and may reduce the value of the land or the ability to sell the land to a potential builder while compromising the town's rural character. This option would require a variance. This alternative does not meet the criterion.

Additional Investment: The construction of 13 new units on the former school lot will be at the cost of private developers or land owners. The town will break the former school site into 13 lots and sell them individually. This will result in roughly \$40,000 in new revenue. However, the town would be responsible for the extension of Vanzile Street onto the site connecting it to Bailey Avenue to provide access to the homes and survey costs. This alternative would require substantially more than \$5,000 in additional investment by the Town of Argonne. This alternative does not meet the criterion.

Alternative 3: Multifamily Complex

Return on Investment: This alternative would require the town to sell the 4 acre site as one parcel to a developer for the current assed value of \$20,500. Based on the site being sold by year two and a multifamily complex being built by year 3 worth a total of \$700,000, a current discount rate of .75% (Federal Reserve), a town mill rate of .0013235105280, a \$3,000 cost for a septic soil test and water test, and an initial investment of \$36,500, this alternative would not recover the initial investment in 20 years. This alternative does not meet the criterion.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency: The Town of Argonne's Comprehensive Plans recommended future land use for this parcel is mixed use. The land is currently zoned as General Rural (GR) use by Forest County and a multifamily complex is an allowable use. This alternative meets the criterion.

Additional Investment: This alternative may require the town to conduct an additional site soil sample and well sample to ensure that the site can accommodate the necessary needs for a multifamily complex. The price of a certified soil tester is below \$5,000. This alternative meets the criterion.

Alternative 4: New Fire Station and Town Hall

Return on Investment: The construction of a new fire station and town hall on the former school site would not result in any additional tax base or revenue for the town and therefore would not create a revenue stream from the site to repay the initial investment. The reuse of the existing fire station on main street would provide some additional tax revenue should an interested business be interested in buying the building. Property tax generated by the private ownership of the former site would not create enough revenue to equal the initial investment in 20 years. This alternative does not meet the criterion.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency: The Town of Argonne's Comprehensive Plans recommended future land use for this parcel is mixed use. The land is currently zoned as general rural use by Forest County. Therefore a fire station and new town hall is an accepted use. This alternative meets the criterion.

Additional Investment: The construction of a new fire station and town hall is estimated to cost between \$300,000 and \$500,000 based on a preliminary investigation by the town's president. As a result of the towns above average median household income, the town would be ineligible for grants requiring a low to moderate income component that assist communities in building public facilities. This investment would be in addition to the necessary infrastructure and road required by a new station. This alternative does not meet the criterion.

9. Evaluation Scorecard

	Residential Units- Low Density	Residential Units- High Density	New Fire Station and Town Hall	Multifamily Complex
Return on Investment	19 Year Pay back	9 Year Pay back	No Payback for initial investment	Payback requires 20+ years
Comprehensive Plan Consistency	15,000 square foot lots, accepted use	7,500 square foot lots	15, 000+ lot and accepted use	Multifamily apartments an accepted use
Additional Investment	< \$5,000 for CSM	Requires additional investment for road construction and CSM	Additional cost to build new fire station and town hall	< \$5,000 for a Certified Soil Tester

 Meets Criterion  Does Not Meet Criterion

10. Recommendation

Based on the assessment of the four alternatives the best option appears to be low residential development. That alternative meets all three established criteria. However, prior to moving forward, the Town of Argonne should list the property for potential developers to identify any interests in developing the site. An interested private developer would provide additional research on specific uses (i.e. multifamily apartments, extended care/senior facility) to identify the highest return on their investment. Should the invitation to private developers go unanswered, the town should move forward with the recommended alternative.

Based on the statistical trends, criteria, and public input meeting, the recommended use for the former school site is to divide the site into 6 (possibly 7) separate single family residential lots. This alternative best meets the criteria and provides the Town of Argonne with additional tax revenue. The site should be divided so that 3 lots are on Maple Street and 3 lots are on Bailey Avenue (see layout option A) and a potential lot with access from Blackbear Avenue (see layout option B). The most effective lot layout will be identified when creating a certified survey map of the land. This density for residential development will require a rezoning. Surveying and other costs may be incurred for soil testing to ensure the parcel of land can accommodate septic system needs for residential uses. It is possible that the number of lots might be reduced based on

additional information. It is also recommended that the land division is completed over multiple years.

The first lot splits would add land to the existing town parcel for the expanded parking lot and lots along Bailey Avenue. Once those are sold, lots along Maple should be created and listed for sale.

Although the population in the town has decreased slightly, so has the average household size resulting in a demand for new housing. Between 2000 and 2010, the town increased the number of owner occupied units by 8 and added an additional 4 units in the past two years. Based on that trend, the potential to sell and develop the 6 lots over multiple years is good.



Prepared By:

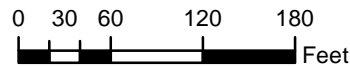
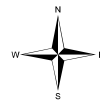
**North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission**

210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
715-849-5510 -www.ncwrpc.org

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC

* Not official survey map.

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.



Parcel Lines



Proposed Lot Lines



Prepared By:
**North Central
 Wisconsin Regional
 Planning Commission**

210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
 715-849-5510 -www.ncwrpc.org

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC

* Not official survey map.

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.



==== Proposed Lot Lines

▭ Parcel Lines

**Attachment
Fiscal Impact Analysis**

Fiscal Impact Analysis- Residential Low Density 6 Units								
Current Discount rate: 0.75%								
Year	Total # of Homes Built	Future Land Sale	Future Tax Revenue	Total Future Revenue	Present Value	Future Cost: Survey	Present Value	Net Benefit
0	0		0		0	0	\$ 36,500.00	\$ (36,500.00)
1	0	\$0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,488.83	\$ (1,488.83)
2	1	\$5,000	\$ 127.72	\$ 5,127.72	\$ 5,051.66	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,051.66
3	2	\$5,000	\$ 255.44	\$ 5,255.44	\$ 5,138.94	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,138.94
4	2	\$0	\$ 255.44	\$ 255.44	\$ 247.92	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 247.92
5	2	\$0	\$ 255.44	\$ 255.44	\$ 246.07		\$ -	\$ 246.07
6	3	\$5,000	\$ 383.16	\$ 5,383.16	\$ 5,147.15	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,434.24	\$ 3,712.91
7	4	\$5,000	\$ 510.88	\$ 5,510.88	\$ 5,230.05	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,230.05
8	5	\$5,000	\$ 638.60	\$ 5,638.60	\$ 5,311.42	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,311.42
9	6	\$5,000	\$ 766.32	\$ 5,766.32	\$ 5,391.30	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,391.30
10	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 711.15	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 711.15
11	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 705.85	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 705.85
12	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 700.60	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 700.60
13	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 695.38	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 695.38
14	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 690.21	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 690.21
15	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 685.07	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 685.07
16	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 679.97	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 679.97
17	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 674.91	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 674.91
18	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 669.88	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 669.88
19	6	\$0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 664.90	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 664.90
20	6	0	\$ 766.32	\$ 766.32	\$ 659.95	0	0	\$ 659.95
						Net Benefit		\$ (120.69)
		Internal Rate of Return: 19 years				Total Revenue		\$ 39,302.38
		Average home price: \$96500				Total Cost		\$ 39,423.07
		Town Mill Rate: 0.0013235105280				Benefit/Cost ratio		1.00