

# CITY OF NEKOOSA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted December 11, 2012



**Prepared by:**  
**City of Nekoosa Plan Commission**

With Assistance of the:  
North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

**NEKOOSA PLAN COMMISSION RESOLUTION:  
RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, section 66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes, establishes the required procedure for a local government to adopt a comprehensive plan, and section 66.1001(2) identifies the required elements of a comprehensive plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Nekoosa Plan Commission has the authority to recommend that the City Common Council adopt a "comprehensive plan" under section 66.1001(4)(b); and

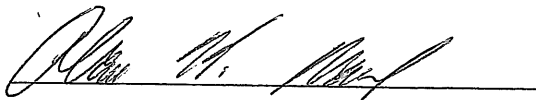
**WHEREAS**, the City has prepared the attached document City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan, containing all maps and other descriptive materials, to be the comprehensive plan for the City under section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Plan Commission of the City of Nekoosa hereby adopts the attached Comprehensive Plan as the City's comprehensive plan under section 66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Clerk certifies a copy of the attached Comprehensive Plan to the City Council; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Plan Commission hereby recommends that, following a public hearing, the City Council adopt an ordinance to constitute official approval of the City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan as the City's Comprehensive Plan under section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes.

Adopted this 20<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2012.



Plan Commission Chairperson



Attest: City Clerk

**CITY OF NEKOOSA, WISCONSIN**  
**ORDINANCE** 568

**SECTION I – PURPOSE**

The title of this ordinance is the City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan Ordinance. The purpose of this ordinance is for the City to lawfully adopt a comprehensive plan as required under s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats.

**SECTION II – AUTHORITY**

The City plan commission under Wis. stats., and under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. stats., has developed this plan. The comprehensive plan of the City of Nekoosa must be in compliance with s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats., in order for the city council to adopt this ordinance.

**SECTION III – ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE**

The City of Nekoosa, by this ordinance, adopted on proper notice with a quorum and vote by a majority of the City Council present and voting, provides the authority for the City to adopt its comprehensive plan under s. 66.1001, Wis. stats.

**SECTION IV – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The city council of the City of Nekoosa has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by s. 66.1001 (4) (a), Wis. stats.

**SECTION V – PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

The Plan Commission of the City of Nekoosa, by a majority vote of the entire commission, recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the city council the adoption of the City Comprehensive Plan, which contains all of the elements specified in s. 66.1001 (2), Wis. stats.

**SECTION VI – PUBLIC HEARING**

The city has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, with notice in compliance with the requirements of s. 66.1001 (4) (d), Wis. stats.

**SECTION VII – ADOPTION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The city council of the City of Nekoosa, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopts the document entitled City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan Ordinance pursuant to s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats.

**SECTION VIII – SEVERABILITY**

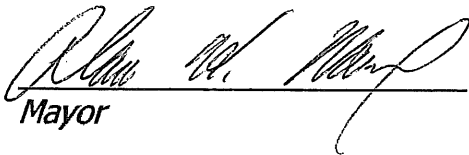
If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are severable.

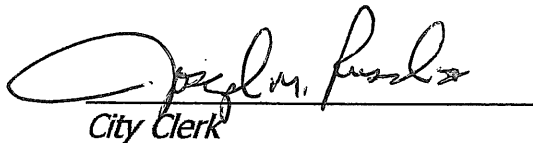
**SECTION IX – EFFECTIVE DATE**

This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members of the City Council and publication/posting as required by law.

Adopted this 11<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2012.

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

**City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan  
Table of Contents:**

Chapter 1: Background & Demographics

Chapter 2: Natural Resources

Chapter 3: Housing

Chapter 4: Utilities & Community Facilities

Chapter 5: Transportation

Chapter 6: Economic Development

Chapter 7: Land Use

Chapter 8: Intergovernmental Cooperation

Chapter 9: Implementation

## **Chapter 1: Background & Demographics**

## **CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS**

### **1.1 Background**

This is the first of nine chapters that make-up the City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan. This chapter is based on the statutory issues and opportunities requirement as outlined in Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(a). It reads: Background information on the local governmental unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs of the local governmental unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local governmental unit over a 20-year planning period. Background information shall include population, household, and employment forecasts that the local governmental unit uses in developing its comprehensive plan, and demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local governmental unit.

#### **A. Brief History and Description of the Planning Area**

The City of Nekoosa covers about 2,150 acres. It is located in eastern Wood County, along the Wisconsin River, south of the City of Wisconsin Rapids. Nekoosa is connected via State Highways 73 and 173 as well as on County Trunk Highway AA.

A bridge was been built across the Wisconsin River to the Town of Saratoga replacing an old steel structure that had served the two communities from 1916 to 1963. Prior to that time, two ferries served traffic across the river. The one near the present business center being called the "Upper Ferry" and the cable ferry located about a half mile below the mill was called the "Lower Ferry".

The paper industry has historically been an important part of the local economy and that continues to be true today. Related manufacturing operations also have locations in or around Nekoosa. The community is surrounded by rich agricultural areas and major producers of cranberries, potatoes, dairy, and other agricultural products which provides an opportunity for value-added agricultural processors. Other local companies provide a variety of services and manufacture a number of different products which help diversify the local economy. The City's main street functions as the primary shopping area. Residential, commercial, governmental and other uses exist throughout the City.

## B. Comprehensive Planning in Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, planning and zoning has been a function of local units of government for over 50 years. Over the years almost every city, village and county has developed various plans, from land use plans, to master plans to development plans. Existing authority for planning is provided in state statutes, including Chapters 59, 60, 61 and 62.

In October of 1999, then Governor Tommy Thompson signed into law Wisconsin Act 9, the Budget Bill, containing substantial revisions of statutes governing comprehensive planning. The law has been revised multiple times. The first change was AB 872, containing “technical revisions” which was signed May 10, 2000. The second change, signed April 13, 2004, was AB 608, which reduced the number of items that must be consistent with the plan to three, these are: official mapping, subdivision ordinances and zoning ordinances, including shoreland zoning. The final law change is known as Act 372, signed in May 18, 2010. It provided clarification that the Comprehensive Plan is not by itself a regulation; any regulation would come from other local actions, such as zoning. It went on to address the question of consistency. Basically in context of the law it means “furthers or does not contradict the goals, objectives, and policies contained in the comprehensive plan.” It provides discretion to local governments related to the interpretation of their comprehensive plan. Act 372 also clarifies that only changes to ordinances enacted or amended after January 1, 2010, need to be consistent with a local plan.

The law, Wisconsin Statute 66.1001, requires all jurisdictions within the state that exercise control over land-use to prepare a comprehensive plan. It lays out the nine required elements of the plan and requires a public participation process. In addition, fourteen state planning goals are suggested. These goals, however, are not mandates for specific provisions that must be included in the comprehensive plan, but criteria on which the grant applications will be judged. The goals are:

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.



7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

The comprehensive planning law is significant in many ways. The law creates a definition of a comprehensive plan in Wisconsin; it requires that almost all local units of government have a plan, and it requires public participation. Most important - is that it maintains that the process be locally driven so all local units of government decide their own future.

### C. The Current Comprehensive Planning Process

The City of Nekoosa requested assistance from the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) to develop this plan. The Nekoosa Planning Commission provided oversight and policy input during the development of the plan. This group met to analyze and discuss information that was gathered and presented by the NCWRPC. Several meetings were held to develop the plan over 2011 and 2012. Adoption of the plan occurred on December 11, 2012.

The comprehensive plan law also requires that a public participation plan be adopted as part of the planning process. The goal is to involve various viewpoints into the planning process. A formal public participation plan was adopted outlining these efforts.

## 1.2 Demographic Information

### A. Population Changes

Table 1-1 displays the population of the City and surrounding communities for 1990, 2000 and 2010. The City's population has remained stable over the last twenty years. The City experienced a less than one percent increase between 1990 and 2010, adding 23 persons. Meanwhile the Town of Port Edwards grew at 5.3 percent over the same time period, while Wood County experienced modest growth of 1.5%. Overall, the City accounts for about 3% of the County's total population.

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	2010	1990 - 2010 % Change	1990 - 2010 Net Change
City of Nekoosa	2,557	2,590	2,580	0.89%	23
Village of Edwards	1,848	1,949	1,818	-1.65%	-30
Town of Port Edwards	1,351	1,446	1,427	5.33%	76
City of Wisconsin Rapids	18,245	18,435	18,367	0.66%	122
Wood County	73,605	75,555	74,749	1.53%	1,144

Source: U.S. Census

Based on the last twenty-year growth trend, the City should expect flat population growth in population over the next twenty years as well.

Every 10 years the Federal government undertakes a National Census. Those results are the main source of information used to understand how communities change over time. In 2010 the Census no longer collected long form data, which is used for the detailed reports. Instead that process has been replaced by a survey instrument call the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS provides more current data but it is collected differently than the 10 year Census information. ACS relies on continually sampling and estimates over a five year period.

### B. Population Profile

The population of the City drives in part the needs of the community. Therefore it is important to understand the make-up of the City's 2,580 residents. According to the 2010 Census, the Median Age is 41.5, with 5.4% of the population under 5 years old while the 65 and Older group is 20.9%. The County Median Age is 41.9. Table 1-2 provides a detailed look at the population changes over the last decade.

	2000	2009	Change
Median Age	36.6	41.5	+4.9 Years
Under 5 Years of Age	6.7%	5.4%	-1.3%
Over 65 Years of Age	16.8%	20.9%	+4.1%
Percent Male	47.0%	48.9%	+1.9%
Percent Female	53.0%	51.4%	-1.6%
Percent White	96.7%	93.3%	-3.4%

Source: U.S. Census & ACS 5-Year Survey (2003 – 2009 Estimate)

### C. Educational Levels

Educational levels in 2009 showed that over 90% had completed high school, while 12.5% had a college degree. Only those 25 years of age and older are reflected in these statistics. Table 1-3 provides a summary of educational attainment in the City of Nekoosa, Wood County, and the State of Wisconsin.

<b>Educational Attainment Level</b>	<b>City of Nekoosa</b>	<b>Wood County</b>	<b>State of Wisconsin</b>
High School Graduate	90.2%	88.0%	84.0%
Bachelor's Degree	12.5%	12.6%	27.0%

Source: ACS 5-Year Survey (2003 – 2009 Estimate)

Overall, the City of Nekoosa has a higher percentage of high school graduates as a level of educational attainment compared to the county and the state and compares similarly to the county for percentage of persons with a Bachelor's Degree, but lags well behind the State as a whole.

### D. Households, Housing Units and Income

The number of households and housing units in the City increased since 2000, while the average household size declined in size. Table 1-4 displays information for both 2000 and 2009. There are 1,135 housing units in the City, which is an increase of 72 units – or about 7 new units a year. The average household size was 2.11.

**Table 1-4:  
Households & Housing Units**

	2000	2009	Change
Households	987	1,121	13.6%
Average HH Size	2.55	2.11	-0.44
Housing Units	1,063	1,135	6.8%

Source: U.S. Census & ACS 5-Year Survey (2003 – 2009 Estimate)

Table 1-5 displays median income information for the surrounding area for 1999 and 2009. The 2009 median household income in the City was only \$33,779, which was nearly 12% lower than 2009 and less that all surrounding communities. Wood County and the State levels were \$47,594 and \$51,569, respectively. The decline in median household income is a concern.

**Table 1-5:  
Median Household Income(\$)**

Minor Civil Division	1999	2009	Adj. Net Change*	1999 to 2009 Net Change
City of Nekoosa	38,375	33,779	-11.98%	-4,596
Village of Port Edwards	48,850	52,321	7.11%	3,471
Town of Port Edwards	43,804	54,808	25.12%	11,004
City of Wisconsin Rapids	34,956	38,803	11.01%	3,847
Wood County	41,595	47,594	14.42%	5,999
State of Wisconsin	43,791	51,569	17.76%	7,778

Source: U.S. Census & ACS 5-Year Survey (2003 – 2009 Estimate)

\*Adjusted for inflation

Table 1-6 displays per capita income information for the surrounding area for 1999 and 2009. the At the same time per capita income increased by over 20%, however, this lags behind all surrounding communities, except the City of Wisconsin Rapids. Generally, per capita income rose between 16 and 26%.

**Table 1-6:  
Per Capita Income(\$)**

Minor Civil Division	1999	2009	Adj. Net Change*	1999 to 2009 % Change
City of Nekoosa	17,063	20,771	21.73%	3,708
Village of Port Edwards	20,750	24,603	18.57%	3,853
Town of Port Edwards	20,020	25,385	26.80%	5,365
City of Wisconsin Rapids	17,725	20,622	16.34%	2,897
Wood County	20,203	24,679	22.16%	4,476
State of Wisconsin	21,271	26,447	24.33%	5,176

Source: U.S. Census & ACS 5-Year Survey (2003 – 2009 Estimate)

\*Adjusted for inflation

During this period the City of Nekoosa’s poverty rate increased from 9.7% to 14.8%, compared to the State and National Rates of 11.1% and 13.5%, respectively. This increasing rate of poverty for all individuals is a concern.

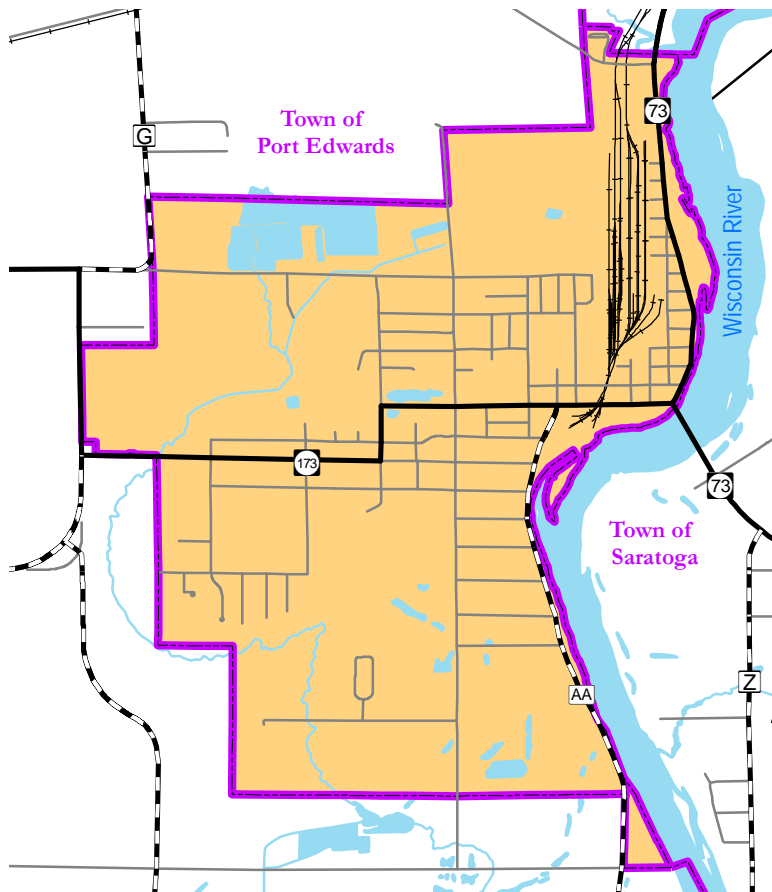
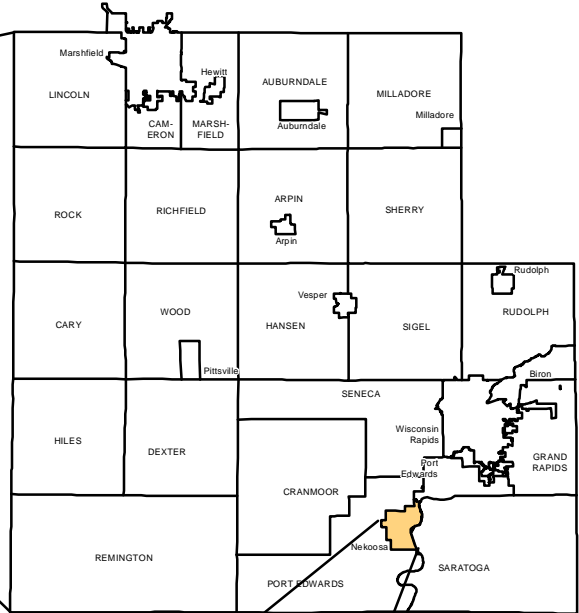
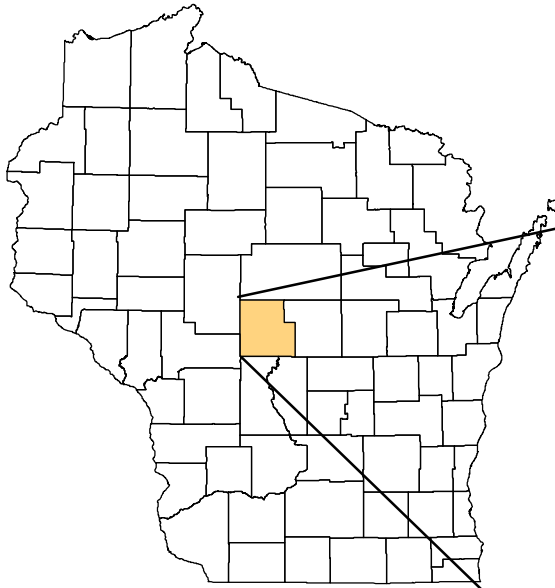
### **1.3 Goals, Objectives and Policies**

Each of the following elements of this comprehensive plan includes a set of goals, objectives and policies, which the City Council will use to guide the future development of the City over the next 5 to 10 years.

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

- ✓ **Goals:** Broad statements that express general public priorities about how the City should approach development issues during the next 20 years. These goals are based on key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the community.
- ✓ **Objectives:** More specific than goals and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. 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.

Many of the following chapter also includes a listing of possible programs that the City might implement in order to advance the goals and objectives of this plan. The listing does not imply that the City is eligible or able to utilize every program shown.



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Wood 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.



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

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

## Chapter 2: Natural Resources



## **CHAPTER 2: NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **2.1 Background**

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

The Comprehensive Planning Law also establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, three relate directly to this chapter. These goals are:

1. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
2. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
3. Preservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.

This chapter is organized into three basic sections: Background, Inventory & Trends, and Goals, Objectives and Policies.

#### **A. Previous Studies**

Previous planning efforts are reviewed as they relate to natural, agricultural, and cultural resources. These plans provide a starting point for the planning process.

There are no plans prepared at the City level that address these issues specifically, but there are some county plans that influence the area, including outdoor recreation plan, land and water resource management plan, and comprehensive forest plan.

#### **1. Wood County Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2011**

The current 5-year plan represents a comprehensive study of outdoor recreation in Wood County. Primary emphasis is placed on the role the County is expected to play in meeting demands for outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Several recreation activities that are considered basic to the County's program are discussed at length in terms of supply, demand and need. Following this discussion is a presentation of a

program aimed at correcting deficiencies noted during the course of the study, or at making general improvements to existing facilities. Secondary emphasis is placed on those outdoor recreation facilities provided by Wood County's towns, cities and villages, the role of those facilities, and how they might best serve the users. Nekoosa is included within the plan, but there are no county or local projects listed for the city at this time.

An issue that could impact the city is the increased demand for walking and biking trails throughout the county.

## 2. Wood County Land & Water Resource Management Plan, 2007

The current 5-year Land & Water Resource Management Plan is a compilation of some significant legislative changes and planning efforts that have occurred at both the state and county level.

Six priority concerns were identified in this plan. They are: Land spreading issues, animal, human, fertilizer, municipal; Monitoring of surface water quality, municipal discharge, cooperation between agencies affecting quality; Declining grassland habitat (prairie chicken) fragmentation; Loss of wetlands; Loss of agricultural land; and Soil erosion, agricultural, highway, and construction.

The plan also developed seven goals to address these priorities:

- Reduce sediment delivery to surface waters of Wood County
- Reduce animal waste and nutrient delivery to surface waters
- Reduce crop damage caused by wildlife
- Protect and develop wetland and uplands for wildlife habitat
- Increase efforts to inventory the water resources
- Minimize the adverse effects of urban sprawl and land fragmentation in rural Wood County
- Improve air quality

This plan will be updated in the near future.

## 3. Wood County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2007

This fifteen-year plan was developed by the county to manage the vast county forest. The plan strives to balance the local needs with broader state and national concerns through the integration of sound forestry, wildlife, fisheries, endangered resources, water quality, soil, and recreational practices. The county manages about 37,500 acres of forestland throughout the county.

## B. Natural Resource Issues

Several issues were identified, listed below in no particular order:

- A variety of flooding concerns were identified throughout the community, including Riverside Park, the area near Market and Cedar Streets, and Point Basse Road near the Mill.
- Numerous wetlands within the City make development a challenge, as well as the flood zone along the river.
- Storm sewer in some areas is undersized for the water levels, such as near Birch and Wood Avenues.

## 2.2 Inventory & Trends

### A. Physical Landscape

All plans must consider the natural environment in which a community exists. Understanding the physical landscape is critical to the growth of a community. Natural restraints and environmental issues need to be identified to plan properly. This section of the plan overviews the local climate, area topography, and soil types.

#### 1. Climate

Winters are very cold, and summers are short and warm. Precipitation is fairly well distributed throughout the year, reaching a peak in summer. Snow covers the ground during much of the period from late fall through early spring. Annual precipitation is about 31 inches.

Soils usually freeze to a depth ranging from the top few inches to about one foot. However, soils can occasionally freeze to a depth of several feet when very cold temperatures occur before the ground is appreciably covered with snow.

#### 2. Topography

Wood County is in two ecological regions of Wisconsin. South Wood County and Nekoosa are in the Central Sands Plains. The Ecological Landscape formed in and around what was once Glacial Lake Wisconsin, which contained glacial meltwater extending over 1.1 million acres at its highest stage. Soils are primarily sandy lake deposits, some with silt-loam loess caps. Sandstone buttes carved by rapid drainage of the glacial lake, or by wave action when they existed as islands in the lake, are distinctive features of this landscape. The landscape is relatively flat, and slopes are mostly long and smooth.

#### 3. Soils

Area soils are related to the physical geography, climate, and vegetation. Most of the soils in the area are formed in glacial till, residuum, or glacial outwash. See the 1977 Natural Resource Conservation Service Soil Survey of Wood County for more information. Generally, the soils in the city have few limitations for buildings with basements.

Human activity also affects soil formation by altering and accelerating natural soil processes. Clearing, burning, cultivating, and urbanization thereby affecting soil structure, porosity, and content of nutrients have altered many soils.

#### 4. Contaminated Sites

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) maintains a Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) that lists a variety of data related to contaminated sites. Please see that site for detailed information.

#### B. Water Resources

A major component of the natural environment is water, including surface water, wetlands, floodplains, and groundwater. See the Natural Resources Map.

##### 1. Surface Water

Nekoosa is on the west bank of the Wisconsin River. Lynn Creek loops around the west portion of the City. Wetlands run along parts of Lynn Creek and numerous cranberry bogs exist in the area. Several waterbodies less than 1 acre in size dot the city. Almost all of Nekoosa is in the Wisconsin Rapids Watershed, which drains to the Wisconsin River.

The southern portion of Lynn Creek is defined by the Wisconsin DNR as an Exceptional Resource Water ERW. Waters designated as ORW or ERW are surface waters which provide outstanding recreational opportunities, support valuable fisheries and wildlife habitat, have good water quality, and are not significantly impacted by human activities. ORW and ERW status identifies waters that the State of Wisconsin has determined warrant additional protection from the effects of pollution. These designations are intended to meet federal Clean Water Act obligations requiring Wisconsin to adopt an “antidegradation” policy that is designed to prevent any lowering of water quality – especially in those waters having significant ecological or cultural value.

##### 2. Wetlands

Wetlands are located along Lynn Creek throughout the city. See the Natural Resources Map. Wetlands perform 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 are able to 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, our lakes, rivers, and streams are cleaner, and our drinking water is safer.

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 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has established minimum standards for managing wetlands.

### 3. Floodplains

Areas most impacted by high water occurrences are adjacent to Lynn Creek and the Wisconsin River. Parts of Elmwood and Fairview Lanes, most of Glendale and Hillcrest Lanes, and all land south of Hillcrest Lane and between CTH AA and South Section Street are also impacted. Contact the city for more detailed information.

There are several terms used related to floods, including floodplains, floodways, floodfringe, and regional or 100-year flood. These terms are defined below:

The floodplain is that land that has been or may be covered by floodwater during the regional flood. The floodplain includes the floodway and floodfringe areas. (These areas are labeled on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) as A, AE, A1-30, AO or AH zones.)

The floodway is the channel of a river or stream and those portions of the floodplain adjoining the channel required to carry the regional flood discharge. The floodway is the most dangerous part of the floodplain -- it is associated with moving water.

The floodfringe is the portion of the floodplain outside of the floodway that is covered by flood water during the regional flood. The term floodfringe is generally associated with standing water rather than flowing water. Development is allowed in the floodfringe subject to local floodplain ordinance requirements.

The regional flood is the same as the 100-year flood, the 1 percent chance flood, or the base flood (FEMA). See the Natural Resources Map.

Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) delineates the "A" Zones including the floodway and flood fringe which are those areas inundated by the 100-year flood within the county.

There is a value in preserving and protecting these natural flood control areas from encroachment. First, by preventing development in the floodplain, the cost of building dikes, levies, or other man-made flood control devices will be saved. Second, for each structure that is constructed in a flood-prone area, that flood-prone area expands,

potentially subjecting other structures originally built outside the delineated flood hazard area to the risk of flooding. Each new structure, or modification to an existing structure, placed in the floodplain, puts more life and property in danger.

Counties, cities, and villages are required to adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances. Floodplain zoning is designed to protect individuals, private property, and public investments from flood damage. These regulations prohibit development in the floodway, the most dangerous flood area.

#### 4. Groundwater

The groundwater in the Nekoosa area meets municipal and industrial needs. Well water is available at various depths, depending on the general topography, the distance above permanent stream levels, and the character of the underlying aquifer. Nekoosa's two municipal wells are relatively shallow, and draw water through the sand and gravel layer that exists from the surface down to the bedrock. Relatively thin layers of clay deposits provide a limited amount of protection from the downward movement of contaminants toward the groundwater.

#### C. Woodlands

Some woodlands exist within the planning area. These forested areas are primarily associated with streams, and wetlands. Forest cover provides many vital functions, which are diverse in nature; forested lands provide for recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, and wildlife habitat as well as protection of sensitive environmental areas. Regulation of the removal of woodland plant material is desirable to protect scenic beauty, to control erosion, and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface waters.

Tree cover is essential, especially for erosion control and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface water bodies. Woodland cover is further addressed in the land use chapter of the plan.

#### D. Rare Species & Natural Communities

The City of Nekoosa has three sections (public land survey sections) with occurrences of aquatic and terrestrial plants, animals, and/or natural communities of endangered status as identified in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory. One section has aquatic occurrences, one section has terrestrial occurrences, and one section has both. Each section identified may have several different species or just one species.

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.

The latest inventory of potential and existing natural spaces that complement biodiversity goals are in the *Land Legacy Report* prepared by the DNR in 2006. The floodplains in Nekoosa are part of the Middle Wisconsin River Ecological Landscape. Grasslands and farms west of Nekoosa are part of the Central Wisconsin Grasslands Ecological Landscape. Both landscapes are briefly described below:

*Middle Wisconsin River (MW)* – Extensive southern floodplain forests dominated by silver maple, green ash, and hackberry are found along the river's lowlands. In concert with associated marshes, they provide important habitat for a variety of resident and migratory wildlife. Upland forests adjacent to the river contribute to the corridor's wildlife habitat values, help maintain water quality, and have significant aesthetic value. Due to the proximity of urban populations, like Nekoosa, this portion of the river receives substantial public use. Recreational boating, fishing, and waterfowl hunting are particularly popular activities. A protected corridor along the river could provide protection for critical habitats and increase the variety of public recreation opportunities available.

*Central Wisconsin Grasslands (CG)* – Center pivot irrigation agriculture is prevalent in the flat sandy soils covering the southern portion of this area. Due to the size, quality, and distribution of the existing grasslands, this area is particularly attractive to a diverse community of grassland birds. The state's largest populations of prairie chicken and Henslow's sparrow are found here. Other declining or rare grassland birds, including grasshopper sparrow, upland sandpiper, eastern meadowlark, northern harrier, and short-eared owl, are found locally. Working with farmers and non-farming landowners to create linkages between scattered grassland parcels would be important in ensuring the long-term viability of populations of grassland-dependent species. Strategic expansion of existing public properties would also provide substantial public recreation benefits.

#### E. Agriculture

Nekoosa has some scattered active farming within the City, including crop farming in the southern part of the City and cranberry bogs in the northern part of the City. The surrounding areas have center-pivot irrigated and non-irrigated row crop farming, including cranberry bogs.



## F. Recreational Resources

The area park and recreation system consists of several parks, area bicycle trails, and other amenities. More detailed is included in the Utilities & Community Facilities chapter of this plan.

## G. History & Cultural Assets

### History

Wood County was established in 1856 and is named after Joseph Wood, a state legislator and judge. The area had originally been part of Portage County. The nationality of the original settlers was diverse, and includes Norwegians, Danish, Swedish, German, Polish, and Irish.

The word Nekoosa is derived from the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) word, "Nakrusa" which translates to running or swift water. Five rapids covering a distance of about three miles in this area were referred to as Nekoosa by the Native Americans, who made their campground on high Swallow Rock overlooking the rapids.

Wakeley's tavern served as a rendezvous and resting place for the river traveler and lumber raftsmen. Wakeley's was the nucleus for the development of a settlement named Point Basse (low point). The name was later changed to Nekoosa.

The settlement became a key town during the colorful era when lumber was rafted down the river from the pineries of the North to Mississippi River markets.

Daniel Whitney built the first sawmill on the Wisconsin River here at Whitney's Rapids in 1831 making Nekoosa the birthplace of Wood County. From this first harnessing of the river's power developed scores of power facilities making the Wisconsin River the hardest worked river in the world. Nekoosa was the hometown of a famous wrestler in the early 20th century named Ed 'Strangler' Lewis. There is a historical marker in the City that highlights his achievements.

Some local buildings with historical significance exist, but none are listed on any state or federal registries. Two 3D building wall murals are located in the City and are of some local significance as cultural assets.

## 2.3 Goals, Objectives, & Policies

The following Goals, Objectives, and Policies will help guide the City of Nekoosa to better protect and utilize its natural, agricultural, and cultural resources.

### A. Natural Resources

Goals:

1. Maintain and enhance the natural resources in the City.
2. Protect surface and groundwater resources.

Objectives:

1. Minimize the potential impact on natural resources when evaluating development.
2. Reduce the amount of storm water and pollutants that flow into surface waters.

Policies:

1. Identify key natural resources for protection.
2. Communicate with federal, state, and county agencies to seek funding for habitat protection.
3. Work to ensure enforcement of floodplain zoning, conservancy zoning, and shoreland zoning ordinances to protect water quality.

### B. Agricultural Resources

Goal:

1. Maintain the future viability of agriculture within the city, unless circumstances indicate another optimal use.

Objectives:

1. Encourage community supported agriculture and other efforts to keep agricultural uses in and adjacent to the city until a time when these lands may convert to another use.

2. Cooperate with the surrounding communities on all land development within the planning area to limit locating incompatible land uses adjacent to one another.

Policies:

1. Coordinate with the surrounding town in the future planning of agricultural lands adjacent to the city. Areas that are to remain in agricultural production should be buffered from existing and future developments of the city, and/or planned for compatible, sustainable use.
2. The City Council and City Plan Commission should consult with the surrounding town, and the county to ensure cooperation in land use planning especially with those lands on the edge of the city and within the extraterritorial planning area.
3. Support the local farmer's market.

C. Cultural Resources

Goal:

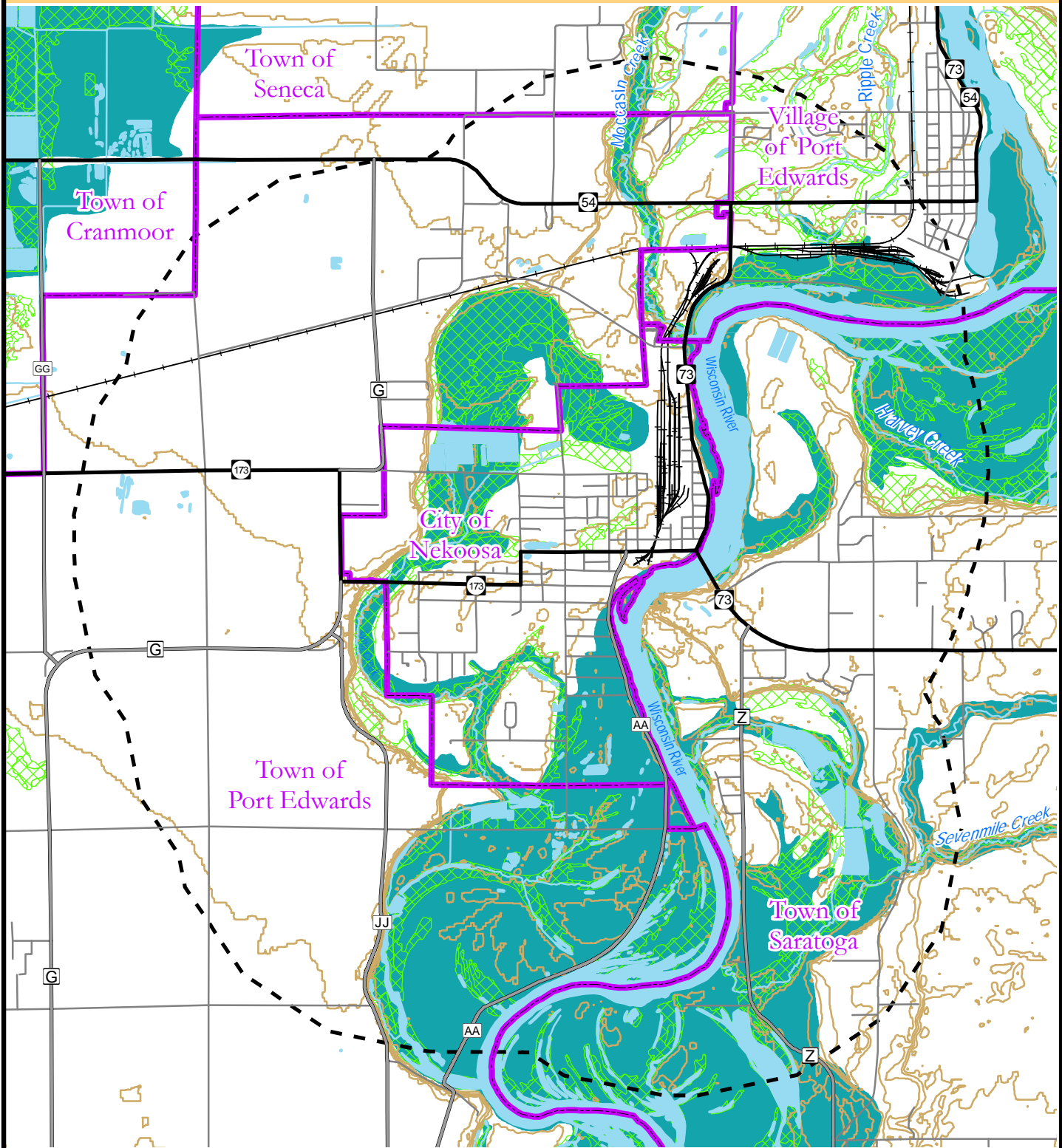
1. Preserve the city's historic, archeological, and cultural places and structures for city residents' use and enjoyment.

Objective:

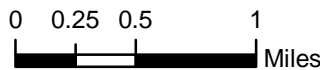
1. Identify and preserve buildings, such as churches, historic homes, and buildings, structures and other landscape features that are part of the city's cultural history.

Policies:

1. Work with federal, state, county, and local groups to identify and preserve the cultural and historically significant areas.
2. Discourage the destruction of cultural sites, and do not allow incompatible uses around them.
3. Work to recognize local historic figures and events.



- Minor Civil Divisions
- 10 ft. Contours
- US Highway
- Wetlands
- State Highways
- High Water Occurrence
- County Highways
- Water
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Project Area



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. NCRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

Source: WI DNR, NCRPC, Wood Co., FEMA



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

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

## Chapter 3: Housing

## **CHAPTER 3: HOUSING**

### **3.1 Background**

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

The Comprehensive Planning Law also establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, one relates directly to this chapter, it reads: Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.

The chapter is organized into three basic sections: Background, Inventory & Trends, and Goals, Objectives and Policies. There is also an overview of programs available to help local communities meet their housing needs.

#### **A. Previous Studies**

No local in-depth housing study was identified. Two regional plans, however, were reviewed as they relate to housing.

##### **1. Regional Comprehensive Plan: A Framework for the Future, 2002-2020**

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) titled “A Framework for the Future,” adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2004, is an update of a plan adopted by NCWRPC in 1981. The plan looks at housing in all ten counties that make up the North Central Region, including Wood County. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local government can address their housing issues.

Subsidized housing units were a focus of the plan in 2000. Of the 5,389 such units in the Region, 430 are in Wood County. Over 56 percent (242 units) of these are housing for

the elderly, and 36 percent (155 units) are for families, with 7 percent (33 units) designed for the disabled. This translates into one subsidized housing unit per 85.5 persons in Wood County. This is a marked contrast to Marathon County where there is one unit per 104.5 persons. Affordability is a primary consideration in housing policy.

## 2. Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the State in accessing formula program funds of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants, among others. “The Consolidated Plan provides the framework for a planning process used by States and localities to identify housing, homeless, community, and economic development needs and resources, and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs.” This is how HUD describes the Consolidated Plan, which consists of a 5-year strategic plan, annual action plans, and annual performance reports. The Plan must be updated annually.

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

In assessing housing needs, the Consolidated Plan, looks at a number of different factors that are significant components of the housing picture. Housing affordability is a primary consideration. According to federal guidelines, a family should not have to spend more than thirty percent of its income on housing. Using this standard “...households in the low-income range have great difficulty finding adequate housing within their means and that accommodates their needs...an individual in Wisconsin would need to earn \$10.44 per hour to afford the fair market rent unit at 30% of income.”

The State Consolidated Housing Plan is primarily focused on how government action can address special needs, not on the workings of the private housing market. “The focus of activities and strategies described in the Plan primarily address meeting the evolving needs of low and moderate-income persons, including persons of special needs requiring targeted assistance.”

## B. Housing Issues

A variety of housing related issues were identified throughout the planning process. They are listed below in no particular order.

- The northeast part of the City is older and has some public infrastructure needs.
- There are some “eyesores” that are being dealt with one at a time.
- Senior housing is a need in the community.
- There has been some turnover of owner-occupied housing to rental, which has created some issues.
- A Community Development Authority exists to provide housing assistance for low and moderate income persons.



### 3.2 Inventory & Trends

#### A. Existing Housing Stock

In 2009, the City of Nekoosa had 1,166 housing units, compared to 1,063 in 2000. Over the period, the city added 103 housing units, which represents an increase of about 10 percent that is similar to the state rate. Meanwhile the county's housing units grew at a lower rate (5.5%) than Nekoosa.

See the residential areas identified on the Existing Land Use Map in Chapter 8.

**Table 1: Total Housing Units**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2009*	2000-2009 % Change	2000-2009 Net Change
City of Nekoosa	1,063	1,166	9.7%	103
Wood County	31,691	33,447	5.5%	1,756
State of Wisconsin	2,321,144	2,549,915	9.9%	228,771

Source: U.S. Census

\*2009 is the 2005-2009 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census

Table 2 indicates that most of Nekoosa's housing was built before 1980, which is the same for the county and the state. Nekoosa has a significantly higher percentage of housing that was constructed between 1940 and 1959, compared to either the county or state.

**Table 2: Year Structure Built, 2009**

Year	Nekoosa	Nekoosa %	Wood Co. %	Wisconsin %
2000 or later	75	7.1%	7.8%	10.4%
1990 to 1999	79	7.4%	11.7%	14.3%
1980 to 1989	102	9.6%	10.3%	9.8%
1960 to 1979	257	24.2%	30.1%	25.7%
1940 to 1959	313	29.4%	21.1%	18.1%
1939 or earlier	238	22.4%	18.9%	21.7%

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census

Table 3 provides an overview of the housing types in the city as compared with the county and state. Single-family homes (1-unit detached) make-up about three-quarters of all housing units in Nekoosa. Duplexes and 10-unit or more multi-family structures represent about 25 percent.

**Table 3: Type of Structure, 2009**

	<b>Nekoosa</b>	<b>Nekoosa %</b>	<b>Wood County %</b>	<b>Wisconsin %</b>
1-unit detached	792	74.5%	77.8%	63.3%
1-unit attached	53	0.5%	2.0%	4.4%
2 to 4 units	108	10.2%	6.7%	10.7%
5 to 9 units	29	2.7%	2.7%	4.7%
10 or more units	119	11.2%	6.3%	9.6%
Mobile home, trailer, or other	11	1.0%	4.5%	3.3%

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census

**B. Value Characteristics**

Median values of owner occupied housing units in the City of Nekoosa were about \$83,600 in 2009 as displayed in Table 4. Housing values increased about 35 percent between 2000 and 2009 in Nekoosa, which is a few percentage points less than the county. Meanwhile the county and state median household values were \$113,700 and \$166,100, respectively. Specified Owner Occupied Housing Units is the total number of owner occupied housing units described as either a one family home detached from any other house or a one family house attached to one or more houses on less than 10 acres with no business on the property.

**Table 4: Median Value for specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units**

<b>Minor Civil Division</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2009*</b>	<b>2000-2009 % Change</b>	<b>2000-2009 Net Change</b>
City of Nekoosa	\$62,000	\$83,600	34.8%	\$21,600
Wood County	\$81,400	\$113,700	39.7%	\$32,300
State of Wisconsin	\$112,200	\$166,100	48.0%	\$53,900

Source: U.S. Census

\*2009 is the 2005-2009 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census

Table 5 shows that median rents in Nekoosa were lower than the county median in 2000, but rose higher than the county median by 2009. Rents in Nekoosa are still lower than the state median of \$700 per month. Gross Rent is contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, and water) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid for by the renter (or paid for the renter by someone else). Gross rent is intended to eliminate differentials which result from varying practices with respect to the inclusion of utilities and fuels as part of the rental payment.

Minor Civil Division	2000	2009*	2000-2009 % Change	2000-2009 Net Change
City of Nekoosa	\$409	\$588	43.8%	\$179
Wood County	\$442	\$554	25.3%	\$112
State of Wisconsin	\$540	\$700	29.6%	\$160

Source: US Census

\*2005-2009 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census

The most commonly applied standard for determining housing affordability is to look at household spending. Those households spending less than 30 percent are defined as “affordable”, while those paying greater than 30 percent of household income are not. Table 6 shows that in 2009, within the City of Nekoosa, about 25 percent of owners and 44 percent of renters spent 30 percent or more of their household income on housing. Both of these percentages are higher than the county numbers, but are similar to the state percentages.

	Owners in 2009	Renters in 2009
City of Nekoosa	25.3% (Owners = 64.4% of occupied housing)	44.2% (Renters = 35.6% of occupied housing)
Wood County	16.3% (Owners = 74.3% of occupied housing)	38.5% (Renters = 25.7% of occupied housing)
State of Wisconsin	22.9% (Owners = 68.4% of occupied housing)	43.2% (Renters = 31.6% of occupied housing)

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census

C. Occupancy Characteristics

Table 7 shows that the owner-occupied housing stock in Nekoosa has increased slightly (about 3 units a year) over the last 10 years. About 170 houses were constructed annually within the county in the same time period. A higher percentage of owner occupied housing (10%) was constructed throughout the state.

Renter occupied housing in Nekoosa increased by over 40 percent as shown in Table 8. The amount of renter occupied housing throughout the county declined, possibly due to a conversion of single family housing back to owner occupied housing. Quantities of rental housing rose by almost 3 percent throughout the state.

**Table 7: Owner Occupied Units**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2009*	2000-2009 % Change	2000-2009 Net Change
City of Nekoosa	730	760	4.1%	30
Wood County	22,385	24,089	7.6%	1,704
State of Wisconsin	1,426,361	1,569,229	10.0%	142,868

Source: \*2005-2009 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census

**Table 8: Renter Occupied Units**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2009*	2000-2009 % Change	2000-2009 Net Change
City of Nekoosa	257	360	40.1%	103
Wood County	7,750	7,359	-5.0%	-391
State of Wisconsin	658,183	677,283	2.9%	19,100

Source: \*2005-2009 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census

Between 2000 and 2009, there was a 10 percent decline in owner occupied units within the city. At the same time there was a 10 percent increase in renters.

#### D. Housing Programs:

There are a number of programs available to local governments to aid with their housing needs. Below is a listing of some of the programs available to localities:

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

There are a number of programs available through HUD that can assist local communities in addressing their housing problems, but the two most prominent are Section 8 and HOME, both are directed at low-income residents and provide aid to states and local governments to satisfy their housing needs.

Since it was first authorized by Congress in 1974, the Housing Choice Voucher Program, commonly known as Section 8, has been a major federal program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled afford housing in the private market. Administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs), eligible families are issued vouchers that they can use to secure housing in the private market. Eligibility for the program is generally limited to families with incomes below 50 percent of the median for the county or metropolitan area in which they reside. The program is open to any housing unit where the owner agrees to participate and where the unit satisfies the standards set by the local PHA.

#### Section 8

Although Section 8 subsidies can be applied to any housing unit that meets the standards and where the owner agrees to participate in the program (tenant-based), there are also project-based programs. Generally, these project-based programs involve financial aids to new construction, renovation projects, or some form of federal mortgage guarantee, and carry with them a contract requiring that a certain number of units be set-aside for very low-income families for a set period of years, usually twenty. This program was largely discontinued in 1983. In recent years, many contracts from the period when project-based subsidies were granted have expired, causing substantial restructuring of the program. Procedures have been developed for the renewal and renegotiation of contracts securing a certain number of housing units for voucher-holding families.

#### Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

The other major housing program for low-income families in the open market is the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), the largest federal block-grant program to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households. HOME is designed to be flexible. Participating Jurisdictions are required to match twenty-five percent of the grant total, and can use HOME funds for four types of affordable housing activities: rental housing development (acquisition,

rehabilitation, and new construction); rehabilitation of owner-occupied properties; homeowner assistance; and tenant-based rental assistance. Rental housing development funds are available in exchange for agreement to provide a set number of affordable units within the project, according to a formula based on the number and kind of units created with the funds, and the amount of funding. Units are committed to low-income housing for a fixed number of years. Income restrictions apply to eligibility requirements for HOME funded housing units. The Participating Jurisdiction is required to award a certain amount of HOME funding to Community Housing Development Organizations, local non-profits that develop affordable housing within the community.

### Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) also can be used to provide affordable housing. Larger cities and counties receive CDBG funding directly from HUD, but cities with fewer than 50,000 residents and non-urban counties can receive grants if their requests conform to the State Consolidated Housing Plan. States set their own standards for awarding CDBG funding, but are required to award at least 70 percent of these funds for activities that will benefit low-and-moderate-income persons. Communities are allowed great latitude in how CDBG funds can be used, including land acquisition, housing rehabilitation, and in certain circumstances, new construction, direct assistance to homeowners such as down-payment assistance or revolving loan funds for first-time buyers, concentrated building code enforcement, and planning and administrative expenses.

A number of other programs are available that foster affordable housing through providing mortgage insurance for qualified projects. By insuring lenders against loss, these programs seek to increase the supply of housing for low and moderate-income families. There are also programs to provide aid to special-needs populations. Section 202 and Section 811 provide funding assistance for supportive housing for the elderly and the disabled.

### Low Income Housing Tax Credit

This program was created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, and has been one of the major sources of financial aid for low-income housing. Projects that meet the program standards can receive a tax credit for up to nine percent of the cost of providing affordable housing for 15 years. Since 1987, over 19,000 units of rental housing have been developed in Wisconsin for seniors, families, and persons with special needs under this program. To foster multi-family development targeting low-income residents, incentives are provided for development in rural counties and with fewer than 24 units. In 2007, the Wisconsin Rapids Housing Authority redeveloped 24 units of affordable housing under the Section 42 tax credit program.

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

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), acting through its Rural Development program, operates the Rural Housing Service that distributes more than \$4 billion in loans and grants annually, generally in communities with population under 10,000. USDA-RD offers a number of programs including loan guarantees, grants, and direct loans to foster single-family and multi-family housing affordable to low-income residents. Funding is available for site acquisition, renovations, technical assistance, housing preservation, and rental assistance. Also available is aid for community facilities, housing for farm labor, and technical assistance for what is known as mutual self-help projects where residents provide “sweat equity” on affordable housing projects. Most programs are limited to low-income persons. USDA-RD is also involved in a number of economic development efforts.

### Section 515

The single most prominent program administered under USDA-RD is the Section 515 program that supports the construction of multi-family housing for low-income residents. Under the program, which has been in operation in Wisconsin since 1969, USDA underwrites fifty-year mortgages at a one percent interest rate in exchange for an agreement to provide housing for low and very, low-income residents. Unlike Section 8, the commitment to provide low-income housing runs for the life of the mortgage, and although owners can buy out the mortgage, they can do so only if they meet certain conditions, including ensuring that no tenants are displaced as a result. Also available through this program is rental assistance similar to project-based Section 8 for tenants in Section 515 financed buildings.

### Section 502

Another prominent program of USDA-RD is the Section 502 Direct Loans. Under this program, qualified applicants may obtain 100 percent financing to purchase an existing dwelling, purchase a site and construct a dwelling, or purchase newly constructed dwellings located in rural areas. Section 502 loans are primarily used to help low-income individuals or households purchase homes in rural areas and to provide financing at reasonable rates and terms with no down payment. Families must be without adequate housing, but be able to afford the mortgage payments, including taxes and insurance. These payments are typically within 22 to 26 percent of an applicant’s income. In addition, applicants must be unable to obtain credit elsewhere, yet have reasonable credit histories.

## 3. Wisconsin Department of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR)

The Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR) and its Bureau of Housing act as the State’s housing authority. It administers the State portion of federal

programs including CDBG – Small City Housing, HOME, SHP, ESG, Transitional Housing, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). DHIR also is responsible for State programs such as State Shelter Subsidy Grants. The Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI) offers grants to local housing entities (governmental, tribal, or nonprofit) for activities including rental aid, down payment assistance, homelessness prevention, and related housing initiatives.

4. Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

According to its mission statement, “The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) serves Wisconsin residents and communities by working with others to provide creative financing resources and information to stimulate and preserve affordable housing, small business, and agribusiness.” WHEDA holds over \$2 billion in assets and has made more than \$52 million in multi-family housing loans. In addition to housing programs, WHEDA administers programs to foster agriculture and small business.

5. Local Housing Program

The City has a Community Development Block Grant housing rehabilitation program available to low and moderate income homeowners and renters. For more information contact the City Clerk.



### **3.3 Goals, Objective & Policies**

The following is a listing of the goals, objectives, and policies identified for the housing chapter of the comprehensive plan.

Goal:

1. Promote an adequate supply of safe, energy-efficient housing for individuals of all income levels throughout the community.

Objectives:

1. Adopt housing development policies and regulations that promote a variety of housing types and cost ranges, to promote housing choices.
2. Identify and preserve areas for future housing development.
3. Expand educational opportunities for both landlords and tenants in the community about rental rights and responsibilities.

Policies:

1. Identify an adequate amount of land for future residential development to meet future needs within walking or biking distance of everyday necessities, incorporates green space into its design, and contains a diverse housing stock.
2. Coordinate new residential development with the availability of sanitary sewer, water and storm water facilities, police and fire protection, recreation facilities, schools, transportation facilities, and solid waste disposal.
3. Review and modify local ordinances and building codes to ensure that they accommodate the housing needs of every life cycle of the population.
4. Encourage home owners and landlords to maintain their properties.

## **Chapter 4: Utilities & Community Facilities**

## **CHAPTER 4: UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### **4.1 Background**

This fourth chapter follows the same three-section format as previous chapters, starting with a background, followed by an inventory & trends, and finally, the goals, objectives, and policies section.

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, and cable communications. Community facilities include local governmental buildings, libraries, educational institutions, and maintenance and storage facilities, as well as services like police and fire protection, medical, municipal water, and wastewater.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, two relate directly to this chapter. These goals are:

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

#### **A. Previous Studies**

Several plans were reviewed as they relate to utilities and community facilities. These plans provide a starting point for the planning process.

##### **1. Sewer Facility Plan**

The City is continually planning for the waste water plant and system. The facility recently underwent a full upgrade.

##### **2. Other Community Plans**

Over the years multiple plans have been prepared related to many different City functions. These plans are too numerous to be listed here.

## 2. Wood County Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan

This plan's primary purpose is to identify how to prevent injury and property damage from natural hazards. Understanding how the natural environment works is a first step in mitigating natural disasters. The Pre-Disaster plan shows how the natural environment and the built environment are in conflict and how to mitigate that conflict (e.g. development in a floodplain is at risk of damage caused by flooding). While the probability of dam breaks is low, there is a high damage potential, and so are listed in the Mitigation Plan, along with floodplain damage possibilities in Nekoosa.

## 4.2 Inventory & Trends

Utilities and community facilities provided by the City of Nekoosa or by other public or private entities are inventoried and briefly evaluated as to their present condition and adequacy to meet the current and future needs of the City. Most of these facilities are continually being maintained and upgraded. See City staff for more information.

Many of the major facilities are identified on the Community Facilities Map.

### A. Public Works

#### Street Department

The City's street department is responsible for the maintenance of the local road system, storm sewers, and waste and recycling removal. The local road network is discussed in detail the transportation chapter. The City Garage is located at 1348 Point Basse Road, as well as a Mechanic's Shop.

#### Solid Waste and Recycling Facility

The City contracts for weekly curbside pick-up of recycling. Unlimited amounts of recyclables are accepted from all households and businesses. Private waste haulers are also available for larger waste disposal needs.

### B. Water

#### Drinking Water

The City's water system consists of wells, storage, treatment, and distribution facilities. Currently, the City operates two ground water wells. These are #4, and #5. The City maintains one water tower for water storage. The distribution system serves most of the City. The system consists of over 18 miles and about 200 hydrants.

#### Waste Water

The Nekoosa Wastewater Treatment Plant is located on the south end of the City on Point Basse Road. The wastewater treatment plant was recently upgraded and has capacity for additional users. It is estimated to be at about 70% utilization.

#### Storm Water

The majority of the City is currently served by concrete pipe storm sewer system. Some areas have been improved, but there are still some areas that need to be addressed.

### C. Public Safety

Three agencies provide various levels of police protection in and around the City. The Nekoosa Police Department, located in City Hall, provides full-time service to the city. The police department's jurisdiction is the City of Nekoosa, and it participates in a mutual aid agreement with the surrounding communities.

The Wood County Sheriff's Department provides service to all the towns, villages, and cities in Wood County for law enforcement. Nekoosa, along with the rest of the county, is served by enhanced 911 emergency response system that is operated by the County.

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

The Nekoosa Volunteer Fire Department fire department provides fire protection throughout the City. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are provided by an on call/volunteer ambulance department.

### D. Medical Facilities

Health services are provided by the Riverview Family Clinic. In addition, there are dental and optometrist services available in the City. The nearest hospital is Riverview Hospital, located in Wisconsin Rapids, is a 99-bed facility that provides full medical services. There are hospitals in Stevens Point, Marshfield and Wausau. There are also two local chiropractic clinics in the City.

### E. Assisted Living Facilities

There are three facilities located in Nekoosa. Two are classified as Adult Family Homes (Aspen Assisted Living on Wood Avenue and Liberty Home Assisted Living on 4<sup>th</sup> Street), and one is classified as a Residential Care Apartment Complex (Retirement Community of Nekoosa on North Cedar).

### F. Day Care Facilities

Nekoosa has approximately 3 regulated childcare providers.

## G. Educational Facilities

There are several educational facilities located in the area.

### K-12 Schools

City residents and the surrounding area is served by the Nekoosa Area School District. The District has three schools, an elementary, middle, and high school. All three are shown on the Community Facilities Map. Total enrollment in 2010 was about 1,400 students. There is one parochial school that serves the area as well. Sacred Heart School and United Church of Christ provides PreK to 4.

There is also a Boys and Girls Club in the area.

### Higher Education

Mid-State Technical College is located in the City of Wisconsin Rapids. MSTC provides a variety of one and two year educational programs. The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is about 25 miles to the northeast. UWSP provides a variety of four year and master's programs.

## H. Parks and Trails

The Nekoosa area park and recreation system consists of several parks. The parks system includes a full range of developed facilities located throughout the City. Nekoosa is connected to the City of Wisconsin Rapid's recreational trail system – the Ashdawgam Trails.

## I. Energy & Telecommunications

Electrical service in the City of Nekoosa is provided by Alliant Energy, and natural gas service is provided by Wisconsin Gas. Telephone service in the city is provided by Charter and Solarus. Cable and Internet service is provided by Solarus as well, although there are several new providers available as technology changes. Various cellular telecommunication service providers have coverage in the city and outlying area.

## J. Dams & Levees

There is one dam located in Nekoosa on the Wisconsin River. No dam breaks have been identified within Wood County. Therefore, there is no historic frequency upon which to base a future probability of a dam break, other than to say that the probability of a dam

failure is very low. The Wood County Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, 2005, provides greater detail about all natural hazards and dam failures.

Flood events in Wood County have caused substantial property and infrastructure damage in the past and have the potential to cause future damage since a significant number of structures still exist in the floodplain.

K. Library & Community Center

The Charles and JoAnn Lester Library opened in 1997. The facility is centrally located in the community on Park Avenue. The library offers a variety of programs, including a children's reading program, has a community room and access to the Internet.

The Nekoosa Community Center is located behind the Middle School on Crestview Lane and provides public space for meetings, concerts, or private parties for groups from 50 to 350. The facility is the site of the Senior Meal Program and Fitness Program. A Community Wellness program is also held at the facility.



### **4.3 Goal, Objectives, & Policies**

#### Goal:

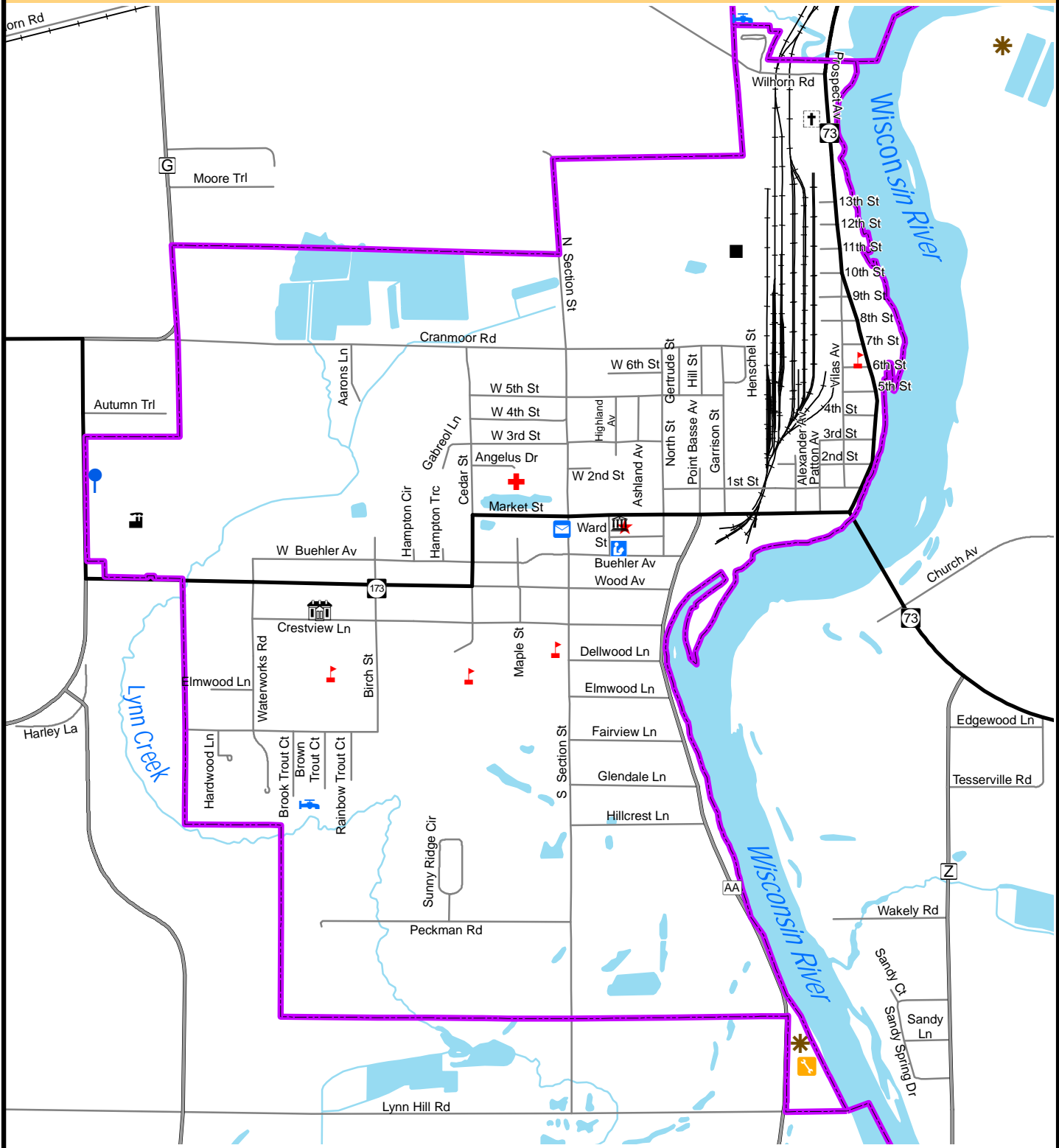
Promote an effective and efficient supply of utilities, facilities, and services that meet the needs and expectations of residents, and contribute to the sustainability of the community.

#### Objectives:

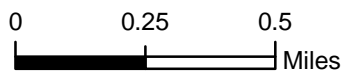
1. Provide services in the most cost-effective and energy efficient methods possible.
2. Coordinate community facilities and utility systems development and use with land use, transportation, and natural resource planning.
3. Direct intensive, sustainable land development to areas where a full array of utilities, community facilities, and public services are available.
4. Provide quality, accessible parks and recreational facilities, areas, and services for all residents.
5. Protect the lives, property, and rights of all residents through law enforcement, fire, and emergency services.
6. Support high quality educational opportunities for all residents.

#### Policies:

1. Encourage compact and well-planned development areas so that community facilities and services can be provided in a cost-effective, energy efficient manner.
2. Promote and continue joint service agreements as a means to consolidate and coordinate services with the county, other cities, villages, and towns, to achieve better services and/or cost savings, and an overall sustainable community.
3. Help coordinate and support local emergency services and facilities (e.g., police, fire, rescue/EMS) through adequate funding, training, facilities, and equipment.



- Minor Civil Divisions
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Waste Water
- Waste Water Treatment Plant
- Water Tower
- Wells
- Business Park
- Cemetery
- City Garage
- City Hall
- Community Center
- Health Services
- Landfill
- Library
- Post Office
- School
- Police / Fire Dept.



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. NCRWPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

Source: WI DNR, NCRWPC, Wood Co.



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

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

## Chapter 5: Transportation

## **CHAPTER 5: TRANSPORTATION**

### **5.1 Background**

This is the fifth of nine chapters that comprise the City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan. The transportation system includes all modes of travel. The local transportation network is an important factor for the safe movement of people and goods, as well as for the growth and development of the city.

This chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a "compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking, and water transportation. The chapter shall compare the local unit's objectives, policies, goals, and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The chapter shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit."

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

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

#### **A. Previous Studies**

Several plans were reviewed as they relate to transportation in the Nekoosa area.

#### **1. 2025 South Wood County Area Transportation Study**

This plan was prepared as a long-range transportation plan for the South Wood County Urban Area, similar to what is required by larger urban areas that are designated as Metropolitan Planning Organizations or MPO's. The plan provides local governments a guide to make appropriate transportation decisions. The plan includes a variety of information, including:

- Issues, and goals and objectives;
- Recommended street and highway improvements;
- Transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, and air mode overviews; and
- Recommendations for all transportation modes.

## 2. North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) created this plan in 2004 to guide the development of bicycle facilities in north central Wisconsin. The vision of this plan is to increase the mobility of people within the Region by making bicycling a more viable and attractive transportation choice. The plan will strengthen the rural character of the county by connecting natural and cultural resource destinations, and by connecting communities, which also will have positive economic development from tourism. This plan focuses on connecting major communities within Wood County, so detailed connections within Nekoosa are not listed.

The plan contains route selections from a variety of past plans provided by both Nekoosa and Marshfield. One of the routes identified is a direct line between Nekoosa and Marshfield. Ownership is now beginning to fragment, so action taken soon may still secure the entire corridor.

## 3. Corridors 2020/Connections 2030

Corridors 2020 was designed to enhance economic development and meet Wisconsin's mobility needs well into the future. The 3,200-mile state highway network is comprised of two main elements: a multi-lane backbone system and a two-lane connector system. All communities with over 5,000 in population are to be connected to the backbone system via the connector network.

## 4. State Trails Network Plan

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) created this plan in 2001 to identify a statewide network of trails, and to provide guidance to the DNR for land acquisition and development. Many existing trails are developed and operated in partnership with counties. By agreement, the DNR acquires the corridor and the local governments develop, operate, and maintain the trail. The recommendations in this plan are presented in multi-modal transportation corridors, and the City is part of the Marshfield Rapids Corridor. Two segments from that plan involve the Nekoosa area.

Segment 4 begins in Marshfield, across the Mississippi River from Winona, MN. This potential trail corridor is on rail line that parallels the Trempealeau River east to Merrillan. The rail line continues east through the north end of the Black River State Forest to City Point and from City Point to Wisconsin Rapids/Nekoosa.

Segment 18 links with potential corridors in the Northern and South Central regions to create a continuous trail route from Ashland, on Lake Superior, to the Wisconsin/Illinois state line. This segment connects Stevens Point with Wisconsin Rapids/Nekoosa and Adams County along the Wisconsin River.

B. Transportation Issues

Several issues related to transportation are listed below:

- Need for better coordination between transportation service providers in south Wood County.
- Need for better connection between cities/villages and towns, as well as along the river on both sides.
- Need to coordinate bicycle and walking facilities with routine construction projects.
- Maintain rail accessibility throughout the city for economic development.

## 5.2. Inventory & Trends

This section of the plan reviews local roads, bike and pedestrian trails, the airport, rail service, and transit. There is no water transportation service. Together these form the transportation system within the city, and connect the city to the larger state transportation system.

### A. Local Roads

Local roads (streets) create the primary transportation system in the city. These roads allow people and goods to move within the city, and provide connections to the county, state, and federal road networks.

#### Jurisdictional Classification:

Public highways and roads are generally classified by two different systems, the jurisdictional, and the functional. Jurisdictional class refers to the entity, which owns the facility and holds responsibility for its operations and maintenance. The functional class refers to the role the particular highway/road segment plays in moving traffic within the overall roadway system.

The jurisdictional breakdown is shown in the display below. In addition to these main classifications, a road or segment of road may hold a variety of other designations including county forest road, rustic road, emergency route, truck route, etc. There are no rustic roads within Wood County. Truck routes are discussed later in this chapter under Trucking.

**Table 1:  
Road Mileage  
By Jurisdiction And Functional Class**

Jurisdiction	Functional Classification			Totals
	Arterial	Collector	Local	
State	3.1			3.1
County*		1.9		1.9
City		3.8	17	20.8
<b>TOTALS</b>	3.1	5.7	17	25.8

Source: WisDOT & NCWRPC, GIS classifies AA ac a county road.

## Functional Classification:

The City of Nekoosa' principal arterials include State Highways 73 and 173, and County Highways AA and G. These roads are the major through roads in the city. All roads are displayed by classification on the Transportation Map.

The City of Nekoosa road network consists of about 2 miles of state highways, 6 miles of county highways, and about 17 miles of local city roads.

WisDOT requires all local units of government to submit road condition rating data every two years as part of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). The Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program and WISLR are tools local governments can use to manage pavements for improved decision making in budgeting and maintenance. Cities can use this information to develop better road budgets and keep track of roads that are in need of repair.

### **Functional Classifications**

**Principal Arterials** – carry high traffic volumes and provide links to major activity centers, they include Interstate Highways and freeways.

**Minor Arterials** – provide trips of shorter lengths and provides more land access. The minor arterial system interconnects with the urban arterial system and provides system connections to the rural collectors.

**Collectors** – provide both land access and traffic circulation within residential, commercial and industrial areas. These facilities collect traffic from local streets and channel it into the arterial system.

**Local Streets** – provide direct access to residential, commercial, and industrial developments. Local streets provide the lowest level of mobility.

Source: WISDOT Facilities Manual

## Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) Counts:

Annual average daily traffic counts (AADT) depending on volume, are measured every three or ten years by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), for several sites located in the city. Monitoring these counts provides a way to gauge how traffic volume is changing in Nekoosa.

The transportation map displays multiple counts from throughout the area. Three counts provide an overview of the transportation volumes in the City:

- HWY 73 Bridge Crossing, a count of 7,500 in 2008.
- Hwy 73 North Segment, a count of 4,400 in 2008.
- 173 West of Cedar Street, a count of 3,800 in 2005.

Congestion levels, pavement quality, bridge conditions, and safety are some considerations used by WisDOT to determine what state highways need improvements within existing funding levels.

The interrelationships between land use and the road system make it necessary for the development of each to be balanced with the other. Types and intensities of land uses



have a direct relationship to the traffic on roadways that serve those land uses. Intensely developed land often generates high volumes of traffic. If this traffic is not planned for, safety can be seriously impaired for both local and through traffic flows.

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 uses can alter the capacity of the roadway. The new business may generate more vehicle traffic. An uncontrolled number of driveways tends to affect highways by increasing the amount of turning traffic into and out from these attached driveways, thereby impairing safety and impeding traffic movements.

Road Improvements:

#### B. Trucking

The truck operator map identifies the Wisconsin highways for operation of vehicles, and combinations of vehicles, the overall lengths of which cannot be limited. State trunk highway 173 is designated as long truck routes within Nekoosa.

In spring, county trunk highways limit semi-truck travel when they are posted with weight limits. When county trunk highways do not have posted weight limits, then basic semi-trucks are allowed.

Local truck routes often branch out from these highways to link local industry with the official designated state highways, as well as to distribute commodities with the local area. Mapping these local truck routes is beyond the scope of this plan, and local issues such as safety, weight restrictions, and noise impacts play significant roles in the designation of local truck routes.

#### C. Bike & Pedestrian Facilities

Both bike and pedestrian facilities are important for the residents of the city. Often these are multi-use trails used for recreational activity, but if planned correctly, they can provide an alternative to driving for short trips.

WisDOT has determined bicycling conditions on all county and state highways. Here are some of the bicycling conditions in Nekoosa:

- A bicycle path follows STH 73 along the Wisconsin River, and connects to STH 73 (high volume, undesirable) to the south, and connects to local roads in Port Edwards and then to a bicycle path in Wisconsin Rapids to the north.
- CTHs AA and JJ leading south of Nekoosa are both rated as the best conditions for bicycling because of the low traffic volumes and low truck traffic.

- CTH G, west and north of Nekoosa, is listed as having a high volume of traffic and undesirable conditions for bicycling.
- STH 173, from Nekoosa west to Babcock, is listed as having a high volume of traffic and undesirable conditions for bicycling.

Sidewalks create the primary pedestrian network within the Nekoosa. There are sidewalks throughout the downtown and along some streets. Issues of most concern to pedestrians are missing sidewalk sections, broken or uneven sections, and intersections without curb ramps. Roads that do not have sidewalks may not provide areas to walk outside of the traffic lanes. These are less desirable pedestrian facilities, since there is no separation between moving vehicles and the pedestrian

#### D. Airport

The City of Nekoosa, the City of Wisconsin Rapids, the Village of Port Edwards, and the Town of Grand Rapids operate the Alexander Field -South Wood County Airport. The airport is located on the south side of the City of Wisconsin Rapids.

Alexander Field - South Wood County Airport (ISW) has two asphalt runways (3,640, and 5,500 feet long), and one turf runway that is 2,100 feet long. As of August 2006, there were 46 single engine airplanes, 3 multi-engine airplanes, and 15 ultralights based at the airport. Of the approximately 44 aviation operations (takeoffs and landings) per day, 50 percent were for transient general aviation, 41 percent were local aviation, and 9 percent were air taxi service. The airport is intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft used in regional service, and small airplanes (piston or turboprop) used in commuter air service. These aircraft generally have a gross takeoff weight of less than 60,000 pounds, with approach speeds below 141 knots, and wingspans of less than 118 feet. There is also heliport at the airport. This is used by Riverview Hospital.

The nearest commercial air service airport is the Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) in Mosinee. There are two private airports near Nekoosa: Winch Field (6W11) has turf runways; and Jennie's Field Airport (W113) also has turf runways.

#### E. Rail

According to the 2008 DOT Rail Map, Canadian National owns all rail tracks through the city. Trains are vital to area business and travel through the City daily.

#### F. Bus/Transit

Wood County contracts with River City Cab to provide shared-ride, reduced-rate taxi service for the elderly and handicapped. The program is subsidized by federal and state mass transit funds. In addition, in cooperation with the Wood County Division on Aging, River City Cab provides reduced fare passes for low-income persons, the elderly, and the handicapped. No intercity bus routes exist within Wood County.

#### G. Transportation Facilities for Disabled

Transportation services help older and disabled adults access the services and programs they need to remain independent. Para-transit is a specialized transit service to serve elderly and handicapped persons who require more accessible vehicles and flexible routing. Providers of this service are usually existing municipal transit operators, taxi companies, and private companies with buses and vans. Wood County Division on Aging provides reduced fare passes for the elderly and handicapped to use River City Cab. Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Central Wisconsin operates two types of transportation programs for the elderly in Nekoosa—a bus service, and volunteer drivers. Marshfield Clinic also provides transportation to the Community Center.

#### H. Transportation Programs

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is the primary provider of programs to assist local transportation systems. Several programs are available, such as:

- General Transportation Aids
- Flood Damage Aids
- Local Bridge Improvement Assistance
- Local Transportation Enhancements
- Traffic Signing & Marking Enhancement Grant

Additionally, the State's new complete streets law requires pedestrian and on-street bicycle accommodations for all state and federally funded highway/roadway reconstruction and new construction projects. More information on these programs can be obtained by contacting the WisDOT office in Wisconsin Rapids.

### 5.3. Goal, Objectives & Policies

#### Goal:

To provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, energy-efficiency, and safety, and that meets the needs of all citizens.

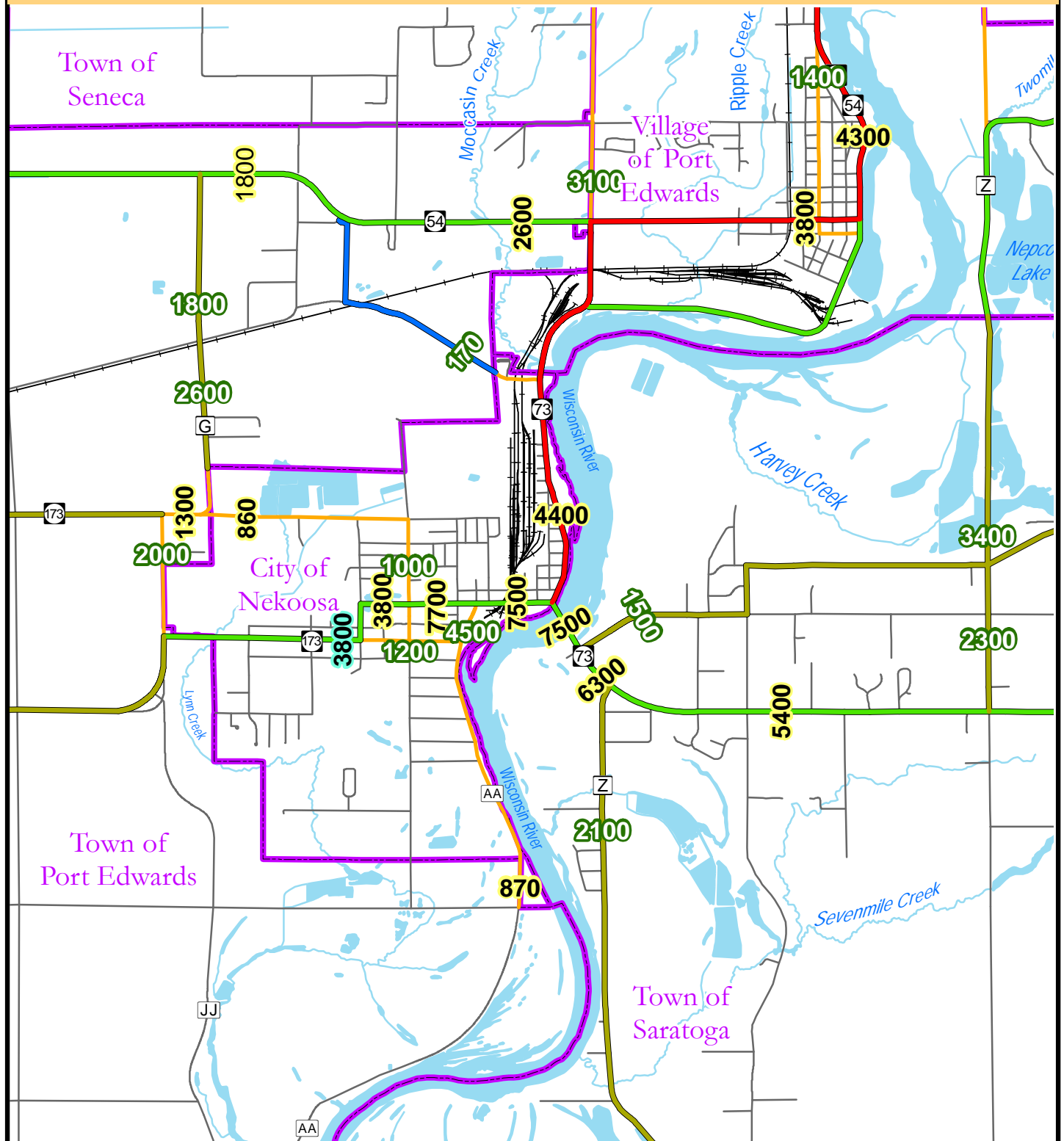
#### Objectives:

1. Maintain the efficiency, safety, and functionality of the City's existing transportation system, which links the urban center with outlying towns, adjacent communities, and the region.
2. Encourage a balanced transportation network that provides a choice in the type of mode (i.e. car, bus, bike, walking, etc.), easy transfer between modes, and transportation opportunities for those without use of an automobile.
3. Achieve close coordination between transportation facilities and land use planning and development.

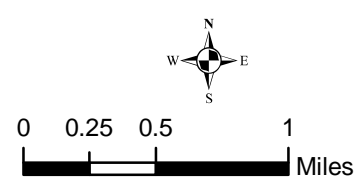
#### Policies:

1. Work with WisDOT to control access onto highways to preserve capacity and movement of traffic, including the development of access control plans for these facilities.
2. Plan for extension of major arterials and other roads as necessary to complete connections, provide for appropriate routes for trucks and emergency vehicles, and serve planned development areas.
3. Consider future road locations, extensions, connections, accesses, address intersection deficiencies, sight distances, and turning movements when reviewing development plans and proposals.
4. Work with Wood County, The Village of Port Edwards and the Town of Port Edwards to plan for a network of interconnected new roads in planned development areas to control highway access and improve access to these areas.
5. Work with rail service providers and users to address facility or service issues in order to maintain safe and efficient rail operations in the City.

6. Avoid land uses that generate heavy traffic on roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use.
7. Incorporate pedestrian and on-street bicycle accommodations into all reconstruction and new construction projects, particularly for classified roadways and highways.
8. Evaluate areas where speeding is a concern, and identify measures to address safety concerns.



- |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Minor Civil Divisions     | <b>Functional Class</b> |
| Project Area              | Local Roads             |
| Water                     | Collector               |
| Railroad                  | Major Collector         |
| <b>DOT Traffic Counts</b> | Minor Arterial          |
| 999 2008                  | Minor Collector         |
| 999 2005                  | Principal Arterial      |
| 999 2002 or older         |                         |



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.

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Wood Co., WI DOT

Prepared By:  

**North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**  
 210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403  
 715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org

## Chapter 6: Economic Development

## CHAPTER 6: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 6.1 Background

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

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation established 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, two relate directly to economic development:

1. Promoting the expansion and stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels
2. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.

Local, county, regional, and state economic development programs that apply to Nekoosa are identified, as are economic development related issues, and overall goals, objectives and policies.

#### A. Previous Studies

##### 1. Economic Development Plan, 2002

The purpose of the plan is to provide an overall guide to the city’s growth. It has four main sections, including Issue, Opportunities, and Constraints; a Community Profile; a Market Analysis; and Downtown Development.

In addition a variety of “visions” for various types of development were developed as part of this plan. There are three that are still relevant today. They are listed below:

The vision for Commercial Development was “the City supports increased commercial development. This commercial development will provide employment opportunities to the citizens of the region, as well as a larger range of goods.”



The vision for the Industrial Development was “the City supports quality industrial development and diversification within the City and surrounding areas that will create additional tax base and provide well-paying jobs for the citizens.”

The vision for Downtown Redevelopment was “the City supports the redevelopment of the Nekoosa downtown. The downtown should serve as a focal point for the community, as well as a center of commerce and employment.”

## 2. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Wood County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development District, as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA).

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWPRC) is the agency that is responsible for maintaining that federal designation. As part of maintaining that designation, the NCWPRC annually prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report. The report serves to summarize and assess economic development activities of the past year, and present new and modified program strategies for the upcoming year.

The CEDS identified three major goals, these are:

Promote expansion and diversification of the Regional economy to provide a range of employment opportunities and increase tax base.

Develop pro-business policies and programs to attract businesses and to foster an entrepreneurially supportive environment.

Identify and encourage partnerships between the public and private sector to identify skills and knowledge needed for emerging sectors.

### B. Economic Development Issues

Several issues have been identified during the planning process. These include:

- Change of the Community Business Mix

Over the last several years, the downtown has lost numerous businesses to other areas. Most people are leaving the community to shop.

- Slow Population Growth & Development

Limited population growth and demand for new housing and other related development.

- Loss of High Paying Manufacturing Jobs

Over the last decade, the general economy has changed. Manufacturing jobs, especially those in the paper sector, have been lost, and the pay scales of the jobs that have been created recently are not at the same pay level.

- Lack of Four Lane Access

The city is not connected to the four-lane transportation network. This can hinder potential businesses from looking to locate in Nekoosa.

- Road Load Limits

On Highway 173 by CTH G there are load limits posted which create some issues for trucking during a portion of the year.

## 6.2 Inventory and Trends

The City of Nekoosa is part of the Wood County economy; therefore, this chapter begins with a review of county level data. The county level is also the primary data level for economic data.

### A. Wood County

The following section reviews the twelve major Industry Sectors, as categorized by the U.S. Census Bureau. This data includes both the decennial Census, which is only collected and released on a ten-year cycle, and the American Community Survey (ACS), which is based on three survey data.

#### 1. Industry Sectors

There are twelve basic sectors that are used to classify employment by the Census. Some definitions change from time to time, but they are: public administration; agriculture, forestry and fishing; mining; construction; manufacturing; transportation and communications; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance, insurance and real estate; education, health and social services; business, personal and entertainment services; and other. Table 1 displays 2000 and 2010 employment by industry sector for the entire County.

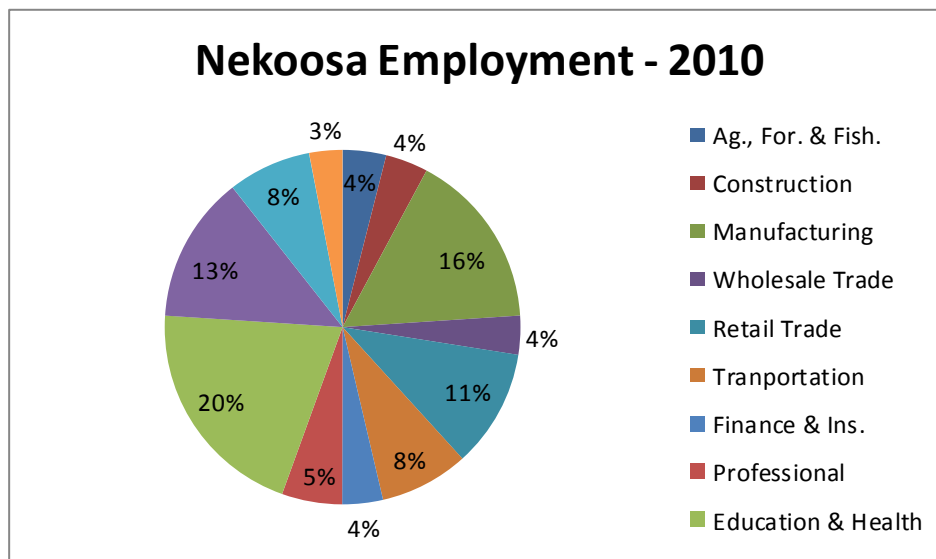
In 2000, there were over 37,000 persons employed in the county. The largest sector was manufacturing, followed by education, health, and social services, and retail trade. By 2010, overall employment decline by 2 percent to 36,591. There was also a change in the top three sectors. Manufacturing fell from one to two and Education, Health and Social Services went from two to one. Meanwhile retail slipped out of the top three and was replaced by Business, Personal, and Entertainment (including Eating and Accommodations).

In 2010, total employment for residents was 1,189. This makes up approximately 3 percent of total county employment. The top three local sectors are Educational Services (20%), Manufacturing (16%), and Business Services and Entertainment, including Eating and Accommodations (13%).

**Table 1:  
Employment by Industry, Wood County**

Sector	2000	2010	2000 to 2010 % Change
Public Administration	980	820	-16%
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	1,321	1,557	18%
Mining	NA	NA	
Construction	2,333	2,141	-8%
Manufacturing	9,144	7,114	-22%
Transportation and Communications	2,266	1,954	-14%
Wholesale Trade	929	829	-11%
Retail Trade	5,150	3,626	-30%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	1,471	1,580	7%
Education, Health and Social Services	8,558	9,912	16%
Business, Personal and Entertainment Services	3,825	5,250	37%
Other	1,368	1,808	32%
County Totals:	37,345	36,591	-2%

Source: US Census 2000 & 2010 (ACS)



## 2. Employment Facilities

The city has a variety of infrastructure amenities resources in place to maintain and expand its economic base for business development, including:

- A fully serviced 40 acre business park. (See attachment).
- Transportation access to County Highways and State Highways 73 and 173.
- Commercial service is provided by Central Wisconsin Airport in Mosinee (about 50 miles away). Alexander Field is a local public-use airport with a 6,000-foot runway suitable for commercial and freight service. It is classified as a Basic Utility – B Airport.
- Class 1 rail service is available from Canadian Pacific Railroad.
- Telephone, cable, internet, and fiber optics.
- Water, sanitary sewer, and local roads throughout the city.

## 3. Local Economic Development Capacity

Beyond the City, there are three primary economic development organizations that serve the community. These are: the Nekoosa Area Community Development Authority, the Heart of Wisconsin Business Alliance, and Incourage.

### Nekoosa CDA

The Community Development Authority activities center on Housing, Economic and Community Development, and Redevelopment. This entity was created under 66.4325 and 66.436, of Wisconsin Statutes. They are authorized to transact business and exercise any and all powers granted to a CDA under the Community Development Authority Law as amended from time to time for the purpose of carrying out blight elimination, slum clearance, urban renewal programs and projects and housing projects.

The Community Development Authority consists of seven residents having sufficient ability and varied experience in the fields of urban renewal, community development and housing. The CDA is an advisory body and mainly has a role in the CDBG housing rehabilitation program.

## Heart of Wisconsin Business Alliance

The Heart of Wisconsin Business and Economic Alliance, or HOW, receives financial support from annual membership dues, local government funding, public and private grants, sponsorships, program revenues and more. HOW serves as a first contact for business resource assistance, maintains the Nekoosa revolving loan fund, provides entrepreneurial training, and either sponsors or participates in several economic development workshops each year. The Wood County Board of Supervisors, through their Conservation, Education, and Economic Development Committee, provides financial support to HOW and County supervisors and staff members participate on various HOW-sponsored committees and events.

## Incorporate (formerly the South Wood County Foundation)

Community Foundation of Greater South Wood County is now called Incorporate. Their mission is to leverage resources and empower people in ways that create connected strategies with the intent to advance opportunities for all. They work to transform local culture and invigorate civic engagement in southern Wood County's rural cities, villages and towns with a combined population of 40,000. They also leverage resources and empower people in ways that provide opportunities for all. The overall mission is promote strategic philanthropy, build social capital, and leverage community resources for the common good.

## 4. Economic Development Programs

The following is a brief listing of county, regional, state, and federal resources and programs to assist economic development efforts in the region. This list is only a summary of some of the programs available, and provides the most current program information. The reader should seek current information on any of the programs listed.

### A. County

The county does not have a countywide economic development corporation, but rather a Marshfield area organization and a South Wood County area organization (see HOW above). Both groups were formed to provide assistance to economic development in their respective areas. Until recently Wood County operated a county-wide revolving loan fund. Those funds have been merged into a new multi-county fund called the Central Wisconsin Economic Development (CWED) Fund. The local contact remains Wood County Planning.

## B. Regional

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is a designated Economic Development District (EDD) by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Under this designation, the Commission maintains a continuous process of planning assistance that supports the formulation and implementation of economic development programs designed to create or retain full-time permanent jobs.

The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) is a regional organization created for the purpose of managing a regional revolving loan fund. The Corporation is comprised of the following counties: Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas and Wood.

## C. State

### 1. Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

WEDC is the state's primary agency for the delivery of integrated services for business development. The following is a listing of the four major program categories, these are: Business Development, Community Development, International Business Development, and Entrepreneur and Innovation.

- Business Development:

Bond Issuance Costs Assistance - Industrial Revenue Bond Issuance Costs Assistance funds are available as short-term loans to help defray the additional up-front costs of issuing a tax-exempt bond for private purposes. This program is for applicants utilizing either Industrial Revenue Bonds or Midwestern Disaster Area Bonds.

Bond Volume Cap Allocation - Bonds are an economic development tool that can be used to stimulate capital investment and job creation by providing private borrowers with access to financing at a significantly lower interest rate where other types of financial assistance are not available.

Community Development Block Grant - Economic Development Capital Financing (ED Loans) - CDBG-ED Loans available to assist with working capital, equipment purchases, and training costs.

WEDC Direct Funding (Loans) - Direct Funding (loans) to businesses. WEDC Direct Funding loan funds will be made available for working capital, equipment, training, building construction and improvements, land acquisition, private infrastructure improvements, asset acquisition, and lease payment reduction for property owners.

WEDC should not be considered a source of primary financing given the high level of demand and the limited funds available.

Economic Development Tax Credit - Economic Development Tax Credit projects must meet specific requirements. Businesses located in or relocating to Wisconsin may be eligible for Economic Development Tax Credits. A certified business may qualify for tax credits only for eligible activities that occur after an eligibility date established by WEDC. Positions that are created as a result of the tax credits claimed shall be maintained for at least five years after the certification date established by WEDC.

Jobs Tax Credit - Jobs Tax Credit projects must meet specific requirements. Businesses located in or relocating to Wisconsin that are creating full-time jobs may be eligible for Jobs Tax Credits. A certified business may qualify for tax credits only for eligible activities that occur after an eligibility date established by WEDC. Positions that are created as a result of the tax credits claimed shall be maintained for at least five years after the certification date established by WEDC. Special consideration for Jobs Tax Credits is given to manufacturing businesses.

WEDC Training Grant - The WEDC Training Grant aids businesses in workforce retention and expansion into new markets and technology. The program provides grant funds to businesses to upgrade or improve the job-related skills of a business's full-time employees. Grant funds may be approved for eligible training provided to existing and new employees in full-time jobs.

- Community Development:

Brownfield Grant - WEDC will grant funds to local governments, businesses, non-profits and individuals for redeveloping commercial and industrial sites that have been adversely affected by environmental contamination. WEDC will provide assistance for redevelopment activities that are extraordinarily costly and difficult to finance through the private sector.

Brownfield Site Assessment Grant Program - WEDC will grant funds to local governments to perform environmental investigations, demolition of structures, removal of abandoned containers and underground tank systems. The primary purpose of the program is to identify and quantify the degree and extent of soil and groundwater contamination.

Capacity Building Grants - Capacity Building (CAP) Grant funds assist local and regional economic development groups, furthering the efforts of WEDC to create an advanced economic development network within the state. These funds are for assessments of the economic competitiveness of the area; development of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; support of strategies that will benefit the organizations or their



members through operational efficiencies, strategy development, education/skill development or increased collaboration with other organizations.

Community Development Block Grant Programs require that projects must meet one of the national objectives of benefitting low and moderate income persons; addressing an urgent local need; or preventing or removing slum or blight.

Community Development Block Grant - Public Facilities Economic Development (CDBG-PFED) - CDBG-PFED funds available to local governments to increase the capacity of local infrastructure systems when project implementation will result in full-time job creation or retention, and local investment by local businesses.

Community Development Block Grant - Public Facilities (CDBG-PF) - CDBG-PF funds available to local governments to increase the capacity of local infrastructure systems; expand services offered to local citizens through construction or expansion of eligible public facilities; or prevent or remove slum and blight.

Community Development Block Grant - Planning Grants (CDBG-PLNG) - CDBG-PLNG funds available to local governments for slum and blight elimination planning; community-wide economic development plans; or local business promotion planning.

Downtown Development - WEDC manages the Wisconsin Main Street Program. WEDC selects communities to join the program. These communities receive technical support and training needed to restore their Main Streets to centers of community activity and commerce.

- International Business Development:

Export Technical Assistance - WEDC's with exporters to assess the demand for Wisconsin-made products outside of the U.S. and help plan a firm's approach to international markets; introduce Wisconsin businesses to potential customers, distributors, or partners; and support service providers here in Wisconsin who can assist in developing profitable international transactions.

Export Development Grant - This grant is designed to help small-medium sized companies become export-ready and to assist them in developing the internal competence to enter and expand into global markets.

International Market Access Grant - This grant is for reimbursement of expenses associated with exhibiting at an approved trade show in a foreign market, participating in a matchmaker trade delegation program or certified trade mission, website and literature and consulting services needed to meet international product certification requirements.

- Entrepreneur and Innovation:

Angel and Early State Seed Investment Tax Credits - The Angel Investment and Venture Capital Tax Credit programs are designed to encourage investment in small, high-technology businesses that have high growth potential. Angel investors, angel investment networks and venture capital seed funds may qualify for Wisconsin tax credits by investing in these designated companies. Early-stage businesses conducting pre-commercialization activities related to proprietary technology may be designated as Qualified New business Ventures.

Technology Development Loans - WEDC provides loans to Wisconsin companies to facilitate research and development and commercialization of innovative technology products.

## 2. Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Workforce Development offers several programs in the area of workforce investment, including adult apprenticeship programs in construction, services, and industrial/manufacturing activities, vocational rehabilitation, employee training, and child care, to name a few.

## 3. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The DNR Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment provides a comprehensive, streamlined program that consolidates state and federal cleanups into one program (e.g., hazardous waste cleanup, underground storage tank investigation and cleanup, spill response, state-funded clean ups, and brownfield sites). Assistance is also provided to businesses seeking to clean up and re-use existing brownfield sites for commercial, public, or green space uses.

The DNR also inventories brownfield sites through their Tracking System (BRRTS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) registry. These databases connect to statewide information about contaminated sites, spills, cleanups, and other data.

## D. Federal

Economic Development Administration (EDA): The EDA is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Its programs target areas that demonstrate need or economic distress. The Public Works program strives to revitalize, expand, or upgrade the area's physical

infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long-term, private sector jobs and investment. Examples of past investments include water and sewer facilities, industrial access roads, rail spurs, port improvements, skill-training facilities, technology related infrastructure, as well as the demolition, renovation, and construction of publicly owned facilities. This program awarded the Nekoosa \$1 million for the Business Park.

**U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA):** The SBA provides financial, technical, and management assistance to help citizens start, run, and grow their businesses. The SBA has many programs focused primarily on making business loans, and providing counseling and training programs for small businesses.

The SBA's Certified Development Company (504) Loan Program provides growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and buildings. 504 loans can be used to fund land purchases and improvements, grading, street improvements, utilities, parking lots and landscaping, construction of new facilities, or modernization, renovation, or conversion of existing facilities. A Certified Development Company (CDC) is a nonprofit corporation set up to contribute to the economic development of its community. The region utilizes the statewide Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation to access this program.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development:** RD provides a wide range of programs to assist in community and economic development in farm and rural areas across the nation. While the USDA's housing, empowerment, and utility programs are beneficial to the stability of communities, it is their business and cooperative programs that are the most directly applied to economic development.

The Business and Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program – B&I helps create jobs and stimulates rural economies by providing financial backing for rural businesses. This program provides guarantees up to 90 percent of a loan made by a commercial lender. Loan proceeds may be used for working capital, machinery and equipment, buildings and real estate, and certain types of debt refinancing. The primary purpose is to create and maintain employment and improve the economic climate in rural communities.

The Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) – IRP finances business facilities and community development projects in rural areas. This is achieved through loans made by the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) to intermediaries. Intermediaries re-lend funds to ultimate recipients for business facilities or community development. Intermediaries establish revolving loan funds so collections from loans made to ultimate recipients in excess of necessary operating expenses and debt payments will be used for more loans to ultimate recipients.

The Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) Program – available to public bodies, private nonprofit corporations, and federally-recognized Indian tribal groups to finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private business enterprises, located in areas outside the boundary of a city or unincorporated areas of 50,000 or more, and its immediately adjacent urbanized or urbanizing area.

The Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) – RBOG promotes sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. This is accomplished by making grants to pay costs of providing economic planning for rural communities, technical assistance for rural businesses, or training for rural entrepreneurs or economic development officials.

### **6.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies**

The following goals, objectives and policies relate to economic development.

#### Goals:

1. Maintain, diversify, and expand the local and regional economy.
2. Preserve and enhance the quality of life in the community.
3. Encourage and support coordination of economic development efforts throughout the county and region.

#### Objectives:

1. Promote the retention and expansion of the current economic base.
2. Encourage the creation of new local businesses.
3. Promote and assist the relocation of new businesses.

#### Policies:

1. Maintain a website presence for the City as related to economic development information.
2. Market available sites and buildings via WEDC's LocateinWisconsin program.
3. Work closely with Heart of Wisconsin and Incurage related to economic development.
4. Evaluate and maintain infrastructure and services necessary for business and industrial uses.
5. Plan for an adequate supply of land for commercial and industrial needs.

## Chapter 7: Land Use

## **CHAPTER 7: LAND USE**

### **7.1 Background**

This is the seventh of nine chapters that comprise the City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan. The land use section brings together all of the previous sections of the plan to create a future land use plan for the community.

There are 14 state planning goals contained in the Comprehensive Planning Legislation. All of these goals can be related to land-use planning, with three being directly related. These 3 land-use planning goals are:

1. Encouragement of land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs.
2. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities
3. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.

The Land Use Chapter brings together all of the chapters.

#### **A. Previous Plans and Studies**

Few plans related to land use have been adopted over the last several years. Wood County's Comprehensive Plan and some of the surrounding communities are briefly reviewed here.

##### **1. Wood County Comprehensive Plan**

Wood County adopted a county-wide plan in 2009 and was prepared by the County Planning and Zoning Department. The County Plan covers the nine required chapters and establishes a variety of goals, objectives and policies for each. The focus of the plan is on the unincorporated areas of the county as well as county level issues. The plan document can be found on the county website.

## 2. Comprehensive Plan: Township of Port Edwards

The Town of Port Edwards surrounds most of the city. They worked with Wood County Planning and Zoning to develop a plan in 2008. The document provides a variety of data as well as an inventory of community related information. The 2010 population is about 1,800.

The town is dominated by natural resource related land uses such as agriculture and forestry. Only about 2 percent of the land is used for residential. A major objective stated in the plan is for “the town to cooperate with neighboring municipalities and school districts when such cooperation and shared services are cost-effective and economical.” Another stated objective is to maintain its “rural character.”

### B. Land Use Issues

The following are some issues that have been identified during the planning process:

- Downtown Revitalization

This is a major area of concern. This is more fully discussed in the Economic Development Chapter of the Plan.

- Housing Stock Maintenance

There are several neighborhoods that are beginning to show signs of age and disrepair, and the traditional commercial areas have also seen some decline. Many of these areas may need some assistance to revitalize.

- Land for Growth

There is a lack of quality developable land for expansion within the City. For the City to expand it may need to go beyond its current boundaries and into the town. Even within the town there are issues with wetlands.

### C. Existing Land Use Tools

To implement the recommendations of the comprehensive plan there are some basic tools that are available to the city. These are zoning, subdivision ordinance, and official mapping.



## 1. Zoning

Zoning is the major tool used to regulate land uses and to implement a comprehensive plan. The zoning ordinance regulates the use of property to advance the public health, safety, and welfare. A zoning ordinance creates different use zones or districts within a community. Each district has a list of permitted uses, which are uses that are desirable in a district. Each district may also contain a list of special uses, sometimes called special exceptions or conditional uses, which are allowed under certain circumstances, and require review by a local body in order to be allowed. All other uses are prohibited.

Zoning regulations are adopted by local ordinance and consist of two basic things, a map, and related text. The zoning map displays the zoning district boundaries, and the text describes what can be done in each type of district. Zoning is the legal tool to regulate specific land uses.

Zoning should be derived from, and be consistent with, the policy recommendations adopted in the comprehensive plan. The desired land uses should drive the development of specific zoning ordinance provisions including district descriptions, permitted uses, conditional uses, and the zoning map.

## 2. Land Division

Land division or subdivision regulations relate to the way in which land is divided and made ready for development. A well administered subdivision control is more useful in achieving planning goals, and its influence is far more lasting. Once land is divided into lots and streets are laid out, development patterns are set. Subdivision regulations can ensure that those development patterns are consistent with community standards. Subdivision regulations can also ensure the adequacy of existing and planned public facilities such as schools, wastewater treatment systems, and water supply, to handle new growth.

Under Wisconsin law, the city has authority to provide extraterritorial review of subdivision requests in the surrounding towns within one and one-half miles of its corporate limits.

## 3. Official Mapping

Cities may adopt official maps. These maps, adopted by ordinance or resolution, may show existing and planned streets, highways, historic districts, parkways, parks, playgrounds, railroad rights of way, waterways, and public transit facilities. No building

permit may be issued to construct or enlarge any building within the limits of these mapped areas except pursuant to conditions identified in the law.

Official maps are not used frequently because few communities plan anything but major thoroughfares and parks in detail, in advance of the imminent development of a subdivision.

#### 4. Other Tools:

##### Extra-territorial Zoning Jurisdiction

Wisconsin Statute, 66.23(7a), allows a first, second or third class city to adopt zoning in Town territory, 3 miles beyond a city's corporate limits. Extra-territorial zoning is a tool that might be worth considering.

To do this, however, it requires a lengthy three-step process, including the creation of a joint committee consisting of representatives from the city and the town(s). This joint committee prepares a proposed plan and regulations for the extraterritorial area, and submits it to the city, which may adopt it as proposed, or resubmit the proposal to the joint committee for changes. In either case, the proposed regulations must receive a favorable majority vote from the joint committee before the city can adopt them.

##### Extra-territorial Plat Review

Under Wisconsin Statute, 236.10, cities and villages are allowed to exercise its extraterritorial plat review authority in the same geographic area as defined within the extraterritorial zoning statute. However, extraterritorial zoning requires town approval of the zoning ordinance, while extraterritorial plat approval applies automatically if the city or village adopts a subdivision ordinance or official map. Towns do not approve the subdivision ordinance for the city or village. Currently, the city does not exercise extra-territorial plat review.

The purpose of both extraterritorial plat review and zoning is to help cities and villages influence the development pattern of areas outside their boundaries that will likely be annexed in the future. This helps cities and villages protect land use near its boundaries from conflicting uses outside its limits.

## 7.2 Inventory & Trends

This section describes the general existing land uses in the city, identifies future demands for land, reviews land values, and outlines a future land use for the city. It also identifies goals, objectives, and policies related to land use.

### A. Existing Land Use

The City of Nekoosa is located on the banks of the Wisconsin River, and is surrounded mainly by the Town of Port Edwards, and a small boundary with the Village of Port Edwards. Within the city, commercial development is concentrated along Market Street. Industrial uses are located throughout the community. The Domtar Mill Dominates the downtown area along the river. Residential development is concentrated in most areas of the city. The city is surrounded by agricultural uses, scattered residential, woodlands, and open space.

The planning process requires that the existing land use information be inventoried and categorized by general use. In this case, ten basic uses were identified. They are: agriculture (which includes cranberry bogs), commercial, governmental, industrial, open lands, outdoor recreation, residential, transportation, woodlands, and water. To collect this information, the process began by interpreting 2010 air photos to create an existing land use map. Members of the Plan Commission and city staff verified and corrected it with review of the initial maps. See the Existing Land Use Map.

Once the map was finalized, total acres for each of the generalized land use categories was calculated using GIS software. Woodlands make up about 37 percent of the community, followed closely by open lands with 22 percent. Residential uses make up 14 percent of the area. See the Existing Land Use Table.

**Table 1:  
Existing Land Use, 2011**

Land Use Type	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	134	6.3%
Commercial	38	1.8%
Governmental	107	5.0%
Industrial	56	2.6%
Open Lands	483	22.5%
Outdoor Recreation	25	1.2%
Residential	308	14.3%
Transportation	159	7.4%
Woodlands	798	37.1%
Water	42	2.0%
<b>Total Acres*</b>	<b>2,150</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: NCWRPC GIS

(\* These calculations are derived from 2010 air photos and generalized planning maps)

**B. Land Use Supply**

Currently there are roughly 1,200 acres of land available (woodlands and open lands) within the city, however, there are numerous sensitive environmental concerns, such as wetlands, making much of these areas not suitable or desirable for development.

The City does have a 40 acre Business Park with available space.

**C. Land Values**

Overall assessment values, which include both land and improvements, in the city have increased about 4 percent over the last five years; however, not all categories of land increased equally. Residential property values increased by 7 percent and commercial values increased by 8 percent, however, manufacturing decreased by 13 percent. Land accounted for about 11 percent of total value. See the Table 2.

**Table 2:  
Assessment Values**

<b>Type of Property</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Residential	\$61,183,100	\$65,537,000	7.1%
Commercial	\$12,406,600	\$13,479,700	8.6%
Manufacturing	\$14,011,200	\$12,131,900	-13.4%
Agricultural	\$12,200	\$8,600	-29.5%
Undeveloped	\$101,400	\$99,600	-1.9%
Forest	\$229,600	\$243,100	6%
Other	\$355,800	\$374,600	5.3%
<b>Total Value:</b>	<b>\$88,299,900</b>	<b>\$91,874,500</b>	<b>4%</b>

Source: WI DOR, Statement of Assessment Values, 2005 & 2010.

Over that same period, Wood County had an overall increase in value over 19 percent. County wide, residential increase was 20 percent, commercial increase was 23 percent, and manufacturing decreased 19 percent. Land accounted for about 21 percent of the total value.

**D. Land Use Demand**

Based on previous land demands in the community, and population projections there appears to be sufficient lands for growth. In 2010 the U.S. Census stated a population of 2,580 for the city. Wisconsin Department of Administration prepares population projections for all communities in the state. These projections extend to 2030. The 2030 projected population for Nekoosa is 2,686, which is an increase of about 4 percent over the next twenty years. Note that these projections were completed prior to the release of the 2010 Census information which will likely decrease these numbers.

**E. Redevelopment and Infill Opportunities**

The downtown retail areas and some of the older residential districts in the city are beginning to show some signs of deterioration. As new development occurs on the fringes of the community, it is important that the city continue to focus efforts to maintain the vitality of the existing commercial and residential areas.

In 2002 the city had an in-depth economic development study completed for the community. That study examined several topics including brownfield development. At

the time 49 sites were identified in the city. Some of these sites would be desirable for redevelopment. There are also scattered vacant lots throughout the city that could be developed for a variety of uses, including residential.

That same study also identified 1<sup>st</sup> Street as a critical area to develop related to the downtown. The area is seen as being underutilized, but with a great deal of potential because of its close proximity to Market Street and the STH 73 Bridge.

#### F. Future Land Use Growth Areas

The City of Nekoosa has had an established land use pattern for many years. There has not been substantial change and there is no substantial change expected in the near future. A current zoning map is displayed indicating anticipated land uses in the city.

### 7.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

The following are the goals, objectives, and policies identified for land use.

#### Goals:

1. Create an efficient and environmentally sustainable land use development pattern.
2. Support a downtown that provides economic, residential, and cultural opportunities in the heart of the city.
3. Maintain parks, recreational facilities, and open space for the benefit, enjoyment, health, and well-being of Nekoosa' residents.
4. Encourage collaboration between the City and neighboring jurisdictions with regard to planning initiatives, development policies, and sustainable activities.

#### Objectives:

1. Encourage compact, mixed-use development patterns to utilize existing public facilities to serve new development whenever possible.
2. Direct new development to areas appropriate for those uses.
3. Ensure that schools, parks, playgrounds, and similar activity centers are well served by sidewalks and bicycle routes.
4. Provide safe and convenient access between neighborhoods, employment centers, schools, service centers, and recreational centers.
5. Utilize the river corridor for multi-use trail development.

#### Policies:

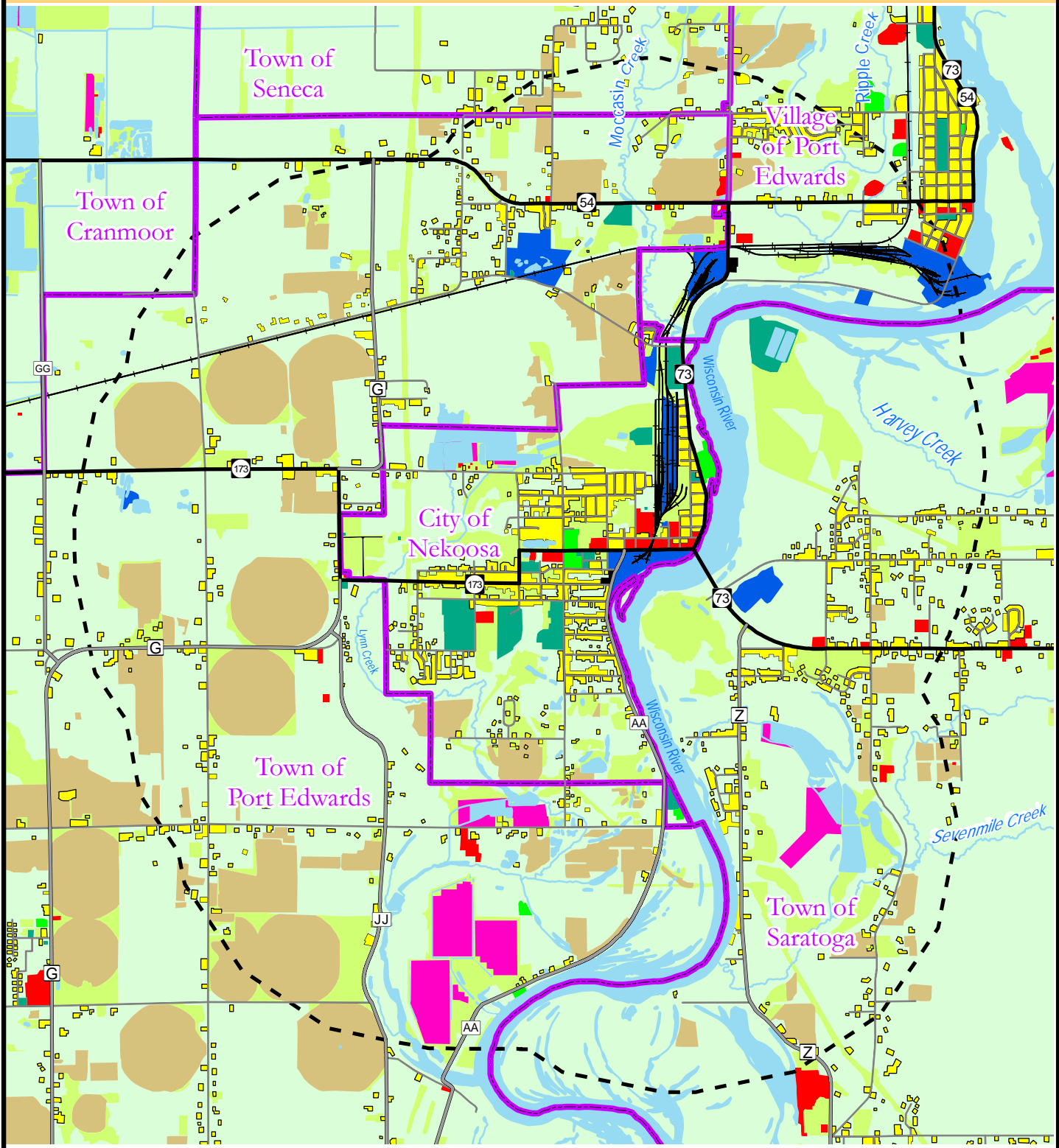
1. Use the City's zoning, subdivision, and official mapping powers to protect waterways, shorelines, wetlands, and floodplain areas.
2. Officially map future transportation routes throughout the planning area, including a comprehensive network of sidewalk and bicycle routes.

3. Encourage the clean up of contaminated sites that threaten public health, safety and welfare.
4. Create and enforce property maintenance codes to maintain neighborhood quality and tax base stability.

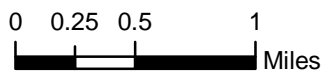


# City of Nekoosa - Wood County, Wisconsin

# Existing Land Use



- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| US Highway            | Cranberry Bog      |
| State Highways        | Governmental       |
| County Highways       | Industrial         |
| Local Roads           | Open Lands         |
| Minor Civil Divisions | Outdoor Recreation |
| Railroad              | Transportation     |
| Project Area          | Residential        |
| Agriculture           | Water              |
| Commercial            | Woodlands          |



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.

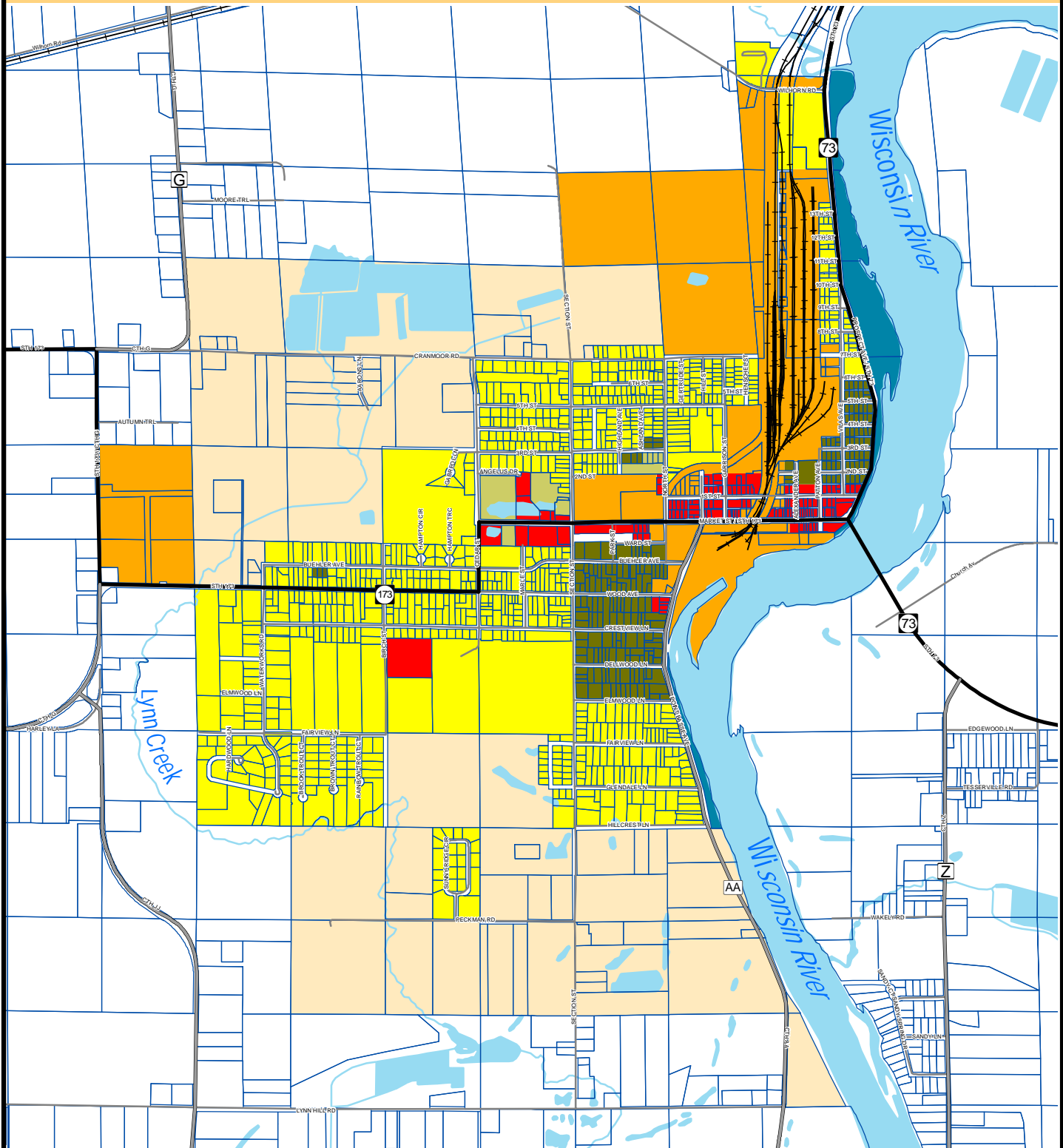
Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Wood Co., 2008 Airphoto Interpretation



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

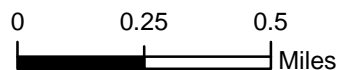
210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403  
 715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org

# City of Nekoosa - Wood County, Wisconsin Anticipated Land Use Areas



### Current Zoning

- A-1, Agricultural
- B-1, Central Business
- FW, Floodway
- M-1, Industrial
- R-1, One Family Residential
- R-2, Two Family Residential
- R-3, Multi Family Residential



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Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Wood Co., 2008 Airphoto Interpretation



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

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

## **Chapter 8: Intergovernmental Cooperation**

## **CHAPTER 8: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

### **8.1 Background**

This is the eighth of nine chapters in the City's Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this chapter is to overview intergovernmental cooperation, review some existing cooperative efforts and identify some potential efforts, and establish goals, objectives, and policies to promote intergovernmental cooperation.

As discussed earlier, the City is surrounded mainly by the Town of Port Edwards and a small part with the Village of Port Edwards, as well as being part of Wood County. All of these are important intergovernmental relationships for the Town. Efforts should be made to maintain good working relationships with the surrounding towns, city, and County.

#### **A. Benefits**

State-wide, there are over 2,500 units of government and special purpose districts. Having so many 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.

The issue of intergovernmental cooperation is increasingly important; since many issues cross over political boundaries, such as labor force, commuting patterns, housing, and economic issues. Communities are dependent on each other. The effects from growth and change on one spill over to all surrounding communities and impact the region as a whole.

There are many reasons for intergovernmental cooperation. Some examples include:

- **Trust:** Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions. 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.

- **Cost Savings:** Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Cooperation can enable some communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly.
- **Consistency:** Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.
- **Address Regional Issues:** Communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues, which are regional in nature.

The major beneficiaries of intergovernmental cooperation are local residents. 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.

## B. Tools of Intergovernmental Cooperation

There are a variety of tools that can be used in the area of intergovernmental cooperation.

- **Shared Service Agreements**

Wisconsin Statute s.66.0301, formerly 66.30, entitled "Intergovernmental Cooperation"; does enable local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Typically, intergovernmental cooperation and coordination refers to the management and delivery of public services and facilities. It is also dependent upon a defined geographic area within which cooperation and coordination may be feasible.

Intergovernmental agreements prepared using this statute, are the most common form 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 have to be accomplished through the normal annexation process. Shared service agreements are utilized to allow this type of cooperation.

- **Boundary Agreements**

Under Section 66.0307, Wisconsin Statutes, municipalities may prepare cooperative boundary plans or agreements. Each city, village, or town that intends to participate in the preparation of a cooperative plan must adopt a resolution authorizing its participation in the planning process.

Cooperative boundary plans or agreements involve decisions regarding the maintenance or change of municipal boundaries for a period of 10 years or more. The cooperative plan must include: a plan for the physical development of the territory covered by the plan. It must also include: a schedule for changes to the boundary, plans for the delivery of services, an evaluation of environmental features and a description of any adverse environmental consequences that may result from the implementation of the plan, and it must address the need for safe and affordable housing. The participating communities must hold a public hearing prior to its adoption.

Once adopted, the plan must be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Administration for state approval. Upon approval, the cooperative plan has the force and effect of a contract. Working with the town, the city could use this tool to establish boundaries in certain areas where it is logical and in the best interest to do so from a planning and service delivery standpoint.

## 8.2 Inventory & Trends

The following is a summary of existing and potential intergovernmental cooperative efforts with various levels of government:

### A. Adjacent Local Governments

Currently there are multiple agreements in place, including mutual aid agreements with surrounding communities. This is an area with potential for more.

### B. County

Wood County provides a variety of services to the residents of Nekoosa. The County directly or indirectly provides a number of services to the City and its residents and the City enjoys a good working relationship with many of the responsible departments. These departments include Highways, Sheriff, and Land Records, among others.

In many cases where state and federal agencies require area-wide planning for various programs or regulations, the 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 Federal Emergency Management Agency in order for individual local units of government to qualify for certain types of disaster assistance funding.

### C. School Districts

The City is within the Nekoosa School District and the Mid-State Technical College district. See the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter for additional information.

### D. 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. The Town is a member of the NCWRPC. 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. Membership in the NCWRPC also includes being part of the Economic Development District or EDD. Participation with EDD makes the community eligible for grant assistance for the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. These relationships lead to funding for the City's business park.

## E. State and Federal Government

The Wisconsin departments of Natural Resources and Transportation are the primary agencies the City might deal with regarding development activities. Many of the goals and objectives of this plan will 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, 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. Examples include local road aids, the Local Roads Improvement Program (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). Many federal programs are administered by the states, so the City would be dealing with the responsible state agency with regard to federal programs and regulations.

## F. Trends

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

- Local governments financial situation;
- Opportunity to reduce costs by working together;
- Elimination of duplication of services;
- Population settlement patterns and population mobility;
- Economic and environmental interdependence; and

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



### **8.3 Goal, Objectives & Policies**

As in the previous chapters of this plan, a series of goals, objectives, and policies are identified.

#### Goal:

1. Seek mutually beneficial cooperation with all levels of government.

#### Objectives:

1. Maintain current agreements and explore additional opportunities with adjacent communities for services.
2. Work cooperatively with neighboring communities.

#### Policies:

1. Continue dialogue with surrounding communities and the county to review service agreements and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
2. Work to develop long-term cooperative boundary agreements with the town.
3. Investigate cost sharing or contracting with neighboring communities and the County to provide more efficient service or public utilities.

## Chapter 9: Implementation

## **CHAPTER 9: IMPLEMENTATION**

This is the final chapter of the City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan. This chapter outlines plan adoption, plan review, plan amendments, plan updates, and implementation. This chapter also includes the recommended steps to implement this plan.

The City Council, Plan Commission, and other various committees, boards, and commissions should use the Comprehensive Plan to guide the physical development of the City. The plan also touches on a variety of other City functions and may be valuable to those efforts as well.

### **9.1 PLAN ADOPTION**

The adoption process requires that the Plan Commission develop and review the Comprehensive Plan, and pass a “resolution” to recommend the adoption of the plan to the City Council. That recommendation is forwarded to the City Council who must hold a public hearing to solicit public comment prior to adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by “ordinance”. That public hearing must be advertised with at least 30 days notice.

Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local growth and development decisions over the next 10 years or more. The adopted plan should also be recognized as a tool for communicating the community’s vision related to natural resources, housing, utilities & community facilities, transportation, economic development, intergovernmental cooperation, and land use.

### **9.2 PLAN REVIEW**

Local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be amended or addressed during a future plan update.

As part of the comprehensive planning process, a number of goals, objectives, and policies were developed. These statements are intended to provide direction to local leaders and staff, as well as residents. To measure progress towards meeting these goals, objectives, and policies, a regular plan review should take place from time to time. Therefore, the task to review/measure plan progress, is as simple as determining if any action was taken or not on the various goals, objectives, and policies.

It should be noted that many of the policies identified in the plan are continuous or on-going and should also be monitored to measure the plan's overall success. In addition, many of the objectives and their related actions can be accomplished in the short term, say 1 to 5 years. However, some will take longer to accomplish, say 6 to 10 years or even more.

### **9.3 PLAN AMENDMENTS**

The plan may be amended at any time, if needed, upon the recommendation of the Plan Commission and approval from the City Council following the same statutory process described for initial plan adoption. The procedures are the same regardless of how minor the proposed amendment.

Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change, or an error is discovered. However, frequent changes to accommodate specific development proposals should be avoided. Some reasons for an amendment include:

- ✓ Plan amendment corrects an error made in the original plan
- ✓ A certain goal, objective, or policy is no longer relevant
- ✓ Future land use map is no longer reflective of community desires

The Plan Commission prior to the public hearing and adoption by the City Council must review proposed amendments. The public should be notified of proposed plan changes and allowed an opportunity for review and comment. For major amendments, it may be desirable to solicit public opinion through surveys and/or community meetings prior to the public hearing.

### **9.4 PLAN UPDATES**

According to the State's comprehensive planning law, comprehensive plans must be updated at least once every 10 years. As opposed to the more routine amendments described above, plan updates will probably involve re-writing entire chapters of the plan document. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community's goals and objectives, based upon an analysis of current growth trends and major changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption.

It is important that the public be involved in the update process. To ensure that the public is engaged in plan amendments, the same procedure used for initial plan adoption must be followed. (See State Statute 66.1001).

Upon Plan Commission review and resolution to make recommended changes to the plan, the City Council shall call a public hearing to allow property owners and citizens time to review and comment on recommended plan changes. The public hearing shall be advertised using a Class I notice.

## **9.5 IMPLEMENTATION**

The primary implementation tools for this Plan are the Zoning and Land Division ordinances. These ordinances provide the underlying regulatory framework that supports many of the Plan's policies. Currently the Plan Commission reviews zoning and subdivision applications and makes formal recommendations to the City Council. The Comprehensive Plan should be an important consideration in this process. Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires that a local government's land use related decisions and actions be consistent with that unit's Comprehensive Plan.

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. These regulatory tools are used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development. There is also a non-regulatory approach to implementing the comprehensive plan; this generally involves decisions related to how the community will spend its limited financial resources on staffing and various capital improvements. State law requires that certain programs and/or actions that affect land use must be consistent with the locally adopted comprehensive plan.

The previous chapters of this Plan contain a compilation of programs the Plan Commission may consider in working to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

## **9.6 CONSISTENCY AMONG PLAN CHAPTERS**

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that each of the required chapters will be integrated and made consistent with the other chapters of the plan. Since the City completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap occurs between the nine plan chapters. Where deemed appropriate, certain goals, objectives, and policies have been repeated or restated within multiple chapters of the plan.

This Comprehensive Plan also references previous and current related planning efforts to ensure they are considered in the community's planning and development decisions.

Some recommendations from other plans have been summarized and incorporated in this plan, as deemed appropriate, to foster coordination and consistency between plans.

In the future, as plan amendments occur, it is important that a consistency reviews. These reviews will ensure that the plan is up-to-date. It is also critical that when the plan and/or maps are changed, that these changes do not conflict with other sections of the plan or other maps, or local implementation tools.

## **9.7 RECOMMENDED ACTION STEPS**

This section outlines the steps to implement the goals, objectives, and policies contained in the comprehensive plan. These steps are:

1. The Plan Commission should pass a Resolution recommending adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. The City Council should hold a public hearing and adopt the plan by Ordinance and use it as a guide for decision-making.
3. The City should incorporate changes to its Zoning Ordinance and other implementation tools to establish consistency, as necessary.
4. The City should provide copies of the plan to the surrounding communities, Wood County, School District, State of Wisconsin, and others.
5. The Plan Commission should become knowledgeable of the plan and use it to justify recommendations to the City Council on development issues.
6. The Plan Commission should review the Future Land Use Map at least annually and make necessary amendment recommendations to the City Council.
7. The City should review the plan at least every five years for any major changes, and update the plan at least every ten years.