

# AGENDA

## CONSERVATION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**DATE:** Wednesday, May 7, 2025  
**TIME:** 9:00 a.m.  
**LOCATION:** Courthouse – Room 302

**Join by phone**

+1-408-418-9388 United States Toll  
Meeting number (access code): 2499 560 9631

**Join by WebEx App or Web**

<https://woodcountywi.webex.com/woodcountywi/j.php?MTID=mfc619cc0ecd5ea80b92298456df17692>

Meeting number (access code): 2499 560 9631  
Meeting password: 050725

1. Call meeting to order
2. Declaration of Quorum
3. Public Comments (*brief comments/statement regarding committee business*)
4. Review Correspondence.
5. Approve minutes of previous meetings
6. Approve vouchers, staff reports, & committee reports
7. Risk and Injury Report
8. Extension
  - a. Introduction – Human Development & Relationships Educator, Ben Eberlein
9. Land & Water Conservation Department
  - a. Update on Mill Creek Watershed (Tracy Arnold, County Conservationist – Portage County)
  - b. Brief overview of *Drones & Conservation* presentation at WI Land+Water conference (by Kyle Andreae)
  - c. 2024 LWCD Annual Report (informational)
  - d. Update and potential discussion regarding nitrate well testing project
  - e. Update on ongoing violations
10. Private Sewage
11. Land Records
  - a. 2025 Emergency Services Atlas
12. County Surveyor
13. Planning & Zoning
  - a. Take action on a resolution to amend the Marshfield Sewer Service Area/Water Quality Management Plan 2040
14. Economic Development
  - a. Update on Wood County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Repair Program.
  - b. Update from Village of Port Edwards and consider release of Economic Development grant funds of \$10,000 for the Re-use and Re-development Plan.
  - c. Discussion on Economic Development grant process and criteria.
15. Consider Extension of CEED's prevue to include Sustainability
16. Committee requests for per diem for meeting attendance
17. Schedule next regular committee meeting
18. Agenda items for next meeting
19. Schedule any additional meetings if necessary
20. Adjourn

**MINUTES**  
**CONSERVATION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, April 2, 2025  
**TIME:** 9:00 AM  
**PLACE:** Courthouse – County Board Room #302

Members Present: Bill Leichtnam, Tom Buttke, Wayne Schulz, Russ Perlock, Tim Hovendick (via Webex)

Others Present: See attached sign-in list

1. Chairman Leichtnam called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. and declared a quorum present.
2. Tom Buttke commented that he endorses the well water testing that is being done in Wood County.
3. The minutes of March 5, 2025, were presented. Motion by Buttke/Perlock to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Motion by Schulz/Buttke to approve the vouchers, monthly department reports and committee reports. Motion carried unanimously.
5. FoodWise Educator Hannah Wendels-Scott gave the committee an update on the River Riders and Marshfield Bike Share programs and requested the release of budgeted Economic Development funds in the amount of \$3,000. Motion by Buttke/Perlock to release the funds as requested. Motion carried unanimously.
6. Public Works Director Rick Schmidt and Alderman Larry Krubsack provided an update on the Jim Freeman Boat Launch project and requested the release of budgeted Economic Development funds in the amount of \$18,875. Motion by Schulz/Hovendick to release the funds as requested. Motion carried unanimously.
7. County Surveyor Kevin Boyer updated the committee on the complaint he filed with the Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors Ethics and Standards committee regarding a surveyor that does work in Wood County. Boyer summarized the March 1<sup>st</sup> report he received back from the committee and shared that after meeting with the surveyor and Wood County Corporation Counsel, he is confident that the surveyor in question will improve his work going forward.
8. Boyer reviewed the current contract for maintenance of Public Land Survey System (PLSS) coordinates that Wood County has with Badger-Land Surveying. Motion by Buttke/Schulz to renew the current contract for a two-year term. Motion carried unanimously.
9. Extension area Director Patrick Gatterman introduced himself and provided a brief overview of his background.
10. Gatterman updated the committee on the Human Development & Relationships Educator position. An offer has been extended and accepted. The new hire is scheduled to start on Monday April 21, 2025.
11. County Conservationist Wucherpennig presented the low bid for the Lewis stream bank project. Motion by Buttke/Schulz to approve the low bid from Weichelt of \$108,242.25. Motion carried unanimously.
12. Wucherpennig presented the low bid for the Cutler permanent grazing project. Motion by Buttke/Perlock to approve the low bid from Cutler of \$18,643.94. Motion carried unanimously.

13. Wucherpfennig spoke about the WI Land & Water Budget priorities and the request for increased base funding for Land & Water Conservation staff. Motion by Schulz/Hovendick to approve the resolution to increase base funding for LWCD to \$20.2 million annually. Motion carried unanimously.
14. Wucherpfennig, along with Administrative Specialist Barb Peeters, and Conservation Specialist Kendra Wilhelm, shared information on the current ARPA funded private well water testing that they are providing free to landowners in identified "hot spots" in Wood County. The response has been good with an increased percentage of landowners returning the test kits.
15. Wucherpfennig asked the committee for direction on Wood County Land & Water Conservation using ARPA dollars for the Mill Creek Watershed, outside of county boundaries. Wood County partners with Portage County in reducing phosphorous, nitrogen and sediments in the Mill Creek Watershed. Wood County has been awarded \$1.2 million dollars in grants and has been the financial custodian, whereas Portage County has not made the effort to apply for those grants. The consensus of the committee was to proceed with using ARPA dollars to continue partnering with Portage County on contaminant reductions in the watershed.
16. Wilhelm shared a flyer for the upcoming Central WI Invasive Species Summit on May 20, 2025. Please contact LWCD to register for the summit by May 13, 2025.
17. Wucherpfennig updated the committee on the ongoing Hoffman Dairy violation. Hoffman Dairy has been sold. At the time of the sale, the \$51,000 in forfeitures due, were paid to Wood County. There are no new developments on the Earth Inc. violation.
18. Wucherpfennig reminded the committee about the Central WI Farm Profitability Expo that is scheduled on April 30, 2025, at Mid-State Technical College in Wisconsin Rapids.
19. Planning & Zoning Director Jason Grueneberg shared the date of this year's CEED tour that will take place on Friday September 12, 2025.
20. Grueneberg and Educator Kayla Rombalski shared pictures and a recap of the Villas of Vesper ribbon cutting that took place on March 25, 2025. The event was well attended.
21. Grueneberg went over the benefits of membership with the North Central Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission. The committee chair agreed the membership is invaluable.
22. Lengthy discussion took place regarding the Economic Development grant process and criteria. Discussion of the process and criteria will be ongoing at upcoming CEED meetings.
23. Rombalski gave a brief history of the Pittsville Community Economic Analysis and the Thrive Rural grant. The analysis and grant resulted in Pittsville moving forward with building a new community center and non-profit that will advance the Pittsville area for years to come.
24. Grueneberg advised the committee that the Wood County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) will be shut down and moved to a regional model in an effort to put the under-utilized \$22 million dollars of federal funding to use through regional programs that are already in place.
25. Grueneberg spoke about the Department of Revenue Innovation grants for communities with a population less than 5,000, and whether Wood County is utilizing those funds. Grueneberg and Rombalski intend to sit down and determine if they can assist any small communities in Wood County in applying for these funds. The grant applications are due April 30, 2025.
26. Rombalski requested a release of up to \$500 in REDI funding for an upcoming Founders Network event in the City of Marshfield. Motion by Schulz/Buttke to release funds not to exceed \$250 to Gabrielle Falkey for the sponsorship of an upcoming Founders Network event on April 10, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.

27. Leichtnam and Perlock requested a per diem and mileage for attending the ribbon cutting at Villas of Vesper. Motion by Buttke/Schulz to approve the per diem and mileage as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

28. Chairman Leichtnam declared the meeting adjourned at 11:59 AM.

Minutes taken by Victoria Wilson, Planning & Zoning and are in draft form until approved at the next meeting.



**Conservation, Education, & Economic Development Committee**  
**April 2, 2025**

NAME	REPRESENTING
Larry Korbson	NEKCOSS
RICK SCHMIDT	NEKCOSSA
Bill O'Leary	WCB #15
Wayne Smith	WCB #1
Russ Perlock	WCB #4
Dennis Polach	WCB - #14
Scott Breth	WCB #9
Kendra Wilhelm	LWCD
Barb Peeters	LWCD
Victoria Wilson	P&Z
Jason Grueneberg	P&Z
Bill Leichtnam	WCB #19
Kayla Rombalski	UW Ext
Patrick Gatterman	UW Ext
Hannah Wendels Scott	UW Ext
Kevin Boyer	Surveyor
Via Webex	
Trent Miner	Clerk
Jim Hovendick	WCB #5
Julie Manc	P&Z
Emily Arndt	P&Z
Shane Wucherpfennig	LWCD
Lance Pliml	WCB chair

## Committee Report

County of Wood

Report of claims for: Extension Wood County

For the period of: April 2025

For the range of vouchers: 30250039 - 30250049

Voucher	Vendor Name	Nature of Claim	Doc Date	Amount	Paid
30250039	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	Office Supplies	04/01/2025	\$18.03	P
30250040	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	Office Supplies	04/01/2025	\$23.99	P
30250041	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	Educational Materials	04/01/2025	\$41.37	P
30250042	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	Educational Materials	04/01/2025	\$27.58	P
30250043	STAPLES ADVANTAGE	Office Supplies	04/01/2025	\$43.43	P
30250044	UW MADISON EXTENSION	4H Space Camp Delegate Fee	04/01/2025	\$1,300.00	P
30250045	STRIGEL LAURA	Reimbursement - 4H Materials	04/08/2025	\$100.01	P
30250046	US BANK	April Credit Card Bill	04/22/2025	\$1,547.00	P
30250047	BORES TRINA	April Expenses	04/29/2025	\$86.80	
30250048	MEZA OLGA	March-April Expenses	04/29/2025	\$588.70	
30250049	MITCHELL ANNA M	April Expenses	04/29/2025	\$131.94	
Grand Total:				\$3,908.85	

### Signatures

Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Committee Report

County of Wood

Report of claims for: Land & Water Conservation

For the period of: April 2025

For the range of vouchers: 18250012 - 18250042

Voucher	Vendor Name	Nature of Claim	Doc Date	Amount	Paid
18250012	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer Seed Order	01/06/2025	\$192.60	P
18250013	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer Seed Order	01/24/2025	\$29.70	P
18250014	CHILI IMPLEMENT CO	Parts for no-till drill	04/07/2025	\$140.30	P
18250015	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order - 2025sale	12/11/2024	\$104.40	P
18250016	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order - 2025sale	12/10/2024	\$51.75	P
18250017	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order - 2025sale	12/18/2024	\$155.25	P
18250018	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order - 2025sale	12/30/2024	\$48.15	P
18250019	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order	01/21/2025	\$77.40	P
18250020	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order	01/02/2025	\$141.30	P
18250021	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order-2025 sale	12/10/2024	\$32.40	P
18250022	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order	01/13/2025	\$54.00	P
18250023	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order-2025 sale	12/17/2024	\$54.00	P
18250024	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order-2025 sale	12/26/2024	\$283.50	P
18250025	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order-2025 sale	12/10/2024	\$162.00	P
18250026	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order	01/08/2025	\$153.00	P
18250027	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Customer seed order	01/13/2025	\$162.90	P
18250028	ALTMANN KYLE	NMFE Reimbursement	04/15/2025	\$1,150.00	P
18250029	COENEN JAMES	NFME REIMBURSEMENT	04/15/2025	\$832.00	P
18250030	KLINKHAMMER PAUL	NMFE REIMBURSEMENT	04/15/2025	\$571.00	P
18250031	PEPLINSKI GLEN A	NMFE REIMBURSEMENT	04/15/2025	\$1,150.00	P
18250032	BULGRIN TYLER	NMFE REIMBURSEMENT	04/15/2025	\$1,150.00	P
18250033	GRASSL ALLEN	NMFE REIMBURSEMENT	04/15/2025	\$1,150.00	P
18250034	BEHLEN JOSEPH R	NMFE REIMBURSEMENT	04/15/2025	\$526.00	P
18250035	REIGEL DARRELL	NMFE REIMBURSEMENT	04/15/2025	\$931.00	P
18250036	EMBACHER KEVIN	NMFE REIMBURSEMENT	04/15/2025	\$549.00	P
18250037	ZIMMERMAN BEN	NMFE REIMBURSEMENT	04/15/2025	\$594.00	P
18250038	US BANK	Office/LMPN/Field day supplies	04/17/2025	\$440.46	P
18250039	MARQUETTE COUNTY LWCD	2025 Tree Delivery Fee	04/25/2025	\$325.00	
18250040	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Seed Order	04/14/2025	\$31.50	
18250041	PHEASANTS FOREVER	Seed order	04/15/2025	\$236.70	
18250042	HRAMOR NURSERY	2025 Tree & shrub order	04/01/2025	\$10,942.50	
<b>Grand Total:</b>				<b>\$22,421.81</b>	

Signatures

Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Committee Report

County of Wood

Report of claims for: Planning & Zoning

For the period of: April 2025

For the range of vouchers: 22250023 - 22250029 38250005 - 38250006

Voucher	Vendor Name	Nature of Claim	Doc Date	Amount	Paid
22250023	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	PL-Office Supplies	03/20/2025	\$83.08	P
22250024	MICHAEL BAKER INTERNATIONAL	LR-Prof Services	02/28/2025	\$22,640.00	P
22250025	BOYER KEVIN	SU-Prof Services	04/01/2025	\$1,126.67	P
22250026	AYRES ASSOCIATES INC (Eau Claire)	LR-ARPA Funding	03/28/2025	\$63,000.00	P
22250027	INDUSTRY SERVICES DIVISION	PS-Sanitary Permit Fees	04/01/2025	\$900.00	P
22250028	HENRIKSEN BRYAN	PL-Shoreland Zoning Permits	04/07/2025	\$100.00	P
22250029	US BANK	US Bank Charges LR	04/17/2025	\$246.28	
38250005	CITY OF NEKOOSA TREASURER	ED-Grants, Donations, Contrib	04/04/2025	\$18,875.00	P
38250006	BOWEN NATIONAL RESEARCH LLC	ED-REDI Grant	04/14/2025	\$7,200.00	P
<b>Grand Total:</b>				<b>\$114,171.03</b>	

### Signatures

Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

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Extension Wood County staff led, delivered, planned or collaborated on all of the following activities:

## 4-H POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Laura Huber, 4-H Program Educator  
Olga Meza, Bilingual 4-H Associate Educator  
Trina Bores, 4-H AmeriCorps member

- A series of lessons (Healthy Living/Life Management) for students at River Cities High School, where we engage them in lessons around topics such as budgeting, cooking, nutrition, and basic home repairs, to prepare them for life after high school and help support their overall health and well-being for when they are on their own.
- Youth participated in a Distance Learning program, Science of the Chocolate Chip Cookie, where youth in grades 3 and up experimented through hands-on learning through zoom and independent experiments to explore different baking techniques to help them find their favorite chocolate chip cookie recipe, while learning more about baking and food science along the way.
- Planning for a Juntos Career Pathways Programs for Youth and Families in collaboration with local school districts and technical colleges. The goal is to provide families with career pathway information and build community between families, so that are better able to prepare for their students future career goals.
  - **Total Reach:** 115 youth and 67 adults
- A series of lessons called "Tools to Thrive" for Latine students who face many challenges, such as language barriers, isolation, and cultural disconnection, at Marshfield High School. These lessons are designed to engage students in various important topics, including cultural identity, mental health, stress management, access to mental health resources, mindfulness and self-care, and community and social connection.
  - *"Our goal is to support and empower students as they assimilate to their new environment and successfully thrive in school. A key component of the program is to offer it in Spanish in order to help students understand content and increase their sense of belonging amongst the group and their school."*

## AGRICULTURE

Matt Lippert, Agriculture Educator

- A workshop "Dairy Feeder School" for all the individuals with a link with the formulation, mixing, and/or delivering of feedstuff for dairy cattle. We are creating an in person and bilingual event where participants will learn and reinforce their knowledge about feed safety, feed management, transition cow health, and the economics of feeding. Through this effort we will impact animal health and milk production efficiency, by improve the use of resources such as, feed ingredients, time and labor leading to an increased farm profitability and waste reduction.
- A zoom meeting for dairy cattle feeders, where tools for improving feeding safety, accuracy and timeliness were learned or achieved) to improve the production, success and profitability of the dairy.

- **Total Reach:** 21 people attended the event from 7 farms. Future contacts through YouTube and internet pages will be available.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

*Kayla Rombalski, Community Development Educator*

- Ongoing planning for the Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities Conference including securing speakers, arranging logistics details, and frequent meetings with partners. This conference will draw a statewide audience of 250+ people to the Wisconsin Rapids area and highlight the entrepreneurial successes of Wood County and Central Wisconsin. There are three planning teams (Marketing & Promotion, Programming & Vision, and Logistics) made up of local partners meeting every other week until the conference occurs.
  - **Total Reach:** 100 participants currently registered. 250 anticipated attendees. 41 local and statewide planning team members.
- Ongoing meetings and process for an organization's five year strategic plan in coordination with Katie Livernash in Portage County. Extension's strategic planning offerings are free to nonprofits and organizations and provide important capacity building and goal setting for the organization. In this case we are updating a strategic plan to reflect 2026-2031 priorities and action items.
  - **Total Reach:** 14 strategic planning committee members representing a staff of nearly 50 people.
- Early planning for a Central Wisconsin Regional Housing Summit to occur on April 15, 2026. This Summit is funded through an Extension grant, and will highlight housing initiatives, success stories, and recommendations across the five-county Centergy economic development region.
  - **Total Reach:** 10 planning team members, anticipated 150 attendees
- Facilitation of regular meetings of the Wood County Broadband/Digital Equity Solutions Team (DEST), Economic Development Roundtable, Child Care Task Force, and Housing Task Force. The purpose of these meetings is to advance Wood County's Economic Development Strategy in each of these focus areas through engagement and action.
  - **Total Reach:** approx. 50 meeting attendees

## CRANBERRIES

*Allison Jonjak, Cranberry Outreach Specialist*

- Allison is currently on maternity leave and will return in May.



## FOODWISE

*Hannah Wendels, FoodWise Nutrition Educator*

*Mallory McGivern, FoodWise Administrator*

*Michelle Van Krey, Healthy Communities Coordinator*

- Collaborating with students from UWSP to create a Food Access Map for Area 7 (Clark, Marathon, Portage, Wood) that includes grocery stores, farmers markets, farm stands, convenience stores and food pantries. The purpose of this project is to assist community members in understanding all food resources available to them in their communities.
- A collaboration with DPI and the Wisconsin Rapids School District where changes such as the hanging of educational posters, installation of cafe awning and a photoshoot of breakfast options were done in cafeterias to upgrade school meal appeal, encourage healthier choices and increase meal redemption for students at Grove, Howe and Mead Elementary Schools and River Cities High School.
- A 12-week series of strength training sessions (StrongBodies) for older adults/adults in the community, where participants engage in regular, progressive strength training and health education to improve their physical and mental health, and enhance social connectedness. This series is led by one Extension StrongBodies volunteer.
- A series of lessons (Healthy Living/Life Management) for students at River Cities High School, where we engage them in lessons around topics such as budgeting, cooking, nutrition, and basic home repairs, to prepare them for life after high school and help support their overall health and well-being for when they are on their own.
- A 15-week series of strength training sessions (StrongBodies) for older adults/adults in the community, where participants engage in regular, progressive strength training and health education to improve their physical and mental health, and enhance social connectedness. This series is led by two Extension StrongBodies volunteers.
- A partnership with United Way/Hunger Coalition, FOCUS Food Pantry, and the Housing Authority of Wisconsin Rapids that provides "Stockboxes for Seniors", a monthly food box service where low-income seniors can receive around 25-30 pounds of nutritious foods to stock their pantry with. The goal of this partnership is to promote the boxes with community partners with the overall goal to improve food security.
- A 5-week nutrition education series for third grade classrooms at Grove Elementary School, where students will learn about MyPlate, making healthy food choices, how to read nutrition facts labels, and about being physically active to help students to be healthier in school and at home.
- A 5-week nutrition education series for kindergarten classrooms at Grove Elementary School, where students will learn about MyPlate, the five food groups, and try new fruits and vegetables. The goal of the series is for students to learn about how making healthy food choices will help them to be healthier in school and at home.





- A 5-week nutrition education series for kindergarten classrooms at Howe Elementary School, where students will learn about MyPlate, the five food groups, and try new fruits and vegetables. The goal of the series is for students to learn about how making healthy food choices will help them to be healthier in school and at home.
- A 5-week nutrition education series for kindergarten classrooms at Mead Elementary School, where students will learn about MyPlate, the five food groups, and try new fruits and vegetables. The goal of the series is for students to learn about how making healthy food choices will help them to be healthier in school and at home.

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

*Ka Zoua Thao, Bilingual (Hmong) Community Health Worker*

- A Tai Chi class for older adults and individuals with arthritis, where participants learn gentle, low-impact movements designed to improve balance, flexibility, and joint health. Through this activity, the program help reduce the risk of falls and empower participants to lead healthier, more active lives, fostering independence and confidence in their daily routines. Total Reach: 20 registered participants with 4 on a waitlist
- An educational presentation for the Wood County Health Department staff and community members, where participants explored the rich history and vibrant culture of the Hmong community. Through this effort, participants gained a deeper understanding of the Hmong community's contributions and challenges, fostering cultural awareness and inclusivity.
- Ongoing one-on-one meetings with Hmong clients, where resources and referrals are made. Through these efforts, individual clients are able to receive support navigating through the healthcare and legal systems, and get connected with community resources. (Location type: Both) Total Reach: 8 one-on-one clients
- The Hmong Women's Social Space serves as a monthly gathering for Hmong women to engage in discussions about often overlooked topics within their community. This initiative aims to foster relationships among participants and empower them to advocate for the recognition of their voices. (Location type: Both) Total Reach: 5 participants
- Monthly meetings for Hmong youth, at Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School, where participants engage in healthy eating, active living, and behavioral health topics affecting their communities. This effort is designed to build a better understanding of these topics and promote advocacy for change in the Hmong community. Total Reach: 28 Hmong youth
- A monthly youth group for Hmong youth at Lincoln High School where participants discuss active living and behavioral health topics. Through this effort, Hmong youth will have a better understanding of these topics and advocate for change within the Hmong community. Total Reach: 5 Hmong youth and 1 Filipino youth

## HORTICULTURE

*Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator*

- A newspaper article for residents of the Pittsville area, where readers learned about the AgrAbility Summit. The goal of this effort was to increase awareness and knowledge about UW-Madison resources.
- A presentation for local Stonecraft members, where participants learned about the benefits of container gardening. This effort was designed to support social and emotional wellbeing to local residents.
- A diagnostic service for the general public, where Marathon and Wood County residents' horticultural inquiries are answered through evidence-based resources. This effort is designed to reduce pollution through horticultural product (pesticides and fertilizers) misuse.

## HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & RELATIONSHIPS

*Ben Eberlein, Human Development & Relationships Educator*

- Ben joined the Extension Wood County office on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Please help us welcome Ben to Wood County!

## NATURAL RESOURCES

*Jen McNelly, Natural Resources Educator*

*Anna Mitchell, Natural Resources Educator*

- A facilitated conversation for stakeholder organizations in the Fourmile Creek watershed, where participants discussed and shared past and current water-related research and engaged in collaborative discussion on ways to improve water quality. Through this facilitated conversation, stakeholders engaged in the first steps of developing a comprehensive watershed plan to enhance water quality through ecologically based, innovative, and cost-effective solutions, while also strengthening working relationships and ensuring consistent, continuous management of the watershed's resources.
  - **Total Reach:** 8 stakeholder organizations including private, non-profit, university, state agency, and county government
- A hands-on demonstration for Scouts, where Anna used a watershed model to help Scouts achieve objectives of their Environmental Science merit badge. Through this demonstration, scouts learned to identify sources of pollution across the landscape and how they can impact water quality through runoff and infiltration. Scouts also learned the environmental and human health impacts of impaired water, and how conservation practices can be implemented to protect surface water and groundwater resources from pollution runoff and infiltration.
  - **Total Reach:** 22 Scouts



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- An informational presentation and hands on demonstration of the groundwater model for central Wisconsin residents, where participants were able to learn about surface and groundwater resources of central WI and how land uses can affect them. Through this presentation and demonstration participants are able to learn how their land uses affect their water resources and actions that they can do to mitigate the risks.
  - **Total Reach:** 80 participants
- A hands-on groundwater lesson for advanced environmental science students at P.J. Jacobs Junior High, where students learned what groundwater is, how it moves and functions as part of an ecosystem, how groundwater is used and what can impact groundwater. Students will use this information to make informed decisions about their own use of and impacts to groundwater as well as informing future lessons on land use impacts to natural resources.
  - **Total Reach:** 13 students and 1 teacher
- Facilitation of monthly meetings of the Wood County Citizen Water Groups, where stakeholders meet to discuss ways to implement their annual action plan, learn about water related issues in Wood County, plan events and activities, update each other on work being done in Wood County, and identify new collaborations for future work/projects.
  - **Total Reach:** 15 Citizen Members of the Wood County Citizen Water Group



## Wood County, Wisconsin LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

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### Activities Report for Barb Peeters - April 2025

- Served as point of contact for LWCD staff while County Conservationist is on FMLA restriction of 20 hours per week (Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> through April 8<sup>th</sup> with those hours worked remotely) and while he was on vacation April 9<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Assisted Conservation Program Coordinator with an Open Records request from legal firm representing Earth Inc. Calculated costs/generated invoice and drafted letter for prepayment of costs prior to release of records.
- Assisted a steady stream of landowners picking up/dropping off nitrate water test kits (ARPA grant project). Answered many questions in person and via phone posed by landowners regarding the nitrate testing. Delivered water tests to the Health Department as received. As of 4/30/25, 177 kits have been picked up and 126 water test kits have been returned.
- Gathered information from a concerned citizen regarding a Wood County manure complaint and forwarded to Engineer Technician and County Conservationist for investigation and follow-up.
- At the direction of the County Conservationist via email request, determined revenue account and notified corporate counsel for deposit of forfeiture fine received from Hoffman Dairy violation (\$51,000.00).
- Processed payments for seed orders. There was a significant increase in the number of seed orders placed for this year's sale (almost triple from the 2024 sale). Worked with distributor regarding an incorrect item received in shipment.
- Processed first quarter mileage for LWCD trucks.
- Assisted with reviewing drafts of invasive species signage at Nepco boat landing & provided feedback.
- Participated in bid openings for Lewis and Cutler projects. Generated bid summaries for both projects.
- Attended April 2<sup>nd</sup> CEED committee meeting in person.
- Made copies of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter information provided by Wellness Coordinator & updated Wellness bulletin board.
- Scheduled staff meeting for May 1<sup>st</sup> and created agenda. Scheduled meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup> to review revised/new contracts/DATCP documents with County Conservationist.
- Drafted new contract templates for use with harvestable buffers program for both the Surface Water Grant and the ARPA grant (two separate contract templates required).
- Requested follow up from County Conservationist on status of project request form that I drafted and sent to him electronically on 2/26/25 to review and forward to I.T. regarding potential implementation of Point & Pay system (due to repeated requests from customers to pay via credit card (i.e. for trees/shrubs/seeds, etc.).
- Responded to calls and voicemails regarding the 2025 tree sale from customers who missed the deadline for ordering trees. Added customers to the waiting list for any extra trees.
- Followed up with Health Department regarding invoice for first quarter water nitrate testing utilizing ARPA grant funds at the direction of and on behalf of County Conservationist while he's on FMLA restriction of 20 hours per week.
- Invoiced MSTC for Nutrient Management Farmer Education 2025 class revenue and processed payment.
- Downloaded the DATCP monthly report for April and shared with LWCD staff.
- Discussed the SWRM Master Contract Notice with County Conservationist via phone and noted a virtual Master Contract Office Hour is being hosted by DATCP on April 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss the update and the processes to be followed to assure the county is eligible to receive SWRM funding. The master contract is updated every five years. In the intervening years, the county conservationist will need to acknowledge approval of the Schedule of Awards.
- Worked with LWCD staff to complete sections of 2025 Work Plan as directed by and on behalf of County Conservationist while he's on FMLA restrictions of 20 hours per week in order to have finalized prior to April 15<sup>th</sup> submission deadline. Final report approved by County Conservationist on 4/7/25 and 2025 Work Plan submitted to DATCP.
- Completed the 2026 DATCP SWRM Grant Application and obtained approval of County Conservationist on 4/7/25. Application submitted to DATCP on 4/7/25 prior to 4/15/25 deadline. Total 2026 DATCP grant application requests are: Staffing/Planning Grant \$290,208.00 and Cost-Sharing Grants (SEG & Structural) \$179,000.00.
- Verified wildlife damage general ledger and assembled all invoices and attachments for first quarter 2025 reimbursement request to the WiDNR.
- Shared April 2025 updates from the Wellness Committee with LWCD staff.

*(report continued on next page)*

- Met with Jen McNelly/UW Extension, Kendra Wilhelm & Emily Salvinski to discuss process for cost sharing RO (reverse osmosis) systems. Jen shared her knowledge and processes used for implementation of cost sharing RO systems in Portage County which will be very beneficial as we formulate our process.
- Scouted potential sites for Snapshot Day at Wazeecha park which will be held in August.
- Organized County Board packet materials and electronically submitted to the County Clerk's office.
- Assisted with planning for the Central WI Farmers Profitability Expo on April 30<sup>th</sup> at MSTC.
- Worked with tree nursery to select substitutions for two species that were unavailable for the tree sale (nursery notified us the week before the sale; made slips to notify customers of the substitutions made by the nursery)
- On behalf of the County Conservationist while he's on vacation, assisted Conservation Program Coordinator with open records request for the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program.
- Assisted customers with purchase of root gel and processed payments.
- Processed payments for rental of no-till drill as received.
- Finalized the 2024 LWCD Annual Report. Shared with the CEED committee, posted to LWCD website and emailed to WI Land+Water Conservation contact email list.
- Revised the wildflower seed order form due to price increases by supplier and updated form on LWCD website.
- Processed reimbursements for Nutrient Management Farmer Education (NMFE) as received. Wood County is the financial manager for the DATCP NMFE Grant in 2025 and responsible for processing reimbursements to class attendees for Wood, Marathon, Taylor, Clark, Portage and Lincoln counties.
- Recorded RSVPs as received for the Central WI Invasive Species Summit on May 20<sup>th</sup> being sponsored by LWCD.
- Labeled and bagged up common milkweed seeds (a native perennial to WI and an essential plant for monarch butterfly survival) obtained for free from the Goose Pond Sanctuary (Southern Wisconsin Bird Alliance) to use as handouts at upcoming events.
- Approved LWCD staff timecards on behalf of County Conservationist while he was on vacation.
- Completed LWCD payroll percentages and forwarded to Finance prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> payrolls.
- Reviewed payroll reports and verified distribution by accounts/departments.
- Ordered department supplies and processed invoices/payments.
- Typed cost share contract for permanent pasture fencing project (R. Cutler).
- Processed payment for open records request/Earth Inc. Maple Ridge 2 site and mailed requested records to law firm.
- Completed prep for the tree/shrub sale (printed tree tags, gathered customer order info, checked par levels of supplies).
- Worked with Parks & Forestry staff to be our back-up on April 22<sup>nd</sup> for landowners picking up/dropping off nitrate water tests (due to the fact we needed all hands on deck to sort/bag trees on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> so all tree orders were ready for pick up beginning April 24<sup>th</sup>). The County Conservationist elected to cover the office April 22-25 during the tree sale due to physical limitations while LWCD staff were at the Forestry Garage working the tree sale but he was unavailable to cover the office on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. A HUGE thank you & shout out to Parks & Forestry staff for their assistance!!!
- Sorted and bagged tree orders at the Forestry Garage April 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. Assisted with tree sale distribution at the Forestry Garage on April 24<sup>th</sup> and April 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Worked with Parks & Forestry staff to also cover distribution of nitrate water samples on April 24<sup>th</sup> due to the County Conservationist being unavailable to cover the LWCD office from 7am to noon. Another HUGE thank you to Parks & Forestry staff!!
- Processed nonmetallic mine plan review fees as received.
- Contacted customers on the waiting list regarding extra trees/shrubs from the tree/shrub sale via phone, bagged orders, arranged for pick-up of orders and processed payments. Processed orders for bundles of extra trees totaling \$1,267.16.
- Processed department invoices/vouchers and deposits weekly for submission to the Treasurer/Finance.
- Participated in Teams meeting on 4/29/25 for Surface Water Grant-Education for the Nepco Lake District on behalf of Kendra Wilhelm, Conservation Specialist who had a conflicting meeting and shared notes from meeting.
- Electronically submitted staff reports/packet materials to the County Clerk's office for the CEED meeting packet.
- Assisted with set up and attended the Central WI Farm Profitability Expo on April 30<sup>th</sup> at MSTC.
- Staff continued to pitch in to help wherever needed while the County Conservationist focused on healing while on FMLA January 15<sup>th</sup> to February 26<sup>th</sup>, on FMLA restrictions of 20 hours per week (worked those hours remotely) February 26<sup>th</sup> through April 8<sup>th</sup> and on vacation April 9<sup>th</sup> through April 23<sup>rd</sup>. While it's been challenging to assure nothing falls through the cracks, it's gratifying to work with such a great group of coworkers. Their willingness to pitch in demonstrates a strong team spirit and willingness to support each other which ensured that the Wood County Land and Water Conservation Department continued to work smoothly and effectively.

## Activities Report for Kyle Andreae – April, 2025

- April 1 – Sick
- April 2 – Bid opening, Sick
- April 3 – Sick
- April 4 – Hayden correspondence and site investigation
- April 7 – Hayden site visit, Lippert plan review
- April 8 – No-till drill repair
- April 9 – Hayden design, Duckett site visit
- April 10 – Hayden design
- April 11 – Hayden design
- April 14 – No-till drill repair and move, Hayden design
- April 15 – Hayden design
- April 16 – Krohn design, Tree sale prep, Cutler site visit
- April 17 – Krohn design
- April 18 – Holiday
- April 21 – Krohn design, Mueske site investigation
- April 22 – Tree Sale
- April 23 – Tree Sale
- April 24 – Tree Sale
- April 25 – Vacation
- April 28 – Lewis design
- April 29 – Lewis design
- April 30 – Farm Profitability Expo





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### Activities Report for Kendra Wilhelm – April 2025

- Continued to organize and plan for the Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo.
  - Reached out to producers for interest in being on a discussion panel.
  - Continued conversations with MSTC regarding the ability to record the Expo and the logistics of lunch.
  - Sent email reminders to partners to help spread the word about the Expo and to make sure all attendees and panelists register for the event.
  - Created a spreadsheet to track registrants.
- Assisted the Nepco Lake District with technical assistance and assistance with the creation of three signs that will be displayed at the Nepco Lake boat landing.
- Attended the April Lakes and Rivers Partnership meeting. This month's focus was the wonderful waters of Wisconsin and healthy lakes and rivers.
- Helped farmers plan and administered the process for implementation of harvestable buffers.
  - Met with one operator to discuss harvestable buffer field plans and discuss contract options.
- Planned and picked up supplies for the purple loosestrife biocontrol project.
- Continued planning for the Central Wisconsin Invasive Species Summit.
  - Distributed flyers to folks in Marshfield that have volunteered to put up flyers around Central Wisconsin.
  - Continue planning with speakers and for the nature walk.
  - Corresponded with the Wood County Planning & Zoning office regarding the printing of a 3' x 3' map of Wood County for use at the Central Wisconsin Invasive Species Summit. Map was picked up from the Planning & Zoning office on Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>.
  - Began preparing a presentation regarding the importance of native plant species and an introduction to invasive species.
- Reviewed the LWCD annual report.
- Attended the CEED meeting on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Attended a meeting regarding enhanced wakes with Parks and Forestry Director Chad Schooley, Nepco Lake District Chair Eric Hummel, and Nepco Lake resident Scott Steward.
- Emailed the North Central Area Association staff members regarding insights, successes, and challenges regarding enhanced wake ordinances and resolutions.
- Assisted the Nepco Lake District with grant technical assistance.
- Attended the HIRC meeting on April 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Assisted with and reviewed the incentive contracts for our harvestable buffer program.
- Coordinated with UW-Extension staff on the use of Wood County LWCD's roller crimper in a UW-Ext. field day at the Marshfield Research Station. The field day/demo will be on May 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Researched good spots to host the annual Snapshot Day to educate and search for invasive species.
- Answered an email regarding the verification of invasive zebra mussels.
- Reached out to the State Lab of Hygiene regarding water quality sampling supplies for Dexter and Wazeecha Lakes.
  - Funding for the sampling is being provided by the DNR Lake Monitoring & Protection Network grant.
- Created a spreadsheet of producers who currently have a nutrient management plan who have good, eligible fields for the Surface Water Grant and ARPA harvestable buffer program.
- Participated in a meeting with a Nepco Lake District board member to discuss current drafts of the newly designed boat wash station signage that will be posted at the Nepco Lake Boat Landing. Drafts were also shared with Chad Schooley and the DNR for review and comment. All three signs have been approved by all parties.
- Attended a SWIMS training.

- Met with Wood County Highway Department staff to prepare a presentation that will be given at the Local Road Forum. The goal was to use consistent language when presenting about invasive species.
- Corresponded with a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at the Auburndale Elementary School in regards to scheduling a day or two to teach students about nutrient management via The Watershed Game.
- Assisted producers with updating and completing their nutrient management plan.
- Met with Jen McNelly, UW-Extension Natural Resources Educator, to discuss reverse osmosis systems and the application process our department is developing for the use of appropriated County ARPA dollars.
- Reached out to DNR regarding water chemistry testing specifics for Dexter and Wazeecha Lakes.
  - Corresponded via phone with the State Lab of Hygiene regarding supply requests and sample forms.
- Coordinated the use of the no-till drill with three producers.
- Prepared a 10-minute presentation for the Nepco Lake District Watershed Event that was held on April 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Correspondence with the High School biology teacher at Pittsville High School regarding a presentation about the rusty crayfish trapping project that occurs every fall and spring.
- Reached out to Human Resources regarding the promotion of the Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo on the Wood County Facebook Page.
- Corresponded with Wood County Highway Department staff regarding storage of the roller crimper and no-till drill on highway department property during the tree and shrub sale.
- Participated in a meeting with a Nepco Lake District board member to discuss final approvals of the Nepco Boat Launch signage, next steps, and the Clean Boats Clean Waters program.
- Dug purple loosestrife rootstock for the purple loosestrife biocontrol project. This project falls under the Lake Monitoring and Protection Network scope of work.
- Attended the Central Wisconsin Invasives Partnership (CWIP) spring steering committee meeting in Stevens Point.
- Participated in the Nepco Lake District Watershed Event.
- Prepared a presentation for the Nepco Lake District April Board Meeting.
- Attended the Citizens Water Group April meeting.
- Assisted with tree sale sorting on Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> and Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Assisted with the tree, shrub, and wildflower seed sale distribution on Thursday, April 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Assisted visitors with general questions as well as nitrate specific questions and well sampling.
- Communicated with a Nekoosa High School senior regarding a job shadowing opportunity.
- Coordinated the use of the River Block Auditorium for a Golden Sands RC&D Deer Management Assistance Program landowner meeting.
- Assisted with bagging extra trees from the tree, shrub, and wildflower seed sale.
- Attended and participated in the April 28<sup>th</sup> Nepco Lake District Board Meeting.
- Attended and participated in the Spring Aquatic Invasive Species Partnership Meeting.
- Attended and participated in the Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo.
- Looked into grass species/seed mixes that will grow best in a sandy soil.



## ***Activities Report for Rod Mayer – April 2025***

- Researched and input work plan report info.
- Kosmatka pond info questions – pointed out issues and email to landowner.
- Review Mid-WI Bach mine site DNR edits of wetland restoration plan.
- Records request for Earth Maple Ridge 2 from attorney Stichert– for correspondence/reporting to DNR of sediment into waterways/wetlands. Researched all documents – copied all applicable – letter to attorney – received payment – mailed.
- Phone meeting with Milestone for upland 135 permitting portion of Ch. 30 site.
- Reviewed DNR SWPPP initial review for Mid-WI Bach mine site and Earth Biron Quarry site.
- Permit transfer info sent to Dale Ladick for sale of mine site to Vitort.
- Meeting with Dean Francis (operator) and Richie Felch (landowner) to discuss pond exemption details.
- Kosmatka Pond exemption review – sent back for edits – approved final application, updated database, file, sent approval letter.
- Felch pond info sent.
- Crop owner meeting for turkeys removing commercial strawberry crop bedding. Discussed abatement methods – issued bird banger to alleviate damage.
- Reviewed Weichelt Hwy T site interim plan for removal of material in wetland area, off site stockpiled area, and pending operations prior to wetland review by DNR.
- Reviewed Earth response to DNR review for runoff of Biron site.
- Reviewed DNR correspondence for new Milestone/Dupee site.
- Reviewed Mid WI-Bach wetland restoration plan per DNR – reviewed interim plan for site until delineation and new plan submitted for review and permit transfer.
- Wildlife fence program correspondence with Rezin Berry for future fence build.
- Completed 1<sup>st</sup> quarter Wildlife Damage and Abatement program reimbursement report (24 pages). Worked with IT for missing invoices. Updated DNR database and sent to DNR.
- Reviewed Laidlaw updates to financial assurance. Updated file, spreadsheet, and software.
- Received records request for fence build bidding from 10/19/2020 fence projects (2). Researched and copied documents. Emailed documents.
- Site visit to Earth Maple Ridge 2 site to remove stop work sign. Took pics and sent to DNR for majority of silt fence fallen down to prevent issues once start disturbing again.
- Received draft for Milestone Marshfield CH 30 site for the 135 permitting portion – printed for future review - sent correspondence to Milestone to complete indexing to check list.
- Received draft to portions and responses for earth Biron Quarry – printed for future review. Sent questions/comments to DNR to get on same page for requirements.
- Tree sale: Picked up approx.. 16,500 trees in Westfield, sorted/tagged species, filled all orders, met customers at shop for pick ups over two days. Packaged extra tree sales.
- Met with crop owner (Autumn Cran.) to discuss future fence and shooting permits.
- Info sent to new mine site inquiry: checklist, app, Engineer firms list, example plans (from records request), etc.



## LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

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### *Activities Report for Shane Wucherpfennig – April 2025*

- April 1 – Emails, Correspondence, Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Planning, Landowner contacts, Discussions with Panelists for CWFPE Event
- April 2 – Bid Opening for Lewis Rip-Rap Project and Randy Cutler Grazing project, CEED Meeting, Webex Meeting in Afternoon
- April 3 – Reviewed and added to LWCD Annual Report, worked on SWRM grant application, Reviewed Staffing Budget Estimates
- April 4 – Discussed Non-Point Coordinator Position with DNR for Interviews, Scheduled Meetings for Later in the Month, Talked with Staff on Upcoming Events, Discussed Harvestable Buffers Funding with Kendra
- April 7 – Wrapped up 2026 SWRM Grant Application and Reporting for 2024
- April 8 – Phone & email correspondence, Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy Listening Sessions
- April 9 – April 22 – Vacation
- April 23 – Covered Office While Staff were Packing/Distributing Trees for our Annual Tree Sale, Distributing/Receiving Nitrate Samples, Phone and Email Correspondence
- April 24 – Covered Office While Staff were Packing/Distributing Trees for our Annual Tree Sale, Distributing/Receiving Nitrate Samples, Phone and Email Correspondence
- April 25 – Covered Office While Staff were Packing/Distributing Trees for our Annual Tree Sale, Distributing/Receiving Nitrate Samples, Phone and Email Correspondence April 13– Virtual meetings, BITS Updates, WAMS update
- April 28 – Approve Time Sheets, Master Contracts Virtual Meeting (DATCP), Phone and Email Correspondence
- April 29 – Phone and Email Correspondence, Virtual Meeting, Preparing for Interviews of Nonpoint Coordinator Position on Friday May 2nd
- April 30 – Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo (CWFPE Event) at Midstate Technical College in Wisconsin Rapids



# Wood County WISCONSIN

## OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ZONING

TO: Conservation, Education & Economic Development Committee

FR: Jason Grueneberg, Planning & Zoning Director  
Emily Arndt, County Planner  
Paul Bernard, Land Records Coordinator  
Brad Cook, Code Administrator  
Kayla Rautio, Code Technician  
Victoria Wilson, Program Assistant  
Julie Mancl, Program Assistant

RE: Staff Report for May 2025

### 1. Economic Development (Jason Grueneberg)

**Central Wisconsin Days** – On April 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> I participated in Central Wisconsin Days at the State Capital. The event was facilitated by Centergy for the purpose of meeting with legislators and discussing Central Wisconsin economic development issues and opportunities.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Repair Program** – On April 24<sup>th</sup> I attended a meeting hosting by the Wisconsin Department of Administration in Wausau on the closure process for CDBG Small Communities Housing Revolving Loan Funds (RLF). An update of the closure process that will be used as well as an explanation of why the RLFs are being discontinued will be presented at the May CEED Committee meeting.

**North Central Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission (NCWRPC)** – On April 30<sup>th</sup> I participated in the NCWRPC quarterly commissioner meeting. Agenda items included 2024 Annual Report review and adoption, review of the Regional Comprehensive Plan draft, establishing a CEDS Steering Committee, 2024 Audit Report and presentation, and discussion on Federal funding disruptions.

**Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities (CEC) Conference** – Planning committees continue to make progress on preparing for the annual CEC conference that will be held June 16-18 in Wisconsin Rapids. The event is for economic developers, local government leaders and community champions that want to learn more about entrepreneurship programming for smaller communities.

**Central Wisconsin Housing Summit** – I serve on a committee that is planning a Central Wisconsin Housing Summit Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at UW-Stevens Point. More details regarding the event including an agenda will be shared when available.

**Wisconsin Rapids Downtown Planning** – I continue to meet with city of Wisconsin Rapids staff on coordinating efforts to initiate redevelopment of the "Triangle" located in front of the Courthouse. More information will be shared when appropriate.

### 2. Planning & Zoning (Emily Arndt)

1. Completed final draft of Town of Rock Ordinance.
2. Updated Land Records with all recent zoning amendments.

3. Continued work with the Town of Cameron to update their comprehensive plan.
4. Assisted multiple towns with zoning ordinance update questions.
5. Worked with the City of Marshfield on a Type 1 sewer service amendment
6. Completed a 208 Review for a sanitary sewer replacement project in Marshfield.
7. Working through review and approval of CSMs.
8. Continued planning the organization of future Comprehensive Plans.
9. Continued working with staff to ensure that questions are answered in a proficient manner.

### 3. **Land Records** (Paul Bernard)

- Parcel Mapping
- Address Mapping
- Working with Health Department on Alcohol Outlet Mapping
- Custom Map Requests
- Real Estate Transfer Returns

### 4. **Code Administrator** (Brad Cook)

4-1-2025- - (3) Reviewed soils, plan review, issued permit for new conv TN: 07, 18 (1) conv. Inspection TN 18, answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-2-2025- Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-3-2025- (1) HS-25-009 letter written & sent, (1) SL permit reviewed, answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL

4-4-2025- (3) soil onsite TN 10,16, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-8-2025- (1) Collected data for DSPS-Hydrograph, (1) SF-25-006 letter written and sent TN : 12, answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-9-2025- (1) Reviewed soils, plan review, issued permit for new reconnect conv TN: 07, , answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-10-2025- (1) SL onsite discussion TN: 18, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-11-2025-(1) HS 25-011 letter written and sent TN 18, (1) Reviewed soils, plan review, issued permit for new HT TN: 03, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-14-2025- (3) well permits reviewed and issued TN: 07, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-15-2024- DSPS Virtual Training,(1) HS letter written and reviewed TN: 18, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-16-2025- IT Safety training, (1) FP permit reviewed TN: 12, answer phone calls and inquires

with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-17-2025- Organize data, office, and cleaning, answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL, appointment.

4-18-2025- Holiday

4-21-2025- POWTS paper search for CST, (1) Reviewed soils, plan review, issued permit for new conv TN 07, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-22-2025- (1) HTA written and sent TN: 21, P & Z Staff Meeting, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL

4-23-2025- (3) Reviewed soils, plan review, issued permit for new HT, conv TN: 7, 11, 18, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-24-2025- Review codes and ordinances, Answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-25-2025- (1) Reviewed soils, plan review, for new HT TN: 16, answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-28-2025- (1) conv inspection TN 18, (1) Reviewed soils, plan review, for new HT TN: 16, answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-29-2025- (2) Reviewed soils, plan review, issued permit for new conv TN: 07, OR-25-003 written and sent TN: 18, answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

4-30-2025- (2) Reviewed soils, plan review, issued permit for new HT and mound TN: 10, 16, (1) conv inspection TN: 18, answer phone calls and inquires with POWTS, SL, FL.

## **5. Code Technician (Kayla Rautio)**

- A. Continued shoreland, soils, & floodplain education
- B. Reviewed POWTS and well permit applications
- C. Worked on GIS wells project
- D. Helped clean-up/organize P&Z shared folder
- E. Reviewed shoreland permit & issued correspondence letter
- F. Assisted with phone call/email/office questions
- G. Inspections/Investigations:
  - 4-1-25: Conventional inspection TN: 07
  - 4-4-25: Soils on-site inspections TN: 16, 10, 03
  - 4-28-25: Conventional inspection TN: 07
  - 4-29-25: Conventional inspection & new well inspection TN: 18
  - 4-30-25: Conventional inspection TN: 18
- H. Attended Meetings/Trainings/Etc.
  - 3-27-25: Security awareness training
  - 4-22-25: Staff meeting

- 4-25-25: Survey records software training

**6. Office Activity (Victoria Wilson & Julie Mancl)**

- a. Monthly Sanitary and Well Permit Activity – There were 9 sanitary permits, 2 shoreland permits and 6 well permits issued in April.
- b. ArcGIS Pro Software Project – Julie continues to assist Paul with GIS mapping projects.
- c. Septic Maintenance Notices – 3,173 septic maintenance notices were mailed on Monday April 21, 2025. These notices notify property owners that they are due to have their septic maintenance completed by Friday August 8, 2025. The requirement is to have the system inspected, maintained or pumped. The maintenance notices go out to those property owners that have a conventional, mound, system-in-fill, aerobic, holding tank, white knight, or any other type of septic system. As usual, when these notices go out, there is an increase in calls from property owners with questions about the notice.
- d. TRIP Receipts – So far in 2025, Planning & Zoning has received \$1,231.36 in TRIP (Tax Refund Interception Program) funds from previous years court cases.
- e. Attended the following meetings/trainings & activities:
  - i. April 2<sup>nd</sup>, CEED meeting (VW & JM)
  - ii. April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Staff meeting (VW & JM)
  - iii. April 25<sup>th</sup>, Survey records software training (VW & JM)



# YEAR - 2024



LWCD, 111 W Jackson Street; Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

Phone: (715) 421-8475 Email: [landcons@woodcountywi.gov](mailto:landcons@woodcountywi.gov)



## Wood County Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD)

# Annual report

### 2024 Cover Crop Field Day

A Cover Crop Field Day Event was held at the Dustin Albert farm on September 17, 2024. Key topics included: an equipment show & tell; an interseeding demo with in-use aerial seeding rye onto standing soybeans before leaf drop; cover crop root growth (a demo pit was dug to look at the root growth below the ground compared to the growth above ground); and an early corn cover crop trial (cereal rye applied on shoulder-high corn on July 21<sup>st</sup> and applying cereal rye on tasseled corn with side-by-side trials). A huge thank you to Dustin Albert for hosting the tour and demonstrating his innovative operations. Watch the LWCD website for upcoming field events in summer/fall 2025.



Early Corn Cover Crop Trial

### 2024 Accomplishments:

- Secured funding of \$167,320.00 from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for staff salaries and support and training expenses.
- Received \$50,300 in Bond money and \$54,000 in SEG money from DATCP to implement the Wood County Land and Water Resource Management Plan. Funds were used to cost share conservation practices.
- Received \$38,336.66 from point sources for water quality improvements (MDV).
- Received \$3,301.00 from the County Board to pay area and state membership dues.
- Received \$73,536.26 from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Large Scale TRM Grant for the Mill Creek Watershed.
- The Conservation, Education and Economic Development (CEED) Committee held 12 regular meetings and 5 special meetings.
- Conducted annual transect survey to determine soil erosion rates in Wood County.
- The 10-foot Great Plains No-Till Drill is in its sixth season of use and had a decrease in use (from 2023) throughout the growing season due to a *very* wet spring and fall. The drill was used by 13 landowners covering 318 acres with 2024 revenue of \$3,192.00 (a flat fee of \$80.00 plus \$8.00 per acre is charged per use to offset maintenance costs).
- Hosted a Cover Crop Field Day at the Dustin Albert Farm – see information on left.
- Maintained the prairie/pollinator garden outside of the River Block building.
- Hired a summer intern through the University of Stevens Point (May-August 2024).

*Continued on Page 2.....*



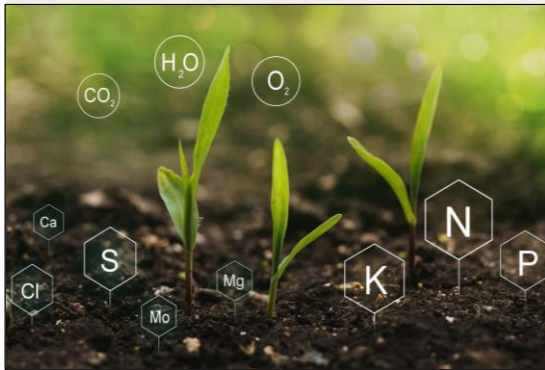
Demo pit to show cover root growth



Equipment show & tell

## 2024 LWCD Accomplishments Continued from Page 1.....

- 23 farmers participated in no-till and/or cover cropping in Wood County or within the Mill Creek Watershed covering 3,457 acres, with funding coming from MDV, LWRM, ARPA or 9-Key funds. A total estimate of 3,687 lbs. of phosphorous and 2,346 lbs. of sediment were reduced.
- Issued five Animal Waste and Manure Management permits and processed permit fees.
- Conducted stream flow monitoring at six sites once per month for six months as part of a six county-wide monitoring project. Reported data to DNR's Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System (SWIMS) Database. SWIMS is the state's repository of monitoring data for Clean Water Act work and is the source of data sharing through the Water Quality Exchange Network.
- Provided no-cost well water nitrate testing to 8 Wood County residents through grant monies.
- Completed and cost-shared the following:
  - One livestock watering system
  - One manure transfer system
  - One streambank crossing
  - One grazing system fence repair
  - Four wells decommissioned
  - One streambank/shoreland protection project
  - Two waste facility closures
  - One roof runoff
- Held the 2024 Annual LWCD Tree and Shrub Sale in April, selling 13,725 trees and shrubs to approximately 141 landowners. Top sellers were white pine and white spruce trees.
- Nine landowners purchased prairie grass/wildflower seeds as part of the Tree and Shrub sale.
- Tree shelters and generic gel were made available for sale throughout the year.
- During the 2024 tree & shrub sale, 628 tree shelters and 8 pounds of generic gel were sold (sold in 4 ounce & 1 lb. bags).
- Coordinated and hosted the "Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo" on April 24<sup>th</sup> at MidState Technical College – Wis. Rapids Campus (see page 7 for more information).
- Updated the "Invasive Species" page on the LWCD website to include informative fact sheets for *Aquatic Invasive Species*, *Terrestrial Invasive Species* and *Invasive vs Native Look Alikes*. The fact sheets include photos, identification information, ecological impact, and other information. Link to Invasive Species website: <https://www.woodcountywi.gov/Departments/LandConservation/InvasiveSpecies.aspx>.



## Nutrient Management / Farmer Education (NMFE)

- Wood County LWCD partnered with Marathon, Clark, Lincoln and Taylor counties to hold multiple courses that qualify farms to write their own nutrient management plan (called the NMFE class). 7 area farmers covering 3,656 acres and multiple farmers from surrounding counties attended the Wisconsin Rapids class. LWCD staff provided assistance to past/present attendees to keep up their plans.
- Received \$546.07 in staff support for assisting with the Nutrient Management Farmer Education (NMFE) classes.
- Worked to get maximum number of nutrient management plans turned in which came to 97. These 97 plans covered 60,835 acres of farmland.
- 7 farmers participated in creating a nutrient management plan in Wood County or within the Mill Creek Watershed covering 3,613 acres, with funding coming from LWRM.

- Participated in the CEED Tour in September 2024 and coordinated tours of the Gorst Manure Pit & Transfer System and Bauer Transfer Site & Clean Water Diversion (both sites located in Marshfield) as part of the annual CEED Tour.
- Treated wild parsnip at 37 locations. Twenty-three new spots were found. Kept wild parsnip map current by taking reports from the public and field mapping.
- As part of the 9-Key Element Plan, surface water samples were tested for total phosphorous and total suspended solids at four locations throughout the Mill Creek Watershed once per month from May to October.
- Staff participated in the Young Conservationists Professionals Network Event in June sponsored by Wisconsin Land+Water and Marathon Conservation Planning & Zoning.



LWCD Staff administered the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) with no new enrollments in 2024. The 1,187.04 acres enrolled in CREP in Wood County provide the following benefits:

- At least 1,956 lbs. of phosphorus loss to waterways prevented per year.
- At least 1,022 lbs. of nitrogen prevented from entering waterways per year.
- At least 1,065 tons of sediment prevented from entering waterways per year.

## LAND & WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Wisconsin law requires each county to have a land and water resource management (LWRM) plan that has been approved by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). The Land and Water Conservation Board reviews plans and recommends action to DATCP. Plans are approved for a 10-year period. The Wood County LWRM plan was due for full review in 2024. As part of the review process, a LWRM Advisory meeting was held with DATCP staff in early June. A Citizens Advisory Council was formed and comprised of a wide range of partners (DNR, NRCS, UW Extension, Health Dept., DATCP, Parks & Forestry Dept., etc.) which met to review the current LWRM plan and provide input on goals and objectives as well as what LWCD should focus on over the next 10 years. The County Conservationist then completed a total revision of the LWRM plan. The plan was reviewed and approved by the CEED Committee on November 6, 2024 which was held in conjunction with a mandatory public hearing. The Wood County LWRM Plan 2025-2034 was approved by the Land and Water Conservation Board in Madison on December 4, 2024 and approved by the Wood County Board of Supervisors on Dec. 17, 2024. A copy of the Wood County LWRM Plan can be found on the LWCD website at:

<https://www.woodcountywi.gov/Departments/LandConservation/Doc/2025%20LWRM%20Plan%20%e2%80%93%20FINAL%20DRAFT.pdf>



## Meet the Land & Water Conservation Department Staff and CEED Committee



**2024 LWCD Staff:**

(L-R) Rod Mayer, Conservation Program Coordinator; Kyle Andreae, Engineering Technician; Shane Wucherpfennig, County Conservationist; Kendra Wilhelm, Conservation Specialist; Barb Peeters, Conservation Administrative Specialist; Emily Salvinski, Conservation Specialist



**2024-2025 Conservation, Education, and Economic Development Committee (CEED) Members**

(L-R) Tom Buttke-Vice Chair, Tim Hovendick, Bill Leichtnam-Chair; Russell Perlock & Wayne Schulz. Absent: Producer Representative George Gilbertson

## Land and Water Resources Management Plan Implementation & Other Programs

Starting in 2000, the Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD) began securing state funds from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to fund local conservation practices on an annual basis. The selected conservation practices are outlined as priorities in the Land & Water Resource Management Plan that was written for Wood County. On an annual basis, the LWCD selects landowners and practices to be funded from those that express an interest and have resource concerns.

- DATCP has provided Wood County LWCD \$2,000,013 to cost share best management practices over the last twenty-five years. Landowners county-wide are eligible for these funds. In 2024, Wood County LWCD secured \$54,000 for nutrient management/cover crops and \$50,300 to install selected practices.
- Wood County LWCD received a total of \$152,650.41 to cost-share best management practices from 2019 -2023 through the Multi-Discharger Variance (MDV) Program. In 2024, Wood County received \$38,336.66 to cost-share best management practices in the Castle Rock, Lake Dubay and Black River HUC 8 watersheds.
- The DNR provided funds to cost share best management practices through the Mill Creek TMDL grant (Phase II grant awarded for \$600,000.00). In 2024, Wood County issued \$78,450.26 in cost-share received through the Mill Creek TMDL grant.

Practices installed in Wood County and reimbursed by DATCP, DNR & MDV in 2024 include: cover crops (3,457 acres); residue management (202 acres); streambank & shoreland protection (2); waste storage facility closures (2); wells decommissioned (4); livestock watering (1); roof runoff (1); manure transfer system (1) and grazing system fence repair (1).

*The following landowners installed Best Management Practices in 2024 (listed by cost share program):*



**DATCP**

- Rick Armagost
- Steven & Rebecca Bauer
- Gunta Erickson
- Ray Fait
- Flying Dollar Cattle
- Matthew & Kristina Graf
- Leslie Jagodzinski
- Luke Keuffer
- Frank & Loraine Klevene
- McMillan Farms
- Roth Golden Acres
- Dennis & Lori Ruess
- Thomas & Cynthia Slattery
- Alan Weiler



**MDV**

- Dustin Albert
- Rick Armagost
- Jason Bernick
- Kurt Eastling
- Ray & Norma Fait
- George Gilbertson
- Allen Grassl
- Kevin Heeg
- Brad Leverance
- McMillan Farms
- Roth Golden Acres
- Thomas & Cynthia Slattery
- Ryan Wayerski



**Mill Creek TMDL**

- Carl Baltus
- Tyler Bulgrin
- Allen Grassl
- Ed & Mary Kollross
- Peter Mallek
- Glen Peplinski
- James Raikowski
- Barry Richardson
- Roth Golden Acres
- Craig Vitort



## 2024 LWCD Accomplishments Continued.....

# Non-Metallic Mining (NMM)

- Certified reclamation and closing of one large non-metallic mine site.
- Approved permit modification with new reclamation plans on two mine sites.
- Received \$45,345 in reclamation permit fees under the Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Program.
- Held \$3,309,600 in financial assurance for nonmetallic mine reclamation.



**Billerud (Verso) site reclaimed.**



**Violation Site**

- Issued 15 new pond build exemptions to nonmetallic mining.
- Inspected 49 nonmetallic mine sites for reclamation progress and active acres; created maps and calculations for each mine.
- Violations found on 8 mining sites with orders for reclamation plan revisions or restoration of areas. Three sites shut down due to non-compliance issues.

## Wildlife Abatement Program

- LWCD received \$45,661.88 from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WiDNR) for expenses and administration of the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program.
- Enrolled 17 landowners in the Wildlife Damage Abatement program.
- Enrolled 3 crop owners in the claims program, opening 1,392 gross acres & approx. 509 huntable acres to public hunting.
- Completed 11 crop appraisals with crop damage claims paid out totaling \$1,667.02 (paid through WDACP as noted below). Claim of \$490.76 denied due to landowner not meeting program objectives.
- Administered the 2024 venison donation program. 343 pounds of ground venison was donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Pantry (Lindsey Locker & OMG Butchering) and Pittsville PANS (Pittsville Meats) in Wood County.



The Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program (WDACP) is a state program with the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources (WDNR). The Wood County LWCD administers the program which provides local control and helps to reduce costs. This partnership helps to connect the local community to these valuable programs and resources. WDACP provides damage prevention assistance and partial compensation to farmers when deer, geese, turkeys and bear damage their agricultural crops. The program also has a network of venison donation partners, including county land & water conservation depts, food pantries, charitable organizations, etc. who all help implement and administer the venison donation program.

## Who regulates Nonmetallic Mining in Wisconsin?...

County and local zoning bodies are responsible for all mine siting requirements and regulations. Under ch.NR 135, Wis. Adm. Code, the DNR Nonmetallic Mining Program is responsible for ensuring uniform statewide implementation of nonmetallic mining reclamation requirements. It does this by overseeing county & local reclamation programs, known as regulatory authorities (RAs).

## NMM Overview.....

Nonmetallic Mining is the extraction of stone, sand, rock or similar materials from natural deposits. An estimated 2,500 mines in Wisconsin provide aggregate for construction, gravel & crushed stone (limestone & dolomite) for road construction, volcanic andesite for shingles, dimension stone for monuments, peat for horticulture and landscaping, industrial sand for export out of state for the oil industry, and a considerable variety of materials for other uses.



# Lake Monitoring & Protection Network (LMPN) Funding

- LWCD received \$13,097.11 from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Surface Water Grant Program to administer activities eligible under the Lake Monitoring & Protection Network (LMPN).
- The LMPN focuses on outreach, education, and aquatic invasive species (AIS) prevention and lake monitoring activities.
- An early detection survey was completed following the Wisconsin State Water Ski Show Championships on Lake Wazeecha. Aquatic forget-me-not was the only new invasive species identified.
- Twenty-two AIS signage inspections were conducted at boat landings which resulted in fourteen signage replacements.
- Worked closely with the Nepco Lake District with technical assistance and supporting them in reaching the goals of the aquatic plant management plan.
- Hosted Snapshot Day at Nepco County Park:
  - Snapshot Day is a one-day statewide event where volunteers learn how to identify and monitor for aquatic invasive species.
  - Eleven total volunteers joined to learn and monitor for invasive species.
  - No new aquatic invasive species were found.

## Snapshot Day 2024



## ARPA FUNDING

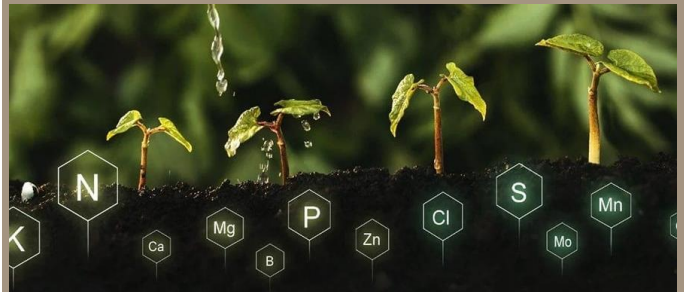
In November and December of 2024, the Land & Water Conservation Department was granted county ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds for the following projects. (The ARPA grant funds must be expended by December 31, 2026.)

- **Purchase of a drone - \$19,500**  
A drone was purchased for a total of \$13,894, leaving \$5,606 in the budget to cover training and software costs in 2025.
- **Water quality improvement practices - \$90,000**  
Residue management (\$25,000) ~ Cover crops (\$25,000) ~ Harvestable buffers (\$40,000)  
In 2024, a total of \$1,683.65 was used as cost-share dollars on 67.35 acres for establishing cover crops on agricultural fields. 74.25 lbs of phosphorus and 97.15 tons of sediment was reduced from running off these fields.
- **Field Test Plots/Training/Field Days - \$10,000**
- **Groundwater testing program - \$10,000**  
Funds to be used for a continued groundwater testing program across Wood County.
- **Incentivizing best management practices to address nitrate contamination - \$40,000**
- **Reverse osmosis cost-share program for private wells testing over 20 ppm nitrates - \$75,000**

**Total ARPA funds to be expended in 2024-2025 = \$244,500.00**



## Nutrient Management Plan.....Right Source, Right Rate, Right Time, Right Place



A Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) is an annual plan that helps farmers make the best use of their manure and fertilizer while also protecting the soil from erosion and improving water quality. A NMP first begins with soil samples that are sent to a lab and analyzed to determine the amount of available nutrients in the soil. The results help the farmer determine their fertilizer needs on a field-by-field basis. Snap Plus software is used to calculate potential soil and phosphorus losses. The farmer can change their tillage system or crop rotation for less soil loss. Starting a NMP is a proactive stance towards improving, protecting and conserving cropland. The NMP assists farmers in slowing erosion and conserving the soil while also fertilizing where needed to add the nutrients necessary for crop growth. A NMP is not only for the present but also for the future.

Wood County LWCD staff held many one-on-one education sessions to assist farmers in the process of developing and utilizing their NMP including the required steps to write a NMP, working with the soil test results, understanding the soil erosion factor of their soil, and learning how to improve the phosphorus index within their fields while maintaining yield.

See page 2 for 2024 NMFE data.

# Natural Resources Conservation Service

## 2024 Annual Report

by: Andy Richardson, Acting District Conservationist

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. NRCS Mission: Helping People Help the Land.

In 2024 workload and landowner interest in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) remained high. We received 15 applications to participate in the CSP. We obligated \$239,395 to 8 landowners in Wood County through CSP to maintain existing levels of conservation and apply new conservation practices on 1,275 acres of land. We received 29 applications to participate in the EQIP. Through EQIP, we obligated \$842,675 to 20 landowners in Wood County to plan and apply new conservation practices on 1,957 acres of land. The CSP and EQIP in 2024 had 81 active contracts managed that cover over 25,000 acres of Cropland, Farmstead, Associated Ag Land, and Forestland to continue to protect existing farm resources and implement additional conservation enhancements. All CSP payments for 2024 were processed, and additional funds were paid to landowners through the EQIP and for various conservation practices applied from previous year's contracts.

Roy Diver retired as District Conservationist for Wood County at the end of 2024 and we are currently awaiting a permanent replacement for his position. Current Wisconsin Rapids NRCS staff include Andy Richardson (Resource Conservationist-Acting District Conservationist), Tristyn Forget (Soil Conservationist), Russ Biebl (Soil Conservation Technician), and Pat Murphy (Retired ACES).

The following is a partial list of landowner accomplishments completed with NRCS assistance from October 2023 through September 2024:

Conservation Plans Written .....	3,967 acres
Cover Crop Applied .....	1,628 acres
Brush Management Applied .....	26 acres
Pasture and Hayland Planting Applied .....	112 acres
Prescribed Grazing Applied .....	134 acres
Residue Management, No Till Applied .....	600 acres
Monarch Butterfly Habitat Applied .....	16 acres
High Tunnel System Applied .....	2 No
Waste Facility Closure Applied .....	1 No
Irrigation Water Management Applied .....	34 acres
Forest Stand Improvement Applied .....	119 acres
Native Tree/Shrub Planting Applied .....	17 acres



**NRCS STAFF** (left to right):  
**Russ Biebl**, Soil Conservation Technician; **Andy Richardson**, Resource Conservationist-Acting District Conservationist; **Pat Murphy**, Retired ACES; and **Tristyn Forget**, Soil Conservationist



Photo: USDA-NRCS

### SWRM Grants

The Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) awards annual Soil & Water Resource Management (SWRM) grants to county conservation committees and other cooperators. These grants assist in funding county conservation staff and cost-share conservation practices installed by producers with assistance through their county. Grant recipients sign & follow a contract with their county. Grant funds must be spent in the year DATCP allocates them, although DATCP may extend cost-share funds an additional year for specific projects.



### WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

The goal of the Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD), the Land and Water Resource Management Plan implementation, the Mill Creek 9-Key Element plan and Muli-Discharger Variance is to improve and protect water quality by reducing pollutants from urban and rural nonpoint sources. Nonpoint source pollution comes from a diverse number of activities in our daily lives including runoff from over-fertilized lawns and crop fields; constructing buildings and roads; and plowing our fields for crops. Nonpoint pollution is the leading cause of water quality problems in Wisconsin. LWCD staff would like to say **“thank you”** to all who have installed practices. We appreciate your efforts to protect the natural resources of Wood County and beyond.





## 2024 LWCD Accomplishments Continued.....

- Removed garlic mustard via hand-pulling at two different locations in Wood County (mailed letters to adjoining landowners as an educational opportunity about garlic mustard identification, management methods, and the NR 40 rules).
- Responded to a report about invasive giant hogweed located on a private property in the City of Marshfield.
  - The population was verified to be giant hogweed.
  - There are only a handful of giant hogweed populations in Wisconsin, with this being the first within Wood County.
  - Giant hogweed poses a threat to human health by potentially causing burns and blisters when skin comes in contact with sap from the stem or leaves in the presence of sunlight.
  - LWCD staff and DNR staff conducted a survey to look for more populations of giant hogweed in public parks within close proximity to the private residence. No additional populations were found.
  - Educational mailings were mailed to surrounding landowners to keep an eye out for giant hogweed and to contact our department if they suspect there are giant hogweed plants on their property.
- Verified five populations of yellow iris, four populations of aquatic-forget-me-not, eight populations of Japanese knotweed, two populations of narrow-leaf cattail, two populations of Japanese barberry, and one population of cut-leaf teasel, all of which are invasive species.
- Worked with Pittsville High School students on their annual rusty-crayfish trapping project. All rusty crayfish caught were provided to Fierce Hearts Wildlife Rehabilitation as a food source for animals in their care.
- Removed Japanese Barberry at two different locations in Wood County (Nepco County Park and Village of Biron).
- Removed seed heads from cut leaf teasel at one location in Vesper.
- Hosted a shoreline stabilization educational event with a focus on Healthy Lakes & Rivers practices.

## Central WI Farm Profitability Expo

The Central WI Farm Profitability Expo (CWFPE) was held at the MSTC-Wisconsin Rapids Campus on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The CWFPE encourages profitable farming by building resiliency, diversifying farming operations, reducing inputs and increasing farmer return on investment. Attendees at the expo learned about conservation practices that farmers can use to increase profitability and self sufficiency while being stewards of the land, such as regenerative management, cover and companion crops, and no-till farming. Central Wisconsin farmers discussed specific barriers experienced when adopting best management practices through panel discussions with fellow farmers who have implemented these practices. Attendees also explored the unique partnerships that can be created when merging agriculture and conservation. The expo was fully funded by a 2024 Innovations Grant through the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).



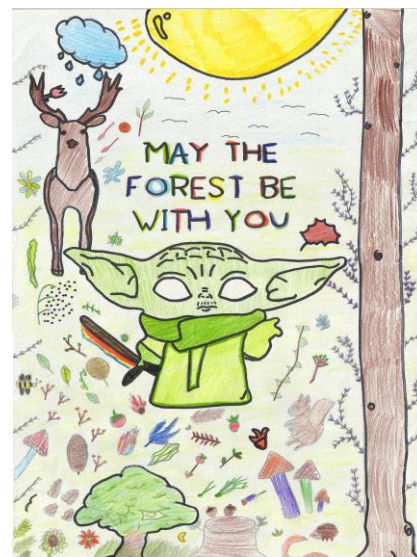
### Wood County Conservation Poster Contest

In April 2024 the annual Wood County Conservation Poster Contest for Wood County students in grades K-12 was held. The 2024 theme was “*May the Forest Be With You*” and the top three Wood County winners who advanced to the Area contest were students from Nasonville Elementary School:

1<sup>st</sup> Place-Taylor Curtin (poster on right →);

2<sup>nd</sup> place-Samuel Stichert;

3<sup>rd</sup> place-Jaylynn Salzwedel.



2024 Poster Contest Winner – 1<sup>st</sup> Place Wood County

### Land Conservation Committee (LCC)

Chapter 92 of the Wisconsin State Statutes requires counties to have an LCC that oversees the administration and implementation of conservation programs that meet local priorities and the needs of land users. These programs might be local programs or state programs that are implemented at the local level. This requirement is met in Wood County by the *Conservation, Education and Economic Development (CEED) Committee*. See page 3 for a photo and names of the 2024 CEED committee members.

# Extension-Wood County

## 2024 Report...

Extension Wood County assists the Wood County Land & Water Conservation Department by providing educational support for county conservation programs.

Extension agriculture educators provide information on the management of soil, nutrients, water, livestock, crops and other related resources. Matt Lippert, Regional Dairy Educator in Wood County, provides information related to the dairy industry, the largest segment of Wood County's agricultural economy. He emphasizes the production of forages, dairy herd nutrition, dairy cattle genetics and dairy farm management. Lippert is a Certified Crop Advisor and a Professional Animal Scientist. Lippert and the Agriculture Institute utilizes webinars, farm magazine articles, e newsletters and print newsletters to broaden the reach beyond the face to face, workshops and other outreach methods. Extension also offers a statewide helpline for assistance with any question agriculture related.

Extension also utilizes its regional and statewide network of UW-Madison specialists and area educators to assist with nutrient and pest management and assisting producers to develop their own nutrient management plans. Dan Marzu, North Central Wisconsin Nutrient & Pest Management Outreach Specialist, works closely with the Wood County Land and Water Conservation Department.

Anna James, Natural Resource Educator, utilizes outreach and education programs to increase local knowledge and skill regarding strategies to reduce nonpoint source pollution and improve water quality. She supports multiple producer-led watershed groups and lake protection groups in Central Wisconsin and provides spaces for these groups to connect and collaborate in order to achieve shared water quality goals. One of Anna's main goals is to ensure that nonpoint source pollution activities are shaped by the needs of community members and local stakeholders. In order to achieve this goal, Anna strives to create intentional relationships with community members, and she utilizes social science research techniques, like social indicator surveys, to better understand the needs of the audiences she serves.

Jen McNelly, Natural Resources Groundwater Educator, joined Extension Wood County in February 2024. Jen provides Wood County and Central Wisconsin Communities with information, tools and resources to better understand groundwater and drinking water concerns and challenges. This includes the development of the Wood County Nitrate Risk Map that can be found in the Wood County Land and Water Management Plan. Jen also helps to facilitate County and citizen groups working on groundwater related issues.

Wood County is the top cranberry-producing county in North America so it is a natural fit to have Cranberry Outreach Specialist, Allison Jonjak, home based with Extension Wood County. Her efforts are focused on improving grower education in cranberry production practices and aligning researcher focus with grower needs. Allison hosts virtual and in-person events focusing on nutrient use efficiency, water use and quality, profitability and integrated pest management. Annual Nutrient Management Plan trainings continue to have excellent participation and support growers in sustainable ecosystem management. The Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers' Association has awarded Allison the Education Advocate award, and cranberry growers appreciate wetlands-specific management decision support and guidance.

Extension also provides educational programs in Horticulture, 4-H and Youth Development, Human Relationships and Development, Community Development, Natural and Environmental Resources and Nutrition education through the FoodWise program.

Stop by the Extension Office for plat books, farm record books, soil sample information, water quality and radon test kits.



### **Extension Wood County Staff:** (pictured on left)

Back (left to right): Wendy Young (Administrative Support), Anna Mitchell (Natural Resources Educator), Jeremy Solin (Area Extension Director), Matt Lippert (Agriculture Educator)

Front (left to right): Laura Huber (4-H Program Educator), Karli Tomsyck (Administrative Support), Kayla Rombalski (Community Development Educator)

Staff not pictured: Allison Jonjak (Cranberry Outreach Specialist); Mallory McGivern (Area 7 FoodWise Administrator); Jen McNelly (Natural Resources Groundwater Educator); Olga Meza (4-H Bilingual Associate Educator); Hannah Scott (FoodWise Nutrition Educator); Jennifer Swensen (Wisconsin 4-H Regional Program Manager); Ka Zoua Thao (Bilingual Community Health Worker); Michelle Van Krey (Healthy Communities Coordinator); Janell Wehr (Horticulture Educator)

**DATE:** May 7, 2025  
**TO:** Conservation, Education & Economic Development Committee (CEED)  
**FROM:** Emily Arndt, County Planner  
**RE:** Sewer Service Area Type 1 Amendment: I-State Truck Center - Marshfield

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## **STAFF MEMORANDUM**

### **Introduction:**

On March 13, 2025, Vreeland Associate Land Surveyors & Engineers, on behalf of the City of Marshfield submitted a petition to the Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) requesting a Type I Amendment to the Marshfield Sewer Service Area/Water Quality Management Plan. The primary reason for the Sewer Service Area (SSA) amendment is to create a private sanitary sewer and watermain for the I-State Truck Center property which has been annexed into the City of Marshfield. Petition documents are attached.

### **Background:**

The City of Marshfield, along with several other communities, adopted the Marshfield SSA/WQM Plan to comply with the Federal Clean Water Act and State Administrative Code NR 121. SSA planning is a process designed to anticipate a community's future needs for wastewater treatment. The plan identifies the most cost-efficient and environmentally sound 20-year sewerage growth boundaries. Wood County DPZ is the designated planning agency responsible for reviewing proposed sanitary sewer extensions and amendments to the plan. SSA planning areas include: City of Marshfield; Village of Hewitt; Towns of Marshfield, Cameron, and Lincoln; and Towns of Spencer and McMillan (Marathon County).

### **Analysis:**

This request proposes the addition of 9.998 acres to the SSA and removes an area of equal size. Both areas are presently located in the City of Marshfield (parts of S22 T25N, R03E and S19, T25N, R03E). A map and spreadsheet detailing the proposed SSA addition and removal are attached.

Again, the primary reason for the boundary amendment is to create a private sanitary sewer and watermain for the I-State Truck Center property which has been annexed into the City of Marshfield.

Areas to be added and removed do not contain any Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). Consequently, the proposed amendment will not stimulate any adverse impacts on water quality. All lands to be removed from the SSA are areas considered to have low potential for future development. The 9.998-acre area proposed to be added to the SSA promotes orderly and logical expansion of sewer development because it abuts the current limits of the Marshfield service area. Marshfield wastewater treatment facilities have adequate capacity to treat/handle additional wastewater flows generated by added areas.



**Amendment Procedures:**

Pursuant to the Marshfield SSA/WQM Plan – 2040 the following amendment procedures were followed:

Type I SSA Amendment Procedures		
	Completed	Details
1. Petition filed with P&Z	Yes	March 13, 2025
2. Petition forwarded to WDNR	Yes	April 17, 2025
3. Petition forwarded to City of Marshfield for review and comment	Yes	March 13, 2025
4. Petition forwarded to impacted municipalities	N/A	All within City of Marshfield
5. Petition/Public Hearing Notice forwarded to affected property owners	Yes	April 11, 2025
6. Public Hearing	Yes	March 4 <sup>th</sup> and 11 <sup>th</sup> 2025 (City of Marshfield)
7. WDNR review and comment	N/A	Review not required since the acreage added/removed is under 10 acres
8. City of Marshfield review and comment	Yes	April 30 <sup>th</sup>
9. CEED Committee review and recommendation		
10. County Board review and recommendation		
11. Forwarded to WDNR for formal notification		

**Conclusions and Recommendations:**

The DPZ adhered to the process for SSA amendments as outlined in the Marshfield SSA/WQM Plan. Additionally, the SSA amendment request is in general conformance with the Marshfield SSA/WQM Plan and other adopted local community development/land use plans.

County review and decision concerning approval or disapproval of the SSA amendment should be based on: comments from affected local governmental units; testimony received at the public hearing; wastewater treatment capacity; and development trends in the area. Based on the information submitted to the DPZ, the petition meets the amendment standards for approval.

**I forward a recommendation to approve the request to amend the Marshfield Sewer Service Area - adding 9.998 acres located in part of S22 T25N, R03E, and remove 9.998 acres located in part of S19, T25N, R03E, as identified on the attached exhibit map titled “Map of Proposed SSA Addition and Removal”. Furthermore, I recommend forwarding the attached resolution to the County Board with a favorable recommendation.**

**Exhibits:**

1. Petition Letter
2. Spreadsheet of Proposed SSA Addition and Removal
3. Map of Area Proposed to be added to SSA
4. Map of Area Proposed to be removed from SSA
5. City of Marshfield Review/Comment Letter
6. Resolution





6103 Dawn St.  
Weston, WI 54476  
Phone #: 715-241-0947

March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Emily Arndt, County Planner  
Jason Grueneberg, Director of Planning & Zoning  
Wood County Planning & Zoning Department  
400 Market Street  
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

Boundary Adjustment to Amend the Sanitary Sewer Service Area Map for the Marshfield Area Water Quality Management Plan

Dear Emily and Jason,

I-State Marshfield is petitioning Wood County Planning and Zoning for a boundary adjustment to amend the sanitary sewer service area map for the Marshfield Water Quality Management Plan. The primary reason for the request is to add three new commercial buildings to the property at the intersection of Drexler Drive and Heritage Drive. The plan is to create a private sanitary sewer and watermain for said property that has been annexed into the City of Marshfield. The proposed boundary adjustment would add 25 acres to the sanitary sewer service area.

Please see the attached utility plan, City of Marshfield specs, and location map.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dustin Vreeland, P.E.  
Vreeland Land Surveyors & Engineers  
715-241-0947  
dustin@vreelandassociates.us

## CITY OF MARSHFIELD SEWER SERVICE AREA (SSA) BOUNDARY AMENDMENT

### PROPOSED SSA ADDITION AND REMOVAL

#### Proposed addition to Marshfield SSA

<u>Owner</u>	<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Mailing Address</u>	<u>Parcel #</u>	<u>Area (ac)</u>	<u>Notes</u>
I-State Truck Center	Yet to be Determined	1505 South Central Ave. Marshfield, WI 54449	33-07473	9.998 acres	Subject property is all of parcel 33-07473

#### Proposed removal to Marshfield SSA

<u>Owner</u>	<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Mailing Address</u>	<u>Parcel #</u>	<u>Area (ac)</u>	<u>Notes</u>
City of Marshfield	400 West 29 <sup>th</sup> St. Marshfield, WI 54449	207 West 6 <sup>th</sup> St. Marshfield, WI 54449	33-03570-3 (West part)	9.998 acres	SW part of City airport



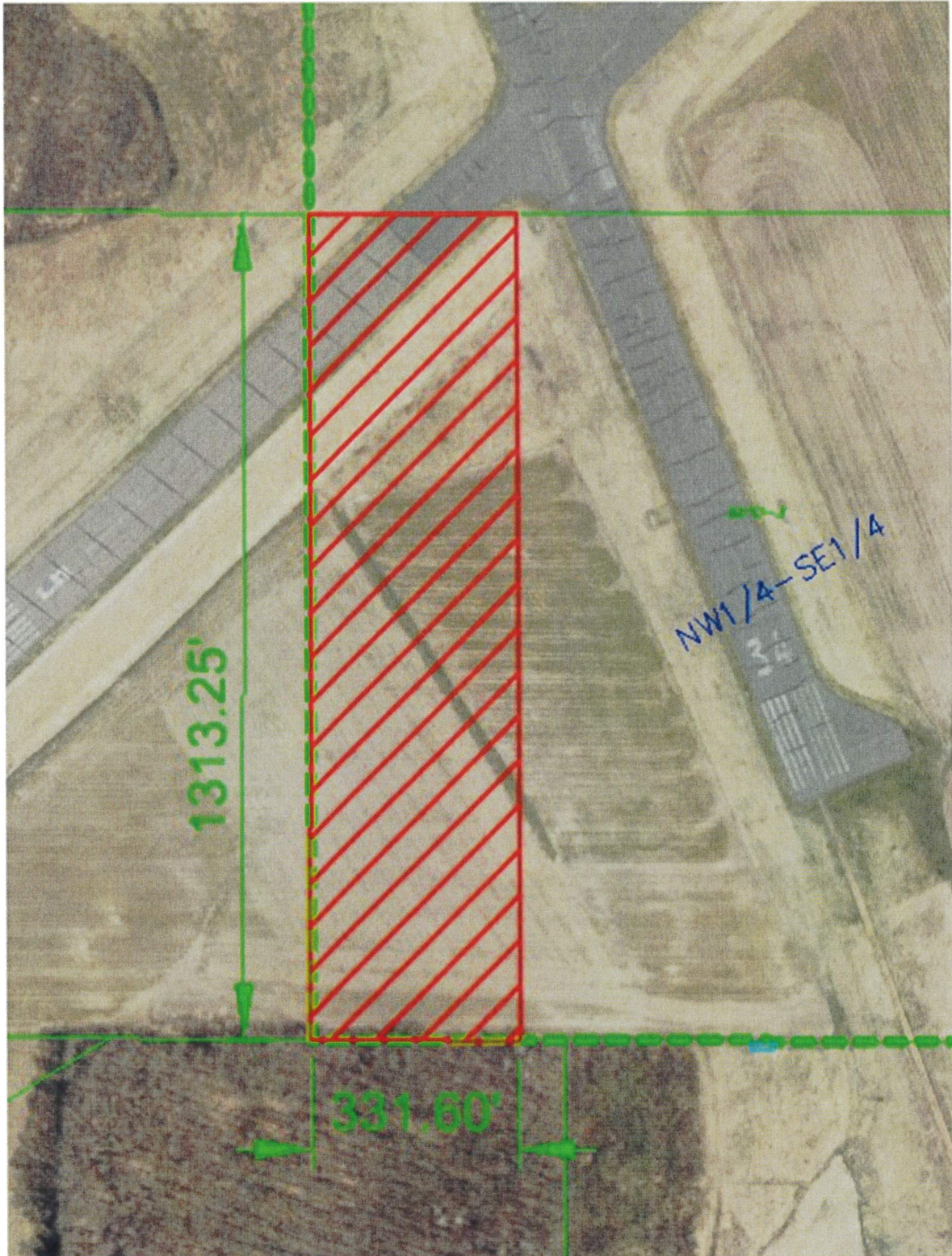


0 0.03 0.07 0.13 Miles

# Location of the Proposed SSA Addition







Location of the Proposed SSA Removal

City of Marshfield  
207 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Marshfield, WI 54449



Steve Barg  
City Administrator  
(715) 387-6597  
Fax (715) 384-9310

April 30, 2025

Emily Arndt, County Planner  
Wood County Courthouse  
400 Market Street  
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

RE: Proposed Amendment to the Marshfield Sanitary Sewer Service Area (SSA)

Dear Ms. Arndt:

The City of Marshfield has reviewed the proposed amendment to the Marshfield Sanitary Sewer Service Area, and we are in favor of the requested addition of 9.998 acres in the southeast portion of the City (from a recent annexation), offset by removal of 9.998 acres from the southwest portion of the City (part of the Marshfield Municipal Airport property).

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you very much!

Sincerely,

  
Steve Barg  
City Administrator  
City of Marshfield  
715-486-2003 (office)  
715-305-2659 (cell)  
E-mail: [Steve.Barg@ci.marshfield.wi.us](mailto:Steve.Barg@ci.marshfield.wi.us)





## RESOLUTION#

DATE May 20, 2025

Effective  
Date

May 20, 2025

Page 1 of 2

Introduced by Conservation, Education, and Economic Development Committee

<b>Motion:</b>	Adopted:	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 <sup>st</sup>	Lost:	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Tabled:	<input type="checkbox"/>
No: _____	Yes: _____	Absent: _____
Number of votes required:		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Majority	<input type="checkbox"/> Two-thirds	
Reviewed by: _____, Corp Counsel		
Reviewed by: _____, Finance Dir.		

INTENT & SYNOPSIS: Amend the Marshfield Sewer Service Area/Water Quality Management Plan – 2040.

FISCAL NOTE: No cost to Wood County.

**WHEREAS**, Chapter NR 121 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, is authorized under §281.11 and §281.12(1) of the Wisconsin Statutes, which are authorized under requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act to protect, maintain, and improve the quality and management of the waters of the state, ground and surface, public and private; and

**WHEREAS**, the Marshfield Area SSA/WQM Plan was adopted, as required by the aforementioned provisions, with the purpose of projecting and evaluating future wastewater treatment and collection needs over a 20-year planning period for the City of Marshfield and six (6) other municipalities in Wood and Marathon Counties; and

**WHEREAS**, the Wood County Department of Planning & Zoning (DPZ) is the designated planning agency responsible for reviewing proposed sanitary sewer extensions and amendments to said plan; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 11, 2025 Vreeland Associate Land Surveyors & Engineers, on behalf of the City of Marshfield submitted a petition to the Wood County DPZ requesting a Type I Amendment to the Marshfield Sewer Service Area (SSA) boundary, adding 9.998 acres to the SSA and removing an area of equal size, to allow sanitary sewer to be extended to the I-State Truck Center; and

**WHEREAS**, 9.998 acres is being removed from the SSA, all of which has low potential for development, to comply with requirements for Type I Amendments as identified in the Marshfield Area SSA/WQM Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 25, 2025 the City of Marshfield reviewed the proposed SSA amendment and is in favor of the proposed 9.998 acres to be added to the SSA allowing sanitary sewer service to the I-State Truck Center; and

Adopted by the County Board of Wood County, May 20, 2025

County Clerk

County Board Chairman

**WHEREAS**, on May 7, 2025 the Conservation, Education and Economic Development Committee conducted a public hearing to accept public testimony on the proposed SSA amendment, and following the public hearing the committee recommended approval; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Marshfield Sewer Service Area/Water Quality Management Plan - 2040 be amended to modify the 20-year SSA boundary to add 9.998 acres located on Heritage Drive, parcel 33-07473, in part of S22, T25N, R03E, City of Marshfield and remove 9.998 acres located in part of S19, T25N, R03E, City of Marshfield, as identified on the exhibit map titled “Map of Proposed SSA Addition and Removal”, enclosed herein.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Wood County DPZ forward the SSA amendment and this resolution to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.





**Wood County Economic Development  
(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**

400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495  
Phone: 715-421-8466

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## **Wood County (WI) Economic Development Funding Application Instructions & Grant Information**

The Wood County CEED (Conservation, Education, and Economic Development) Committee and the Board of Supervisors have made available a limited amount of economic development funds to be awarded each year to projects or proposals that seek to enhance the economic vitality of Wood County. This includes projects or proposals to encourage business growth and development, promote tourism and recreational opportunities, develop workforce retention or attraction strategies, and more.

**To be successful, proposals** should be clear and concise with a detailed description of the project's scope, program, or activity, timeline, and 1:1 match funding. A successful proposal will -

1. **Align to REDI Plan Goals:** Wood County's economic development strategy ([The Rural Economic Development Initiative \(REDI\) Plan](#)) outlines strategic goals in key focus areas. Proposals should align with one of these strategic goals -
  - o Supporting **Entrepreneurship**
  - o Offering collaborative **Economic Development Networking**
  - o Ensuring robust **Technology Infrastructure**
  - o Addressing **Housing** needs throughout the County
  - o Engaging in solutions for **Child Care** Accessibility & Affordability
  - o Supporting **Asset-Based Branding & Tourism**
  - o Developing combined county-wide **Recreational Mapping** to increase use and attract tourism
2. **Provide an ROI to Wood County:** Proposals should provide a detailed ROI (Return on Investment) description for the funds invested.
3. **Be Completed in One Year:** These economic development grant funds are not ongoing. Successful proposals will have a clear timeline and be completed within the 2025 calendar year.
4. **Include a 1:1 Match:** Proposals should include at least a 1:1 match. The match can be monetary or in-kind contributions. A description of the match must be included in the application.

**Who Can Apply?** Applications are welcome from local municipalities or units of government, non-profit/community organizations, or project-based teams. Proposals should have a Wood County focus.

**Funds Available & Grant Size:** A total of \$400,000 is available in this fund for the 2025 grant cycle. There is no cap in place for these requests, but keep in mind there is a **1:1 match preference** and scoring will be based, in part, on the match details.

**What we do not generally fund:** Annual campaigns, Operating expenses or losses, Debt retirement, Endowments, Direct support of individuals, Lobbying, Sectarian causes

**Process:** All applications are due by 4:30pm on Friday, July 5, 2024. Applications are reviewed in August, approved by the County Board in November and grantees will be notified following approval of the County budget. Note that funds will not be released until a project results report is presented to the CEED Committee.

**Questions/More Information:** Contact Jason or Victoria in Wood County Planning & Zoning with questions. 715-421-8466, [jason.grueneberg@woodcountywi.gov](mailto:jason.grueneberg@woodcountywi.gov), [victoria.wilson@woodcountywi.gov](mailto:victoria.wilson@woodcountywi.gov).



**Wood County Economic Development  
(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**  
400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495  
Phone: 715-421-8466

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## 2025 Wood County (WI) Economic Development Funding Request

**Proposal Title:** Paper Mill Reuse and Redevelopment Implementation

**Applicant Organization:** Village of Port Edwards

**Website:** <http://www.vi.portedwards.wi.gov/>

**Mailing Address:** 201 Market Ave, Port Edwards, WI 54469

**Street Address:** (if different)

**Contact Name & Title:** Duane Gau, Village Administrator

**Phone:** 715-887-3512

**Email:** [villageadmin@portedwardswi.gov](mailto:villageadmin@portedwardswi.gov)

### Proposal Narrative

**1. REDI Alignment** (select one) General Economic Development ☐

If selected other, please describe:

**2. Please provide a summary of your proposal.** Explain how it is consistent with and supports the Wood County REDI (Rural Economic Development Initiative) Plan.

See "Proposal Narrative" attachement

**3. Have you received funds through this grant in the past?** (if yes, check box) ☒

**Have you applied in the past?** (if yes, check box) ☒

If yes, in which years did you receive funds and in which years did you apply?

See "Proposal Narrative" attachement



**Wood County Economic Development  
(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**

400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495  
Phone: 715-421-8466

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- 4. Describe the timeline for this proposal.** Note this grant requires the funding recipient to complete work on the proposal/project within one calendar year (2025).

See "Proposal Narrative" attachement

- 5. Explain how this proposal will provide a Return on Investment (ROI) to Wood County.** Please be as specific as possible. E.g. The housing incentive we offered with County Economic Development funds will lead to an annual tax levy increase of \$X.

See "Proposal Narrative" attachement

- 6. Describe the match for this proposal.** Note that a 1:1 match is preferred. E.g. For a \$5,000 grant award, the grantee must provide \$5,000 of in-kind or financial match. The match must occur within the calendar year (2025) the funds are awarded for.

See "Proposal Narrative" attachement





**Wood County Economic Development  
(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**  
400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495  
Phone: 715-421-8466

## Funding Considerations/Request Summary

(provide separate spreadsheet/budget if needed)

Budget Summary		Budget Detail	
Total Organization Budget	\$	Revenue/Income	
Total Proposal Cost	\$	Funding Source A	\$
Total Amount Requested	\$	Funding Source B	\$
Total Match *	\$	Total Revenue/Income	\$
* Please provide a match explanation in question 6.		Expenses	
		Expense A	\$
		Expense B	\$
		Expense C	\$
		Total Expense	\$

## Project Reporting Requirement

As a reporting requirement of receiving an Economic Development Grant, a one-page summary project report will be prepared and presented to the CEED Committee. **This report must be submitted no later than Tuesday, October 1, 2025.** Funding will not be released to the applicant prior to the reporting requirement being met. Please also note that funds are not able to be carried over into the following year.

## Signatures

I attest that the information in this application submitted to Wood County is true and correct.

### Applicant

	Duane A. Gau	7-3-2024
Signature	Printed Name	Date

### Highest Organization Elected Official/Board Chair

	Betsy A. Mancel	7-3-2024
Signature	Printed Name	Date

**1. REDI Alignment:**

General Economic Development

**2. Please provide a summary of your proposal. Explain how it is consistent with and supports the Wood County REDI (Rural Economic Development Initiative) Plan.**

The Village of Port Edwards was greatly affected by the closure of the Domtar Paper Mill in 2008. At the time it closed, the Mill provided over 500 direct jobs and an additional 800 indirect jobs, which was already down significantly from the more than 1,200 jobs it once directly supported on-site.

In the years after the Mill's closure, redevelopment and reuse of the Mill and surrounding buildings has been slower than expected. However, DMI plans to resume demolition of the Mill building later this summer.

In preparation for the demolition of the Mill building, the Village of Port Edwards completed a Reuse and Redevelopment plan focused on identifying next steps for the surrounding properties. A copy of the plan is attached to this application. The plan lays the groundwork for next steps to revitalize the area, particularly the vacant former Administration Building. This building is half-owned by Wood County, with DMI retaining ownership of the other half. Split ownership of the building and years of decay make this an exceptionally difficult property to redevelop.

Port Edwards is a small rural community that does not have the staff capacity to carry out all of the implementation activities identified in the plan. We propose using the grant funding to make this plan a reality. We propose hiring a consultant to work with Wood County, DMI, and other stakeholders. The consultant will refine a preferred alternative and craft an RFP/RFQ to recruit a developer that can execute the plan's vision.

The Village has had preliminary discussions with the YMCA and the owner of the Computer Data Center regarding the redevelopment of those two properties. This project also would allow the Village to explore those concepts in more depth and create additional redevelopment around the Mill. Those properties could be added to the RFP/RFQ process if the property owners choose to participate.

The Reuse and Redevelopment plan includes four design alternatives that encompass the goals of the Wood County REDI Plan. In particular:

- **Housing:** The plan encourages the development of housing on the Administrative Building property and the YMCA property.
- **Recreational Trail:** The plan envisions a trail loop through the property that connects the Village to Wisconsin Rapids and Nekoosa. This centrally located property will serve as a trailhead and resting spot for trail users to enjoy the scenic waterfront views.
- **Vibrant Community to Live, Work, and Play:** Despite the long stretches of rivers throughout the region, there are virtually no existing commercial establishments where customers can be directly on the waterfront. This location can take full advantage of the scenic views across the Mill Pond and will be a treasured outdoor dining and recreational experience for locals and visitors alike. Featuring a brewpub, recreational trail, outdoor

sports, and a music stage, this location will draw tourists to the area and improve the quality of life for residents.

**3. Have you received funds through this grant in the past? Yes**

**Have you applied in the past? Yes**

**If yes, in which years did you receive funds and in which years did you apply?**

In 2023, the Village applied for 5 projects totaling a request of \$450,000. The requests were for Murals (\$75,000), Dog Park (\$10,000), Bike Trail (\$80,000), Downtown Improvements (\$100,000), and Land Acquisition (\$150,000).

Two of the five requests received partial funding The approved projects were for a bike trail (\$20,000) and land acquisition (\$75,000), for a total of \$95,000.

**Commented [SH1]:** Duane, can you confirm if these were spent, or did the Village have to return the funds?

**4. Describe the timeline for this proposal. Note this grant requires the funding recipient to complete work on the proposal/project within one calendar year (2025).**

Timeframe	Activity
Month 1	Kick-off meetings with DMI and Wood County
Month 1-3	Refine a preferred alternative and decide key components of the RFP/RFQ (sale price, timeline, portion of property for sale, etc.)
	Meet with state and federal agencies to identify funding sources that will be the best fit for this project.
	Meet with potential end-users to identify viability/interest for the targeted reuses of the property
	Meet with surrounding property owners to identify other redevelopment opportunities for the YMCA and Computer Data Center buildings
Month 3-4	Assemble developer list based on the preferred concept alternative and create an RFP/RFQ
Month 3-6	Issue RFP/RFQ and interview developers
Month 7	Select developer to implement preferred alternative

**5. Explain how this proposal will provide a Return on Investment (ROI) to Wood County**

This proposal will provide a significant ROI on Wood County's \$10,000 investment in the following ways:

- 1) The Administrative Building, partially owned by Wood County, is a massive liability. It is severely blighted and a target for vandalism. In our assessment, the building needs to be demolished to clear the way for a more productive use of the property. This proposal will identify a buyer, identify demolition funding from state and/or federal sources, and put the property back into productive use. This will save taxpayer money and eliminate the County's risk of liability from owning a severely blighted building.
- 2) The buildings in and around the Mill property have lost substantial value from their peak. Spurring reinvestment in this area will increase the tax base for the County and create

numerous jobs for residents. We project that implementing the redevelopment concepts would bring the property from \$0 valuation to upwards of \$3.5 million - \$4.8 million in taxable value.

- 3) The Village has limited funds and staff capacity to apply for federal/state grants. This project will enable the Village to apply for hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal/state grants to fund demolition of the Administrative Building.

**6. Describe the match for this proposal. Note that a 1:1 match is preferred.**

The total project budget is \$20,000 (see "Project Budget" attachment.) We propose a 1:1 match, with the Village providing \$10,000 and the County providing \$10,000. The project is expected to take approximately 7 months to complete.



# Port Edwards Mill Implementation Plan

				HOURS BY POSITION			
				Principal Planner	Assistant Planner	Associate Designer	Admin. Assistant
V&A Staff:				Scott Harrington	Scott Heacock	Elona	Nicole
Hourly Rate:				\$200	\$90	\$150	\$70
PHASES & TASKS:			Notes				
Phase 1: Mill Reuse and Revitalization Plan Implementation				44	92	15	10
1	Biweekly Meetings: DMI and Wood County			12	12		
2	Refine Concepts			5	5	15	
3	Informational Meetings with Potential End-Users and Developers (3-4)			5	10		
4	Discussions with state/federal agencies to identify best sources of grant funding (3-4)			5	10		
5	Discussions with surrounding property owners (YMCA and CDC)			5	10		
2	Assemble Developer List			2	10		
3	Draft RFP/RFQ			5	25		10
4	Interview Developers			5	10		

Total V&A Hours	Total V&A Labor	Printing Costs		TOTAL COST for PHASE
			Round Trip Miles	
			\$/mile:	
			\$0.680	
<b>161</b>	<b>\$20,030</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$20,030</b>
24	\$3,480			\$3,480
25	\$3,700			\$3,700
15	\$1,900			\$1,900
15	\$1,900			\$1,900
15	\$1,900			\$1,900
12	\$1,300			\$1,300
40	\$3,950			\$3,950
15	\$1,900			\$1,900



Village of Port Edwards

# Reuse and Redevelopment Plan

# Acknowledgements

## Village Board

- Betsy Mancl, President
- Caleb McGregor, Vice President
- Tiara Grunden
- Jennifer Moore
- Lonn Radtke
- Erik Saylor
- Joe Zurfluh

## City Staff

- Duane Gau, Interim Village Administrator
- Ben Martinson, Public Works Director
- Diane Tremmel, Clerk/Treasurer

## Village Planning Commission

- Tiara Grunden
- Doug Kasten
- Bob Kroll
- Lisa Miller
- Scott Stewart

## Department of Natural Resources

- Michael Prager
- Candice Quandt

## Vandewalle & Associates

- Scott Harrington, AICP
- Scott Heacock
- Elona Bartnick
- Jeff Maloney
- Dean Proctor
- Dan Eckberg, AICP

*This plan was made possible with funding provided by the Wisconsin DNR Remediation and Redevelopment Program.*

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## Introduction

The Village of Port Edwards was greatly affected by the closure of the Domtar Paper Mill in 2008. At the time it closed, the Mill provided over 500 direct jobs and an additional 800 indirect jobs, which was already down significantly from the more than 1,200 jobs it once directly supported on-site. Shortly after the closure, the Village assembled a detailed plan for redevelopment of the property in partnership with the new property owner, DMI Acquisitions.

In the years after the Mill's closure, redevelopment and reuse of the Mill and surrounding buildings has been slower than expected. Understandably, Village residents and elected officials are frustrated by the lack of redevelopment progress on the property. The delay began when the demolition contractor for the project filed for bankruptcy in 2015. This resulted in years of litigation between DMI and the demolition contractor. Now that their litigation is resolved, DMI plans to resume demolition on the Mill building in 2024. As of the writing of this plan, DMI was pursuing a demolition permit approval and a development agreement with the Village.

Given the many years of delay, the Village is eager to move this process along as quickly as possible. This plan seeks to lay the groundwork for a quick and realistic redevelopment that can resolve this persistent issue for the Village of Port Edwards. With progress once again occurring on the site, this plan revisited earlier planning efforts and explored the surrounding context for additional opportunities to generate tax base for the Village.

The largest unknown for the planning area is redevelopment of the former Administration Building. The building sits on two separate parcels, and the northern portion was transferred to Wood County due to delinquent property taxes in 2022, while the other half remains owned by DMI. This building presents a great challenge and opportunity for redevelopment in this area. This analysis culminated in four scenario alternatives that set a vision that reflects current economic trends and community priorities. This plan was made possible with funding provided by the Wisconsin DNR Remediation and Redevelopment Program.

2008 – Domtar closes the Mill.

2013 – DMI purchases the Mill property.

2014 – DMI begins demo.

2015 – Demo ends prematurely due to contractor going bankrupt.

2017 – DMI sells warehouse property. Begins operating as a warehouse for Milk Specialties Global.

2022 – Computer Data Center and Administration building are transferred to Wood County due to delinquent property taxes.

2023- DMI resolves litigation with demolition contractor. Begins process of reapplying for demolition permits and hiring new demolition contractor.

2023 – Investor purchases computer data center.





## Existing Property Conditions and Ownership

The property has a long and complex history with a variety of issues that need to be considered during any redevelopment. Based on conversations with individuals familiar with the properties, this section documents the overarching property conditions and conditions of buildings within the study area.

### Overarching Property Conditions:

VPLE: Prior to selling the property, Domtar obtained site closure and a Voluntary Liability Exemption (VPLE) for the entire Mill property. There was significant environmental testing and remediation of the property conducted as a result of that process. There are a few small areas of continuing obligations on the Study Site that are encapsulated and cannot be disturbed. There are no known environmental issues on the property for the former Administration Building.

Compatible Reuses: The proposed Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning for the Mill properties allows a wide range of uses, including residential, commercial, and industrial. DMI plans to increase the number of rail spurs on their property and lease out spaces primarily for industrial uses. Based on the configuration of the property and location of those planned improvements, we have determined that residential and other non-industrial uses are feasible on the Administration Building site.

Parcel Lines: When the Mill had a single property owner, parcel lines had no bearing on the location of new buildings or utilities. This left unresolved issues of utilities on the property without proper easements and parcel lines that divide buildings in half. Most of these issues will be resolved as DMI completes the Village's PUD process and replats the property. There are remaining issues concerning covenants between property owners for maintenance of internal utility and private road infrastructure. The implementation phase will need to consider the responsibilities each property owner will have for developing and maintaining the shared infrastructure in the area.

Public Water Access: The Mill Pond is a great amenity for the Village with great views and calm waters. However, there is very limited public access available. The Administration Building site provides a great opportunity to create access to the Mill Pond. A planned bike trail along the waterfront will create a complementary recreational asset. The proximity to the historic John Alexander statue adds an additional element of community importance to

this location. These factors make this an ideal location for a brewpub or restaurant that can serve as a resting point along the trail for people to relax and take in the scenery. A brewpub or restaurant could support additional recreational facilities for the Mill Pond and surrounding open space without creating new maintenance costs for the Village.

Flooding: Basement flooding and leaking roofs have been an ongoing issue in the Study Site, particularly for the Administration Building and CDC. These buildings have water and mold damage that has been unaddressed while they have sat vacant for years. Based on the assessment of individuals that have recently walked through the buildings, rehabbing these buildings would, at a minimum, require completely gutting the inside down to the studs and starting from scratch.

Asbestos: Due to the age of the buildings in the Study Site, there is a significant amount of asbestos in nearly every building. The increased costs of asbestos remediation need to be considered in any rehabilitation or redevelopment of buildings on the property.

Economic Conditions: Wood County is designated as a “Distressed County” by WEDC, and the Study Site is located in an Opportunity Zone. Although attracting new business to an economically challenged region will be difficult, these designations open up new sources of funding that can be used to implement the plan. Additionally, initial stakeholder outreach revealed that existing property owners are unsure of the best industries to target for recruitment. Understanding and communicating the local economy’s strengths and developing a list of target industries for recruitment is an important factor in implementation.

Waterfront Trail: A long-discussed feature on the Study Site is a trail through the property along the waterfront of the Mill Pond, hydro spillway, and the Wisconsin River. Engineering concepts already have been completed for the trail, but funding that was previously allocated to the project was redirected due to ongoing property maintenance issues on the Mill Building. When complete, the trail would provide a riverfront path for Village residents to enjoy, complete with a public art installation honoring the history of the Mill.

Power: The site was originally powered by the Domtar-owned hydro dams. In 2014, the hydro dams were disconnected from the site and new distribution lines to Alliant Energy were installed. However, only the Warehouse was reconnected with new transformers. All of the buildings on the Mill property have transformers, but not all of them are connected to power yet. Getting all of the buildings up and running will likely require significant internal rewiring.

Downtown: Market Avenue serves as the Village of Port Edward’s historic downtown and is the only walkable business district in the Village. It features Village Hall, a Post Office, restaurant, hair salon, and a few other local businesses. Local businesses in the downtown were severely impacted by the closure of the Domtar Mill in 2008. Almost overnight, the community transitioned from a job center into a bedroom community. Since 2008, the Village has taken bold efforts to revitalize business in the community to reestablish its commercial core and bring jobs back into the downtown area. The Downtown is less than a 10-minute walk from the Mill property.





## Surrounding Building Conditions and Plans

Many of the properties in this area are under private ownership and already have detailed plans in place for future development. The key exception is the former Administration Building. The split ownership of the property is a major impediment to redevelopment. Additionally, there is no clear vision for desired redevelopment. With that in mind, the scenario alternatives in this plan focus on the former Administration Building to create a clear vision that is compatible with adjacent properties. Map #1 details the existing ownership and usage of nearby properties.

Former Administration Building: This 153,000 square foot, three story building was expanded over time and is located on two separate parcels. The northern section was foreclosed on by Wood County due to delinquent property taxes, while the southern section is still owned by DMI. Potential investors have stated that the split ownership of the building is a major factor in their decision not to purchase and redevelop this building. Resolving the split ownership of this building is a critical component to putting this blighted property to productive use. DMI's previous demolition permit included a concept of property lines that put the administration building on a single parcel. The scenario alternatives in this plan used those proposed property lines as the basis for the designs.

Additionally, the building's configuration (which is actually four separate, interconnected structures) and prior uses for office, storage, laboratory, and pro-type manufacturing spaces creates difficulties in adapting to other uses. In 2020, the Village hired an engineering firm to investigate the building conditions throughout the Mill property. A review of that report, along with building blueprints, to determine the reuse potential for each building can be found in Appendix A. In summary, the west wing is the most intact and may be salvageable. However, the rest of the building is in poor condition and ill-suited for reuse. The salvageable portion of the building is much wider than a typical residential building footprint and would be most suitable for flex space use.

Mill Building: The Mill was vacated in 2008 and has been empty since that time. In 2014, demolition began on the Mill but was cut short when the demolition contractor filed for bankruptcy. After years of delays, DMI has resolved their litigation with the contractor and plans to resume demolition on the Mill building during 2024. DMI recently hired a new demolition contractor and is in the process of filling out the four required demolition permits for the property (state, local, FERC, and DNR). They have hired an engineering firm to complete the platting and redesign process for the building. Conceptual renderings of the rehabbed Mill Building are already complete. In short, the southern portion of the Mill Building will be demolished, the southern exterior wall will be replaced, and the remaining 410,000 square foot, two-story building will be subdivided and leased. The building tenants are expected to be industrial in nature, and DMI has begun targeted outreach to prospective tenants. The building is served by rail spurs and will have newly constructed loading docks for trucks at both levels. Truck traffic will be routed through Filtration Plant Road.

Chip Building: Currently located on the same lot as the Mill Building, this 24,500 square foot, single story building will be located on a separate lot after the PUD and replatting for the entire site are approved. The building features 23,000 square feet of open area with 40-foot ceilings in addition to a small office space and rest rooms. It has rail access and is suitable for manufacturing, processing, or assembly-type uses.



**YMCA Building:** Located across the street to the north of the Warehouse, this building has been largely abandoned after a new YMCA was built in nearby Wisconsin Rapids. The building offers limited access to a 24-hour fitness center, daycare, boxing gym, and basketball court. Large portions of the complex are in disrepair and have been closed to the public. The YMCA is starting an internal process with the board of directors and additional stakeholders to determine future reuse for the property.

**Domtar Hydro Plant:** Domtar has retained ownership of the Hydro Plant that currently is attached to the east end of the Mill Building, as well as much of the shoreline along the Mill Pond. The Hydro Plant provided power to the Study Site when Domtar owned the entire property, and still powers Domtar-owned properties outside of the Study Site. However, Wisconsin law prevents a non-utility from selling power to another user. As a result, the Hydro Plant was disconnected from the Study Site after the property was sold.

**Former Computer Data Center (CDC):** Formerly owned by DMI, this 12,500 square foot building was recently foreclosed on by Wood County due to delinquent property taxes. This single-purpose structure has not been occupied in more than a decade and has water damage throughout the building, which creates challenges for reuse. In addition, the basement of the building, where the utility systems are located, is subject to frequent flooding. There is also asbestos located throughout the building.

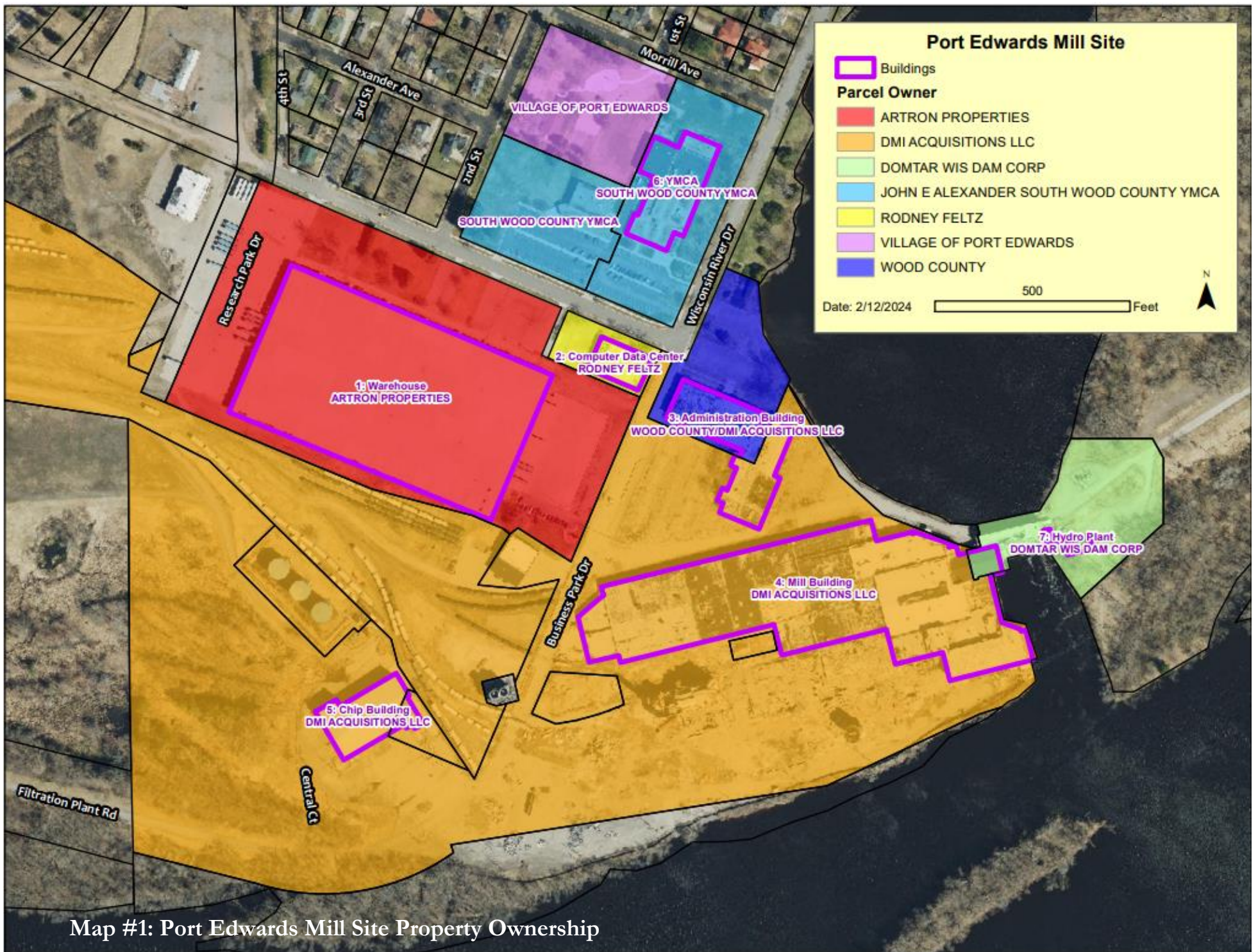
The original reuse plan for this building was to continue using it as a computer data center. It received some initial interest, but ultimately all potential tenants passed on the building due to its deteriorated structural condition.

In late 2023, an investor purchased the property from Wood County. He intends to rehab the building for industrial/manufacturing use.

**Warehouse:** This 290,000 square foot building is owned by Artron Properties and occupied by a single long-term tenant (Milk Specialties Global). The tenant also leases the former truck repair building located to the immediate west. Artron Properties recently invested in a new fire suppression system for the warehouse connected to the Village's water system due to their concerns about maintenance of a shared system with DMI. However, the Village's water system may need to be upgraded or moved to serve the warehouse's new system and accommodate anticipated future expansions.







Map #1: Port Edwards Mill Site Property Ownership





## Regional Economic and Housing Trends

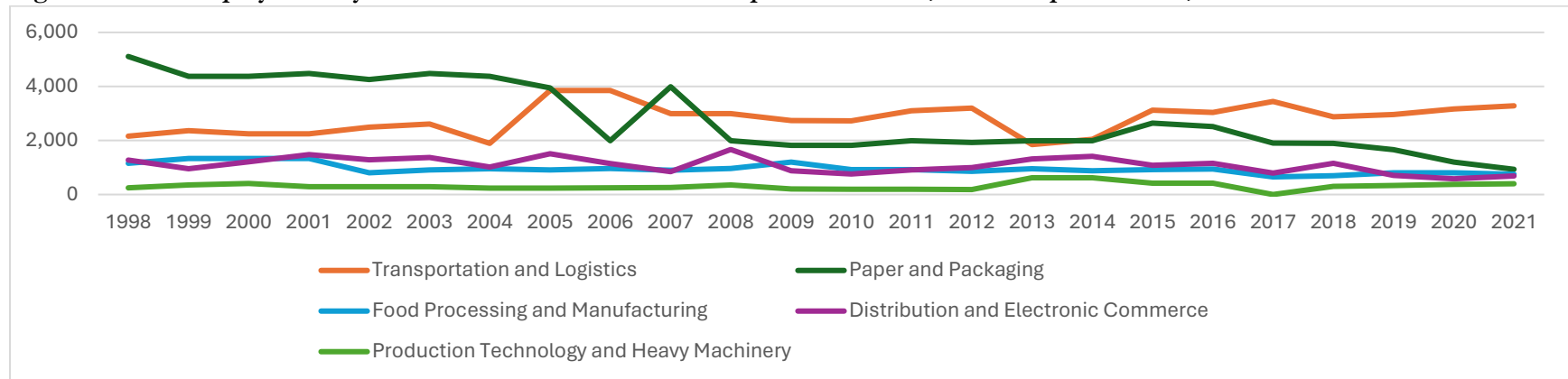
Understanding regional economic and housing trends is an important aspect of determining future reuses for the property. Key trends are highlighted in this section, and additional economic and demographic information can be found in Appendix C.

### Economic Trends

Historically, Wood County was known for the strength of the paper industry. In recent years, the County has been hit with large job losses from closures of large established paper mills. In Port Edwards, the Mill closed in 2008 and has yet to see redevelopment or reuse of the main mill property and many of the surrounding buildings. Wood County is designated as a “Distressed County” by WEDC, and the Village of Port Edwards is located in an Opportunity Zone. Attracting new business will be difficult, but the Distressed County and Opportunity Zone designations can potentially attract investment to the area.

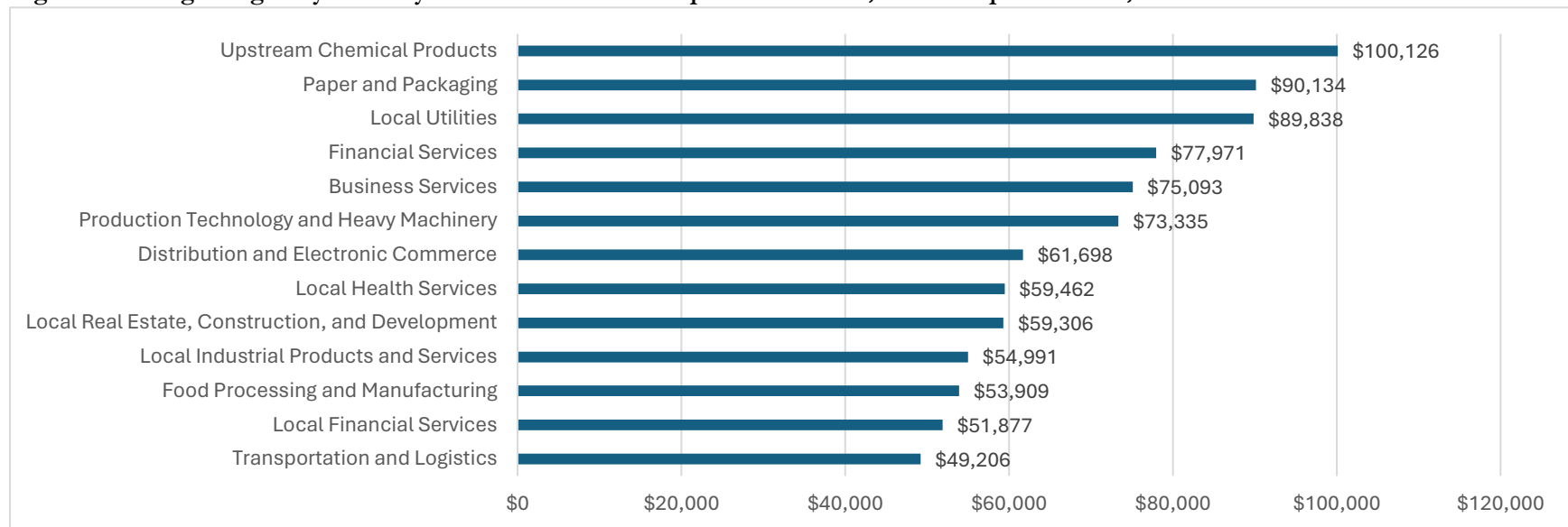
The Village of Port Edwards is located within the Wisconsin Rapids-Marshfield, WI Micropolitan Area. As shown in the graph below, the total employment in the Paper and Packaging industry has declined significantly. At the same time, the Transportation and Logistics industry has grown. Despite the large losses of jobs from paper mill closures, the unemployment rate in the region is 3.1%. A metric commonly used by economists for “full employment” is approximately 3-5%. This means the region has reached “full employment” and has a shortage of workers for available jobs. However, it is important to note that although the decrease in Paper and Packaging jobs has largely been offset by an increase in Transportation and Logistics jobs, the average salary for Transportation and Logistics jobs (\$49,206) is significantly lower than the average salary for Paper and Packaging jobs (\$90,134). These factors all indicate that future job recruitment efforts in the Village should focus on higher wage industries to replace the high-wage jobs that were lost when the paper mills closed. This can be accomplished through targeted outreach efforts to individual businesses and by creating community amenities that attract and retain a high-wage workforce.

**Figure 1: Total Employment By Economic Cluster - Wisconsin Rapids-Marshfield, WI Micropolitan Area, 1998-2021**



Source: U.S. Cluster Mapping Project

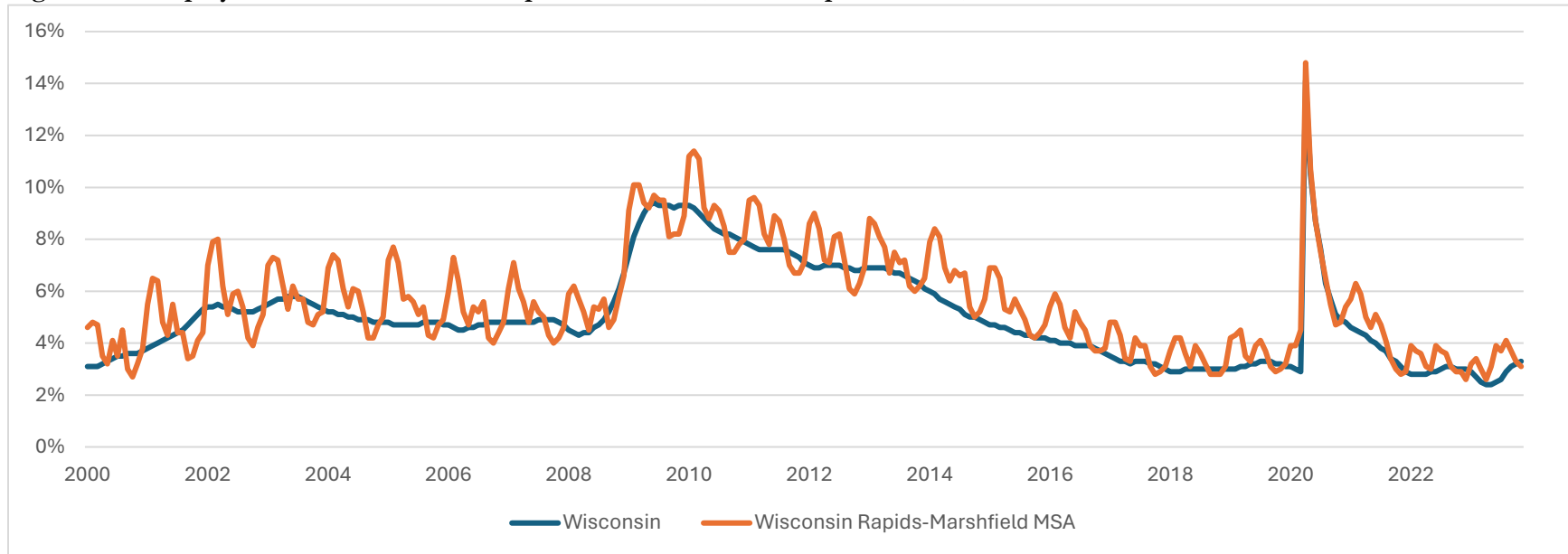
**Figure 2: Average Wages By Industry Cluster - Wisconsin Rapids-Marshfield, WI Micropolitan Area, 2021**



Source: U.S. Cluster Mapping Project



**Figure 3: Unemployment Rate - Wisconsin Rapids-Marshfield, WI Micropolitan Area, 2000-2021**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Housing Trends

Interviews with stakeholders and a review of U.S. Census Bureau data revealed a lack of workforce housing in the Village. Some stakeholders stated that a lack of housing affordable to middle-class families is a barrier to filling existing jobs.

A key metric for determining supply and demand in the housing market is the vacancy rate. If too many units are vacant, it indicates a lack of demand for housing. If not enough units are vacant, it indicates a lack of supply for housing that makes it difficult for new residents to move into the community. For owner-occupied housing, a 2% vacancy rate is considered “healthy.” For renter-occupied housing, a 5% vacancy rate is considered “healthy.” These are both general rules of thumb, but are a good starting point for communities to understand the housing needs in their community.

Port Edwards is a small community, and therefore has a fairly significant margin of error in U.S. Census Bureau estimates. To account for this, trends in Wisconsin and Wood County as a whole were included for comparison. Port Edwards and Wood County both show a lower vacancy rate than the state as a whole for owner-occupied housing and are well below the “healthy” rate of 2%. Rental occupancy rates are closer to a “healthy” vacancy rate of 5%.

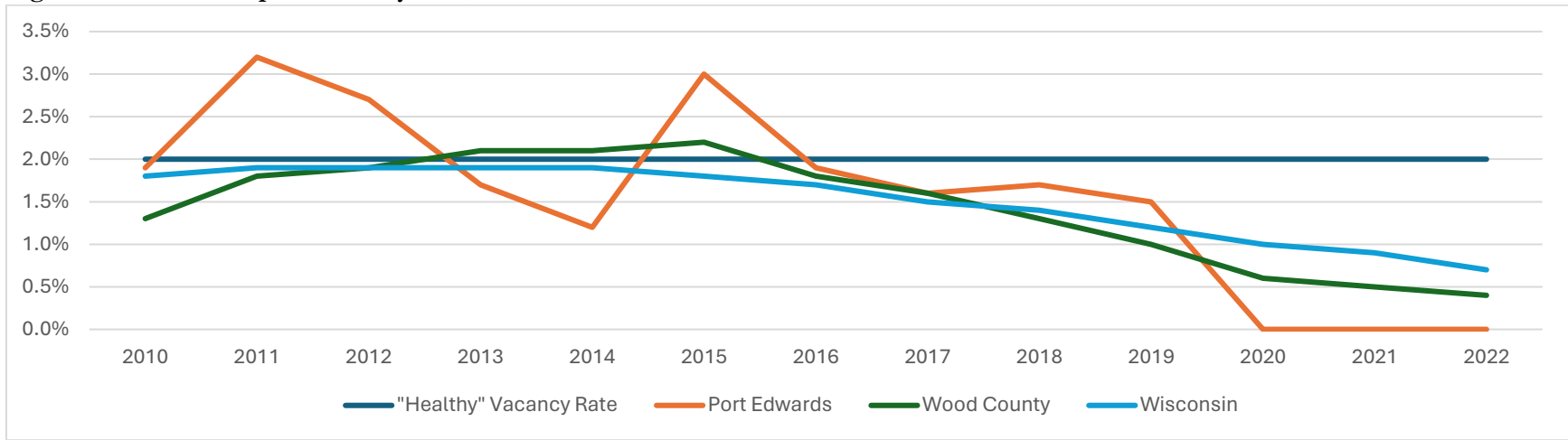
These trends are exacerbated by the lack of new housing built within the community in recent years. More than 85% of the existing housing units in Port Edwards were built prior to 1980, and 21% were built prior to 1939. Units built prior to 1980 are more likely to have environmental hazards such as asbestos, lead paint, and lead pipes. These are all factors that may push prospective residents to choose to live in a neighboring community instead of choosing Port Edwards.

Most developable land within the Village’s municipal boundary is already developed. Future residential development will require either growing outwards (annexing land from neighboring towns) or growing upwards (infill redevelopment for multi-family units in larger buildings).

Like other communities in the region, Port Edwards has struggled with a declining population. This is attributable to a number of factors, such as the loss of jobs from the Mill site, lack of new housing construction, and an increasing number of knowledge workers moving to larger metros for increased economic opportunity. A declining population poses challenges for recruiting new businesses or residential development to the Village, particularly if there is not sufficient workforce or new households to meet demand for new development. Reversing this trend will require action from the community to attract new residents. In addition to attracting new jobs, local communities can attract new residents by investing in amenities that increase the overall quality of life in the Village. Existing initiatives in the Village to rejuvenate the downtown, create a bike path through the Village, and maintain local park space are all important tools for attracting new residents to the area.

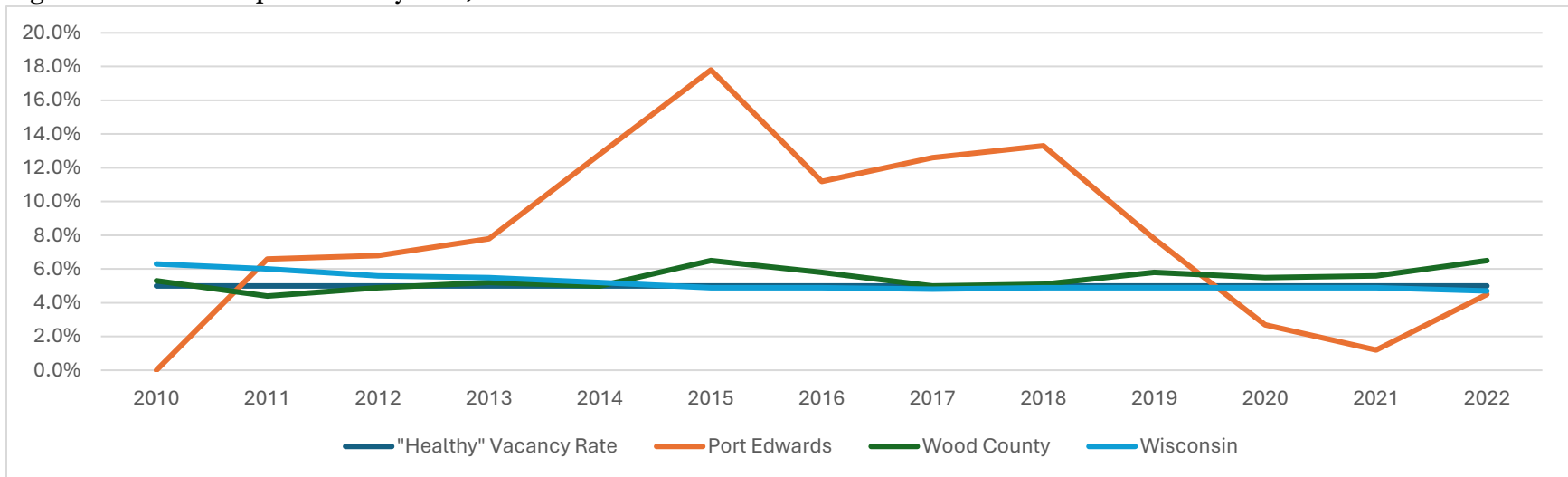


**Figure 4: Owner-Occupied Vacancy Rate, 2010-2022**



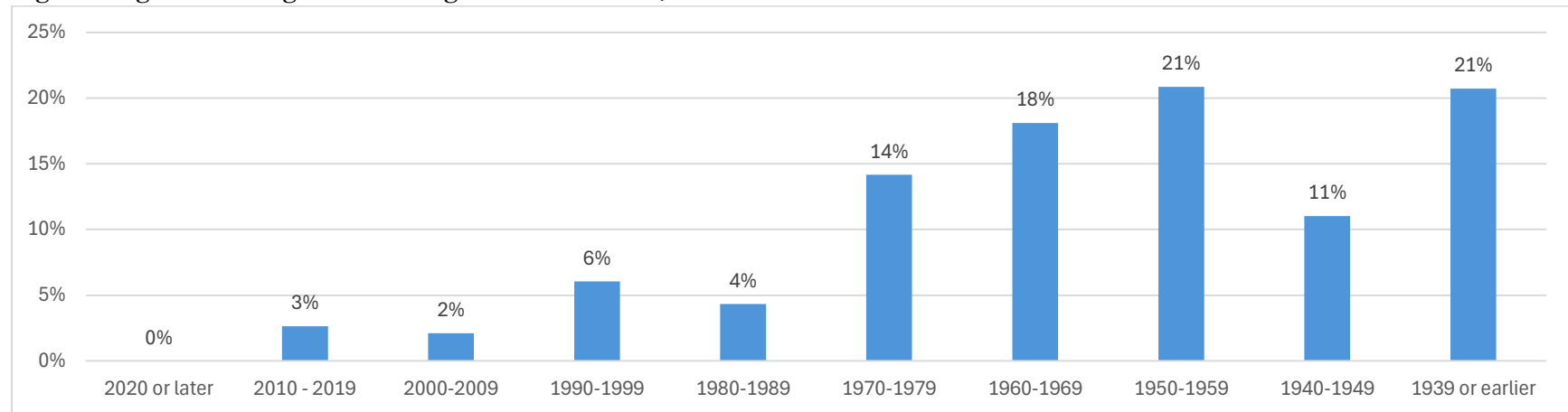
Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5 year estimates

**Figure 5: Rental-Occupied Vacancy Rate, 2010-2022**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates

**Figure 6: Age of Housing Stock – Village of Port Edwards, 2022**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Figure 7: Population 2000-2023**

	2000	2010	2020	2023*
Port Edwards	1,944	1,818	1,762	1,736
Wood County	75,555	74,749	74,207	73,706
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	5,951,400

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

\*Source: WisDOA 2023 Population Estimates by Municipality



## Public Input Summary

The Village held public meetings on February 13<sup>th</sup> and May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 to get feedback from Village residents and elected officials. The first meeting focused on determining overarching priorities for the Mill property along with identifying preferred reuses for the Administration Building and Computer Data Center, both of which were owned by Wood County at the outset of the planning process. The second meeting focused on reviewing the four scenario alternatives developed by the consultant.

The top priorities for the community are quickly redeveloping the site, increasing the tax base, and creating new opportunities for business. Attendees were less concerned about the specific reuses that could occur for each building. Based on the public feedback, the concept alternatives for the plan focus on the Administration Building property to identify opportunities that could be quickly and effectively executed.

When asked about new public amenities on the property, attendees did not want the Village to be responsible for maintaining new park space. There was still support for a new trail along the pond that is planned to be constructed as part of the DMI redevelopment of the Mill building.

Lastly, attendees were blunt about the challenges for redeveloping this area during both meetings. They noted that the Mill was supposed to be demolished over 10 years ago, and they are incredibly frustrated by the lack of action to complete the project. During the meeting, attendees identified solving the split ownership of the Administration Building as the key challenge for redevelopment of that property. They also noted that there will be challenges recruiting new businesses to the area. After reviewing the four scenario alternatives, attendees noted a preference for Alternative 2: Recreation Destination.



## Public Meeting #1 Survey Results

When asked to rank potential reuses for the building on a scale from 1-5, the top priorities were increasing the property tax base, creating new jobs/business opportunities, and redeveloping the properties quickly.

Overarching Priorities	Average Score
Increase property tax base	4.56
Create new jobs/ business opportunities	4.44
Redevelop/rehab properties quickly	4.11
Create new housing	3.44
Create new public/ recreational amenities	3.11
Reuse existing facilities to the maximum extent possible	3.00
Create new shopping choices	2.89
Create new health care/ institutional facilities	2.89
Create public lake access on Nepco pond.	2.89
Create new hotel space	1.89

When asked to rank potential reuses for the Computer Data Center on a scale of 1-5, respondents were relatively neutral given the desire to redevelop these properties as quickly as possible, attendees were encouraged by the recent purchase of the property and noted support for the new investor's plan for Industrial/Manufacturing uses. Due to the likelihood of this building getting rehabbed within its existing footprint, it was removed from consideration for the scenario alternatives.

Priority Reuses: Computer Data Center	Average Score
Industrial/Manufacturing	3.78
Office	3.44
Retail	2.89

“I’ve been here my entire life, and my family has been part of the Mill for generations. It needs to be cleaned up and movement needs to happen.”

“The Mill closed the year before I moved to Port Edwards. I have seen the economic changes play out in the community and school. The most important piece is to revitalize the area.”

When asked to rank potential reuses for the Administration Building on a scale of 1-5, respondents were relatively neutral and prioritized industrial/manufacturing, office, workforce housing, and public lake access. In addition to the written comments, a few attendees noted skepticism about the usefulness of public lake access in this location given other nearby areas where public access is possible. Similarly, some attendees noted concerns with new housing in this location due to truck traffic from the warehouse and neighboring industrial uses.

Priority Reuses: Administration Building	Average Score
Industrial/Manufacturing	3.67
Office	3.56
Workforce Housing	3.22
Public Lake Access	3.22
Retail	3.11
Senior Housing	3.11
Park Space	3.11
Restaurant/Brewpub	2.89
Health Care/Institutional	2.89
Hotel	2.78

“Being a newer resident, but lifelong to the area, it is important to rebuild and clean up the area to create tax base and utilize a beautiful area.”

## Public Meeting #2 Review of Scenario Alternatives

On May 13<sup>th</sup>, the Village hosted an open house to review four scenario alternatives that were prepared by the consultant based on the input from Public Meeting #1. Attendees at the meeting were supportive of all four concepts, with most selecting Alternative #2: Recreation Destination as the preferred concept. In particular, the selection of an event venue as the anchor tenant was viewed as a market feasible and attainable goal to support the redevelopment. There was also strong support for the proposed trail, and activities along the waterfront.

Some residents voiced concerns about continued contamination of the property. As discussed earlier in this plan, there are no known signs of contamination on this portion of the planning area. Additional soil investigations during demolition and construction would provide further assurances that the property does not have any ongoing soil contamination that would prevent further usage of the site.



# Opportunity Analysis and Scenario Alternatives

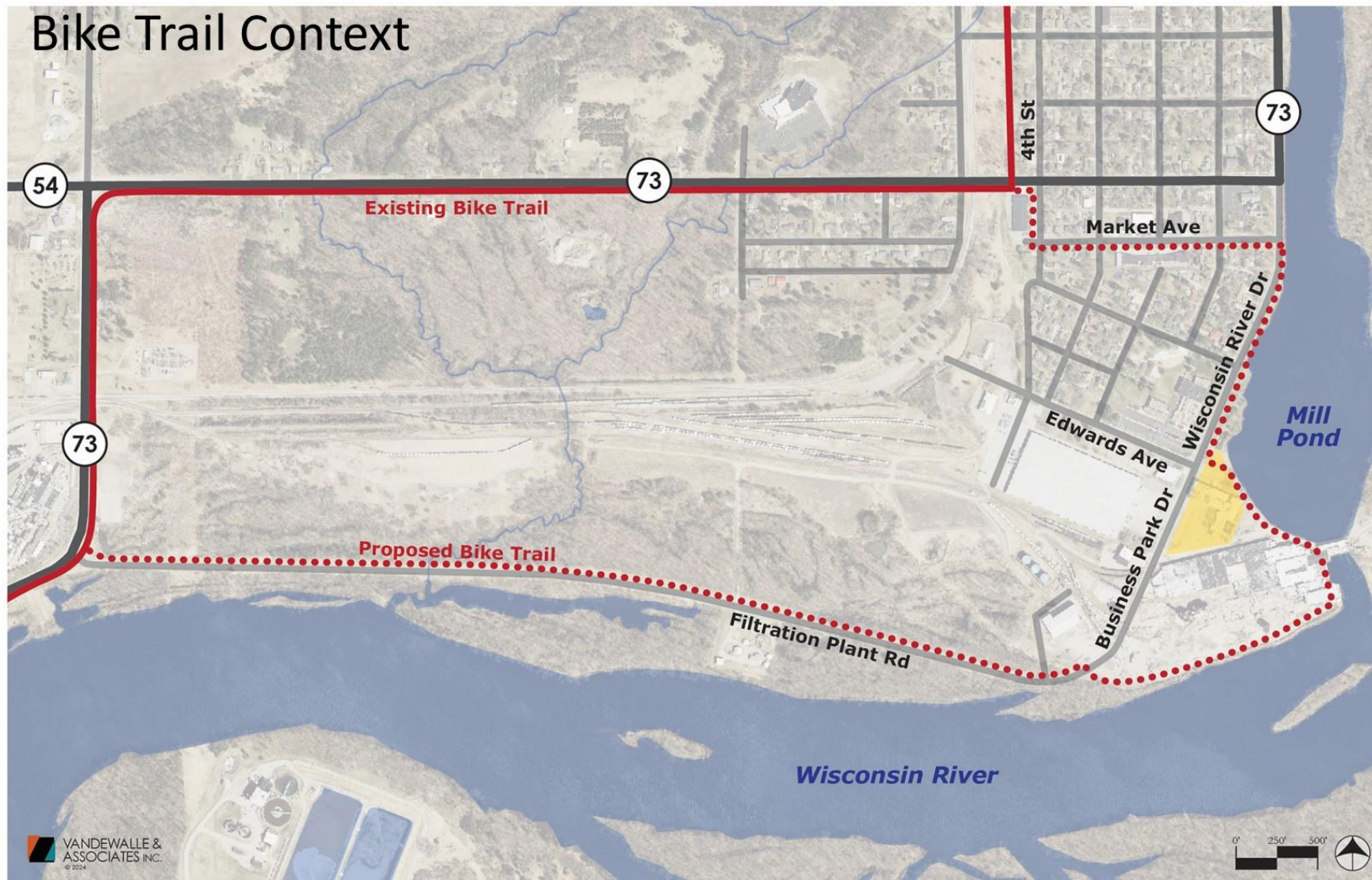
Four scenario alternatives were prepared for the Former Administration Building based on the review of existing property conditions, regional economic trends, conversations with surrounding property owners, and public input. These concepts reflect the overarching goals of the community and could be quickly and effectively executed. They provide an inspiring vision to guide the Village and potential developers during the implementation phase of the project.





## Bike Trail

There is an existing bike trail that connects Port Edwards to Nekoosa and Wisconsin Rapids. A long-envisioned addition to the main trail is a loop that connects through downtown Market Avenue, through the Mill property, and off on to Filtration Plant Road. This addition would draw trail users through the Village's main business district and create extra foot traffic to make downtown businesses more vibrant. The Administration Building's prime location next to the Mill Pond and along a recreational trail is a key asset for a business that can draw trail users and customers from throughout the region.

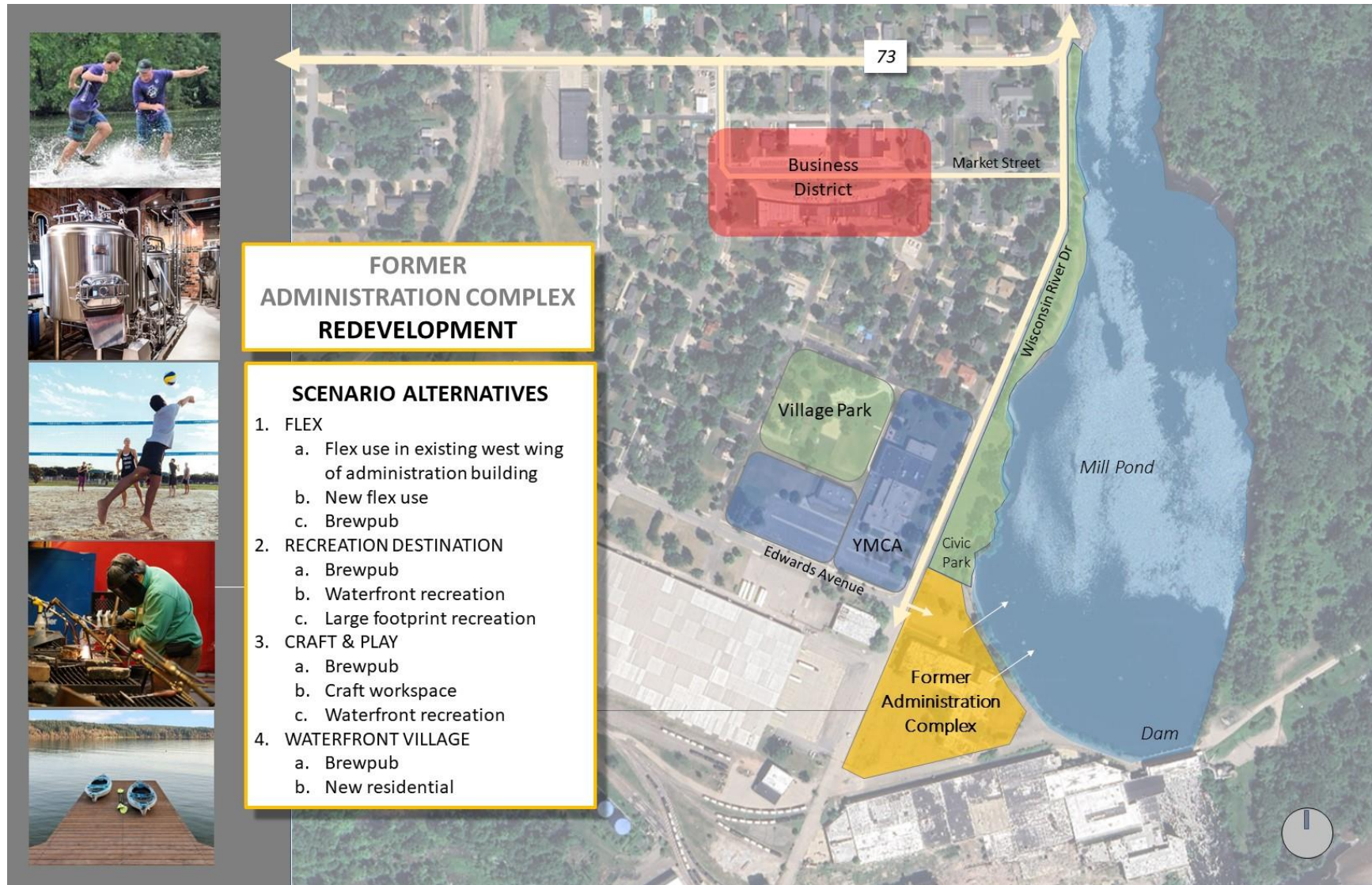




## Scenario Alternatives

In recognition of the community's desire to see redevelopment happen quickly, four scenario alternatives were prepared that provide a variety of complementary uses that are designed to fully embrace the surrounding assets and buffer from nearby industrial uses.

Key elements included in the concepts include a brewpub, craft spaces, play areas, an event venue, residential, and historical features. Each of these elements are described in more detail at the end of this section.





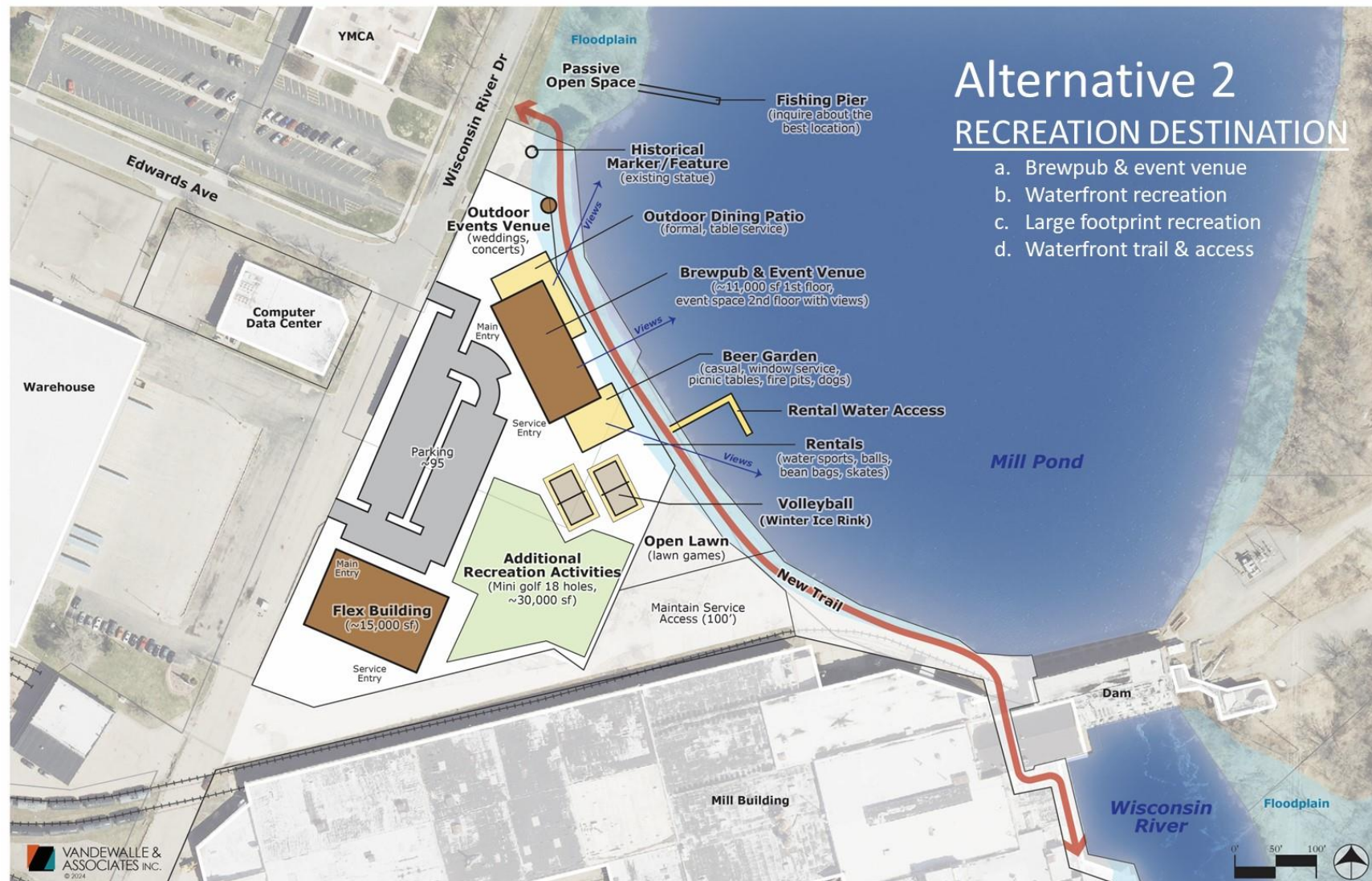
## Alternative 1: Flex

The Flex concept proposes retaining the existing west wing of the Administration Building. Due to the wide footprint of the building, residential uses are an unlikely reuse for the building. Instead, the building and a newly constructed flex space on the southern portion of the property could complement the brewpub and recreational uses. Preferred uses for these buildings include light industrial, surplus space for brewing, bike and boat repair shop, tackle shop, makerspace, or similar types of businesses.



## Alternative 2: Recreation Destination

The Recreation Destination concept proposes demolishing the Administration Building and replacing it with a large brewpub and event venue, complete with outdoor dining, an outdoor event venue, and waterfront recreation. This design also includes open space that could accommodate an 18 hole mini-golf course and two volleyball courts. The newly constructed flex space on the southern portion of the property would complement the brewpub and recreational uses. Under this concept, industrial activities would be strongly discouraged from the flex space buildings to minimize conflicts with the increased number of outdoor users on the property. Preferred uses for the flex space building include surplus space for brewing, bike and boat repair shop, tackle shop, makerspace, or similar types of businesses.





## Alternative 3: Craft & Play

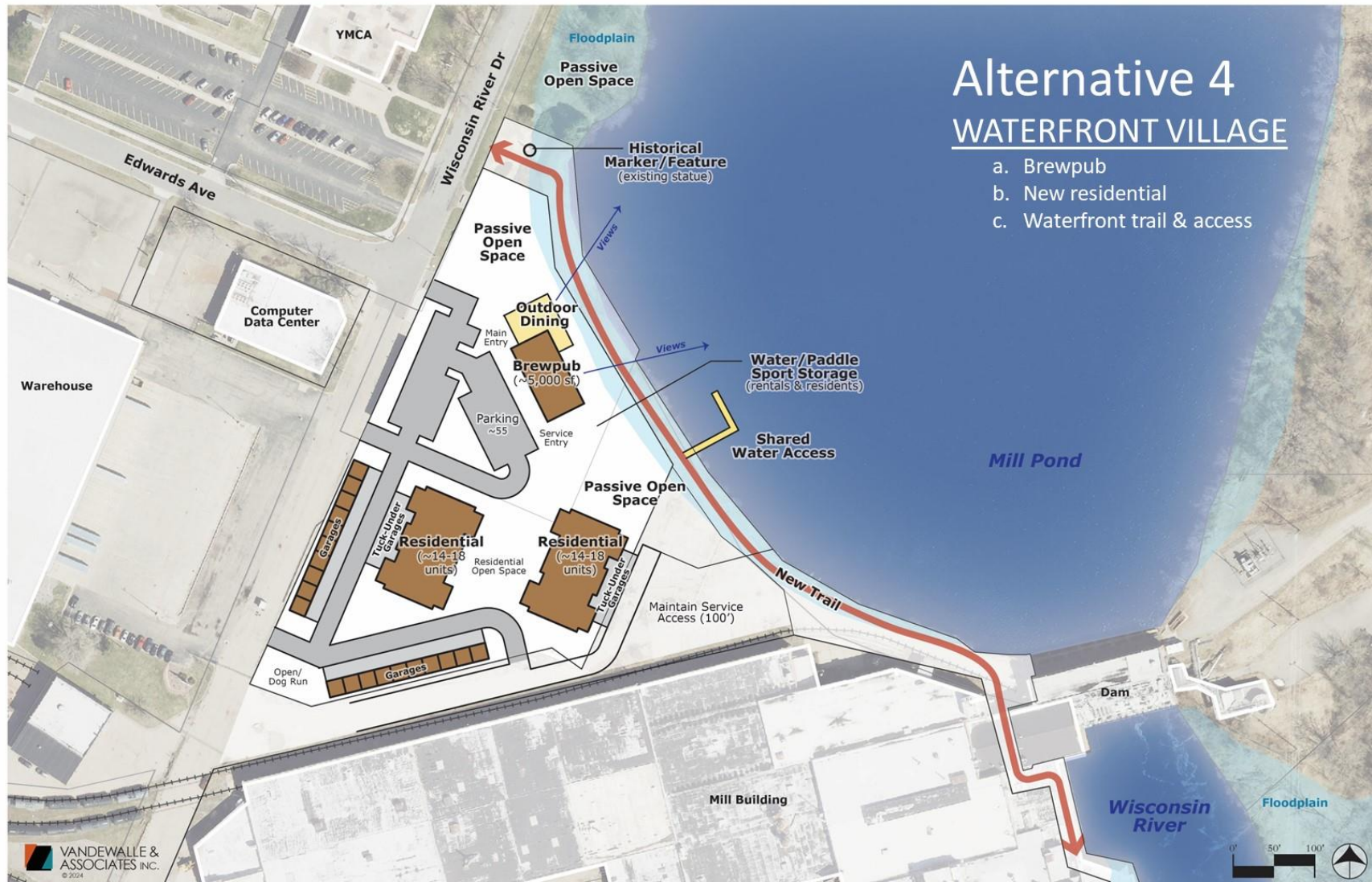
The Craft & Play concept proposes demolishing the Administration Building and replacing it with a small brewpub, complete with outdoor dining, waterfront recreation, and open spaces for additional recreational activities. The newly constructed buildings on the southern portion of the property would complement the brewpub and recreational uses. Preferred uses for the flex space building include surplus space for the brewing, bike and boat repair shop, tackle shop, makerspace, artisan studios and galleries, crafts people, local food and beverage processing and sales, or similar types of businesses.





## Alternative 4: Waterfront Village

The Waterfront Village concept proposes demolishing the Administration Building and replacing it with a small brewpub, complete with outdoor dining, waterfront recreation, and open spaces for additional recreational activities. This concept includes newly constructed residential units. Approximately 28-36 units could be constructed within this footprint. Garages and additional parking are used as a buffer from the nearby warehouse and industrial uses. This concept also includes increases in passive open space for residents of these buildings.





## Design Element 1: Brewpub

A Brewpub is envisioned as the key anchor tenant for each of the alternatives. Despite the long stretches of riverfront throughout the region, there is nothing like this in and around Port Edwards that gives people the ability to be directly on the waterfront in a restaurant or commercial setting. This location can take full advantage of the scenic views and will create a memorable outdoor dining experience that will be a treasured destination for locals and visitors alike. Wisconsin has a strong tradition of waterfront breweries and restaurants. Examples to draw inspiration from include Vintage Brewing Company in Sauk Prairie, and Ishnala in the Wisconsin Dells.

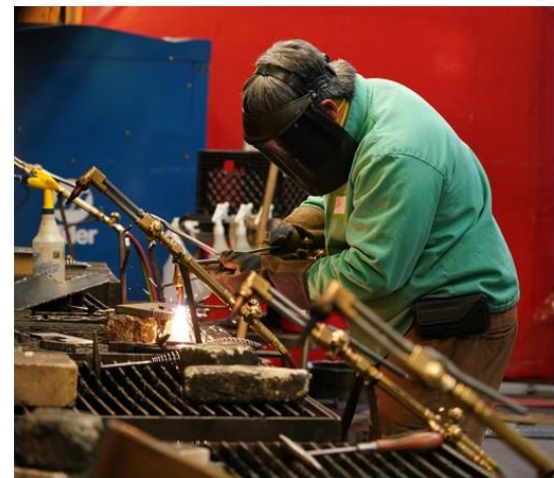


BREW PUB



## Design Element 2: Craft

The Mill property has historically been a key employment site for the Village. The decline of the paper industry means that the Village needs to look for new opportunities to diversify the local economy. The flex spaces shown in the site alternatives will provide a space for new businesses to flourish. Due to the close proximity to recreational and commercial uses, this plan proposes that the flex spaces target businesses that will be compatible to the nearby recreational, commercial, and residential uses. These businesses will increase the tax base of the Village and provide high-wage jobs and business ownership opportunities to residents in the community.



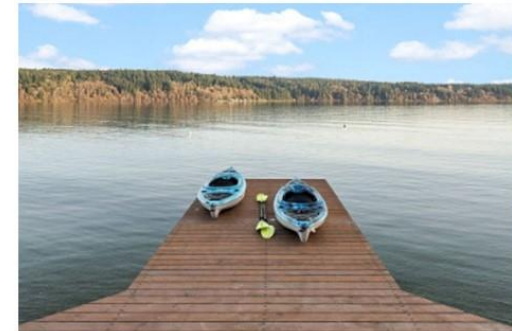
CRAFT



### Design Element 3: Play

The incredible natural amenities of the property are a key asset for the community and nearby businesses. This serene setting will be a destination for people to rest along the trail, take in the scenery, or cast a line from a fishing pier. The calm surface of the Mill Pond is great for kayaking, paddleboarding, or log-rolling. Additionally, the property has sufficient space to accommodate volleyball courts, outdoor mini-golf, and yard games. The opportunities are endless!

## PLAY





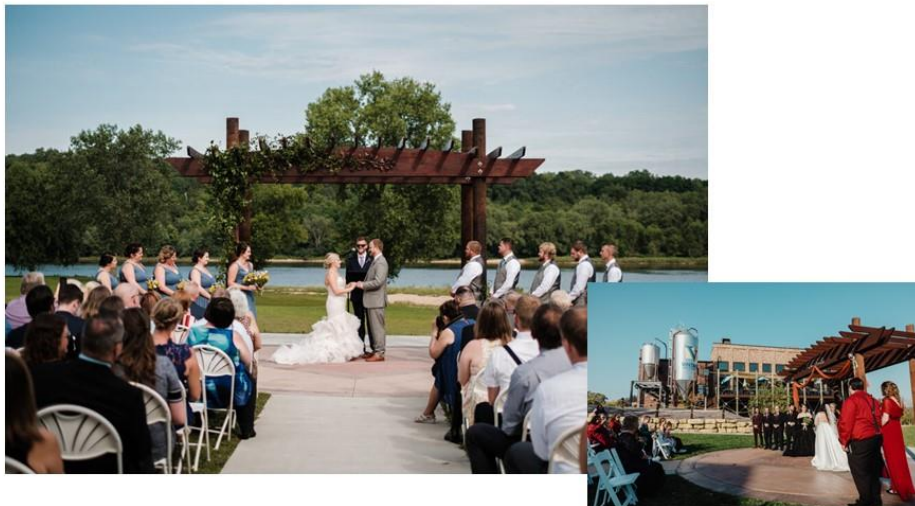
## Design Element 4: Event Venue

Located along the scenic Mill Pond, this property provides an excellent backdrop for an outdoor event venue that can be privately run as a separate business or an extension of the brewpub. Events will draw new customers in the door, accommodate larger weddings in the summer months, and provide a space to create lasting memories.

The north side of the property is buffered from industrial uses and near the John Alexander statue. Events held in this space will maximize the scenic beauty of the area and draw more visitors to this important monument that memorializes the Mill property and the Alexander family's contributions to the community.



## EVENT VENUE



## Design Element 5: Residential

Over 85% of the Village's housing stock was built before 1980, and low vacancy rates indicate a demand for new housing units within the community. Most developable land within the Village's municipal boundary has already been developed, and this location provides an excellent opportunity for quality infill development.

The Waterfront Village concept proposes 28-36 residential units. Units are buffered from surrounding properties by garages and parking spaces. Nearby passive open space would be ideal for dogs to run and families to play. Construction styles similar to the pictures below are anticipated as the most market-feasible opportunity, but the Village should remain open to other proposals that maximize density and therefore add the most value to the Village's tax base. Detailed information on median rents, incomes, and demographics in the community can be found in Appendix C.



## RESIDENTIAL





## Design Element 6: Historical Features

The Administration Building is past its useful life and will likely be demolished unless it's repurposed as outlined in Alternative 1. It is filled with asbestos and other contaminants, and the configuration of the building makes it difficult to repurpose.

The building played an important role in the Village's history that deserves to be remembered. There are six relief panels on the north façade of the building that depict stages of papermaking. They are a distinctive feature of the building that can be removed and preserved prior to demolition. These panels can be repurposed into a monument surrounding the John Alexander statue to tell the story of the Village's history and preserve the memory of what once stood here.



Administration Building  
North facade

## HISTORICAL FEATURES



MONUMENT  
(Example)





## Implementation

Implementation will require collaboration between the property owners in the area, the Village, the County, and the State. The following recommendations provide a roadmap for making these projects a reality. It also details the next steps the Village should take to play a leadership role in facilitating collaboration between the various entities that are involved.

### Recommendation #1: Resolve the Split Ownership of the Administration Building

The Administration Building is on two separate parcels with split ownership. The northern parcel is owned by Wood County and the southern parcel is owned by DMI. Both parties would like to see the building demolished or rehabilitated into a more productive use. Potential investors have indicated that the split ownership is a deal breaker for investing in the property. Additionally, consolidating the ownership under County jurisdiction will make it easier to apply for grant funding that can pay for demolition and implementation of the site concepts presented in this plan. The Village will need to play a lead role in facilitating this process.

### Recommendation #2: Apply For Grants

The Village's budget is stretched thin with existing obligations and cannot fund demolition for the property. It also has limited staffing and funds to support grant writing. Wood County, as a property owner of the Administration Building, can take the lead on applying for state and federal grants to assist with demolition. In particular, the DNR Ready for Reuse grant, WEDC Brownfield and Idle Sites grants, and the WEDC CDI grant are the most applicable to this project and have the highest chance of success.

### Priority Funding Sources for Demolition:

**DNR Ready for Reuse Grant:** The maximum grant amount is \$200,000 and it does not require a local match. Grant applicants must own the property. Requires the applicant to have a reuse lined up with financing in place to complete the cleanup and redevelopment.

**WEDC Brownfield and Idle Sites Grants:** These two grants from WEDC can be used to fund demolition or rehabilitation activities on properties that have been long vacant. A community can apply for both grants for the same project.

**WEDC CDI Grant:** This program supports community redevelopment efforts for catalytic shovel-ready projects. Funds can be used for demolition and new construction of significant destination attractions.

**TIF District:** If grant applications are unsuccessful, the Village could fund demolition with money generated by a TID. The Village's existing TID is at the end of its spending period, so funding demolition would require a new TID.

These grants require a plan to be in place prior to grant funding being awarded and will likely require a developer/business to be lined up and ready to go if the grants are approved. This plan will serve as the basis of this for these grants, along with commitments from a future buyer.

In addition to these grants, the Village should pursue other grant opportunities that arise. This plan focuses on a core employment destination within walking distance to the Village's historic downtown, and the Village foresees development on this property as a catalytic project for supporting downtown businesses. This makes the project well suited for grant programs focused on supporting downtown businesses and redevelopment. The Village should provide information and letters of support for any grants that Wood County applies for.

### **Recommendation #3: Explore Creating a New TIF District**

Tax Increment Finance (TIF) is one of the most important economic development tools available to local governments in Wisconsin. TIF is a financing mechanism to spur development and grow the tax base in an area that would not otherwise see the type, magnitude or timing of development desired by the community. TIF works by designating a small geographic area for redevelopment, and using future additional tax revenue from new development and appreciation to fund improvements that build the tax base.

TIF funds can be used for demolition and other site preparation costs. This makes it a good option to supplement any grant funding. The existing Tax Increment District (TID) is near the end of its spending period and has allocated all available funding. A new TID would need to be established to fund the demolition.

A successful TID requires new development in the district that provides a basis for funding projects within the TID. The Mill property, YMCA, Administration Building, Computer Data Center, and Warehouse properties are all anticipating development. The Village should not create a new TID until it becomes clear that one or more of these projects will move forward and will provide enough increment to warrant the creation of a TID. The new TID could generally follow the lines of the existing TID, with strategic additions of the aforementioned properties to generate additional increment.

To be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, the Village needs to carefully review each funding request to understand the project's financing and ensure each project only receives the funding needed to make the project financially viable.

### **Recommendation #4: Participate in YMCA Redevelopment Vision**

YMCA access is a community priority for Port Edwards. The 4k program saves the school district money and is a critical service amid a statewide shortage of childcare options. Additionally, the 24-hour gym and recreational facilities are an important component of promoting community health. Usage of the facility in Port Edwards has declined in part due to a new YMCA that was recently built in Wisconsin Rapids. The YMCA plans to continue providing services in Port Edwards, but no longer needs as large of a building footprint to provide those services.

The YMCA is at the beginning stages of deciding the next steps for the property. The existing building is outdated and in need of extensive repairs. Sections of the building are closed off due to extensive mold, and the age of the building leads to high energy and maintenance costs for the portions that are still in use. Additionally, the odd configuration of rooms does not lend itself to any obvious reuse.

An optimal outcome for the Village would be a site design that creates new YMCA programming space, but also includes for-profit entities that will add to the Village's tax base. This will require a partnership between the YMCA and an investor/developer. The Village should collaborate with the YMCA to create a mutually beneficial vision for that property. Potential areas for collaboration include applying for WEDC Idle Sites grant, including the

property within a new TIF district to assist with funding demolition and site preparation costs, reviewing a comprehensive plan amendment and rezoning application for the property to encourage residential and commercial uses, and assisting with developer recruitment.

## Recommendation #5: Flexibility For Future Reuses

The existing zoning for the Administration Building allows manufacturing and laboratory uses, with conditional uses of animal hospitals/kennels, hotels/motels, offices, and restaurants. Implementing the site concepts from this plan will require PUD zoning to accommodate the variety of uses on the lot. A PUD zoning for the Mill property was recommended by the Plan Commission in 2018 but never adopted by the Village Board as DMI never completed the process. The proposed PUD would have allowed a wide range of uses, including residential, commercial, and industrial. The 2018 PUD can serve as a template for future rezoning that allows maximum flexibility to accommodate the unique nature of this property.

The Village's ordinances require that a PUD zoning district have an accompanying development agreement. The purpose of the agreement is to memorialize the obligations of the Village and the developer, ensure that the proper infrastructure and easements are in place to allow legal access to each building on the property, and to set timelines for the development. The Village should move forward with PUD rezoning for the Mill properties along with accompanying development agreements in accordance with Village ordinances.

## Recommendation #6: Facilitate Orderly Demolition.

The Village already is engaged with DMI on facilitating the local demolition permit for the Mill property. That demolition permit application will set standards to minimize impact on surrounding property owners and protect the general public from asbestos and other environmental contaminants within the existing building.

In addition to the larger Mill property demolition, there is much work left to do to facilitate the demolition of the Administration Building. With the building on separate parcels with separate ownership, the demolition will require a collaboration between DMI, Wood County, and the Village. Demolition will likely require a mix of funding from DMI, grant sources, and a new TIF district. The Village can play a leading role in facilitating this collaboration.





# Appendix A: Statement of Determination

This analysis of the adaptability of the Administration/Research Building is based on review of the Property Condition Assessment for Village of Port Edwards (2020) and review of architectural documentation and building photographs.

Analysis and conclusions are framed in the need to determine whether the Administration/Research Building should be razed or if reuse (particularly for residential use) is possible and viable. Different phases of construction and portions of the building, each presenting different challenges and possibilities, are discussed.

## Summary: Property Condition Assessment (General Engineering Company, April 2020)

- “In our opinion, the building should be razed.”
- “...extensive deficiencies” due to lack of repair and maintenance
- “... dangerous, unsafe, unsanitary and otherwise unfit for human habitation”
- Long periods without heating or electricity
- Long periods of active leaking resulting in extensive water damage
- Large quantities of mold on all levels
- All interior finishes and millwork would require replacement
- Main electrical equipment exposed to water and unusable
- All plumbing in poor condition
- Mechanical equipment all exposed to water and moisture and past serviceable life
- Roof systems generally in poor condition with much of it not structurally sound

## Architectural Analysis

### West Wing (Administration Offices)

- 3 stories (including basement)
- Approximately 77,000 square feet (total)
- Concrete, steel, and glass construction
- In fair to poor condition due to neglect, lack of heating/cooling, water damage, and vandalism.
- The footprint is approximately 100 feet in width. Even though the central hallway works with the structure and current circulation, the approximate depth of 45 feet from center circulation to outside walls is not conducive to residential units.
- Open floor plate allows flexibility of layout and uses.
- Well-lit with natural light.
- Existing egress stairs and elevator could be reused. These may need to be enclosed to qualify as means of egress.
- Accessibility to the building is an issue with no floors at grade. An interior or exterior ramp or a second elevator to the First Floor would make this building accessible.
- Original curtain wall (glazed exterior skin) has high energy costs and would be expensive to replace.
- Fully glazed outside walls and the structural spacing would make unit separation difficult and balconies impractical.

### East Wing (Research Building)

- 3 stories (including basement), numerous levels
- Built in 3 phases
- Approximately 60,000 square feet (total)
- Concrete and brick construction
- In poor condition due to neglect, lack of heating/cooling, water damage, and vandalism.
- Built in two, less than ideally integrated, phases. Multiple ramps and stairs are necessary to match different floor elevations of the two building phases.
- Specialized floor layout with rooms for specific past uses may be difficult to reuse. Very partitioned, inefficient.
- Many of these interior walls are masonry (some may be load-bearing).

## Conclusions

- Damage, contamination and health issues, inability to reuse systems, lack of integrity in the building's components, and interior design/renovation character all present significant challenges to renovation and reuse of the Administration/Research Building.
- Any reuse of the building for any purpose would require the gutting of everything but some of the structure and possibly some doors and windows. This removal would include most or all of the interior non-load-bearing walls and finishes, gutting of all mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and fixtures.
- If structural components are salvageable and costs are not prohibitive, further analysis of the integrity of the following would still be required to determine viability for reuse:
  - All structural components (steel and metal components are likely not sound) ;
  - Most of the roof structures, decks, and moisture barriers;
  - Exterior walls and skin and windows; and
  - Removal and remediation of all health threatening elements (i.e., interior mold and contamination).
- Flooding in the basement may still be an issue. Further investigation and remediation of this condition would have to be completed before renovation.
- The specialized interior layout of the east wing of the structure poses a challenge for reuse for any other uses than the existing.
- Although some continuity exists between the building areas (because the additions considered this need), the three-phases of construction have created a somewhat segmented building. Unless uses align well with the different existing spaces, this makes reuse more difficult.
- Residential reuse is especially problematic:
  - The size and configuration of the floor plates are not well suited for typical residential unit sizes and layouts;
  - Differences between floor elevations make circulation difficult; and
  - Contamination and mold may be impractical or impossible to mitigate.
- Other uses such as office, research, or light manufacturing may be possible but only if structures are sound, health issues can be eliminated, and if the rehabilitation costs are not prohibitive.
- Reuse of the west wing (previously the administrative offices) seems possible because of the flexible open floors and possible fewer issues with health issues, but only for uses well-suited for such spaces (i.e., office), not for residential.
- Reuse of the east wing (previously the research building) presents many barriers to reuse. Just the right office or research use that aligns with the specialized layout (not residential) would be required.

## Appendix B: Renovation and Demolition Estimates

Preliminary cost estimates were prepared to give a greater understanding of the costs associated with renovating or demolishing the Administration Building. These estimates are based on general trends and assumptions about the building. Final costs will vary depending on contractor availability, costs for environmental (i.e., asbestos) removal/clean-up, site remediation, disposal, permitting, regulatory requirements, selective dismantling, and local equipment and labor.

These estimates are applied on three levels of square foot costs (high, medium, and low). High finish might include interior walls, quality finishes, equipment/furniture. Low finish might include fewer partitions, finish materials, and storage. Cost estimates were separated into the West and East wings of the building to account for a partial demolition.

Asbestos is a known contaminant throughout most of the flooring in the building. However, the extent of asbestos is unknown at this time. Cost estimates for asbestos removal were developed based on different percentages of asbestos throughout the building footprint.

The most likely scenario for the building is demolition with associated asbestos remediation. In that scenario, the total costs to prepare the site for new development will potentially range between \$2.3 million and \$4.4 million. A majority of the costs are associated with asbestos removal. A detailed assessment of asbestos within the building will help further refine these estimates.

	High	Medium	Low
Demolition	\$991,500	\$754,500	\$582,000
Asbestos Removal	\$3,412,500	\$2,559,375	\$1,706,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,404,000</b>	<b>\$3,313,875</b>	<b>\$2,288,250</b>



## Renovation Cost Estimates

HIGH COST			
West	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
High finish	51,300	\$300	\$15,390,000
Low finish	25,700	\$150	\$3,855,000
Total	77,000		<b>\$19,245,000</b>
East	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
High finish	49,200	\$300	\$14,760,000
Low finish	10,300	\$150	\$1,545,000
Total	59,500		<b>\$16,305,000</b>
MEDIUM COST			
West	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
High finish	51,300	\$200	\$10,260,000
Low finish	25,700	\$100	\$2,570,000
Total	77,000		<b>\$12,830,000</b>
East	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
High finish	49,200	\$200	\$9,840,000
Low finish	10,300	\$100	\$1,030,000
Total	59,500		<b>\$10,870,000</b>
LOW COST			
West	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
High finish	51,300	\$100	\$5,130,000
Low finish	25,700	\$50	\$1,285,000
Total	77,000		<b>\$6,415,000</b>
East	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
High finish	49,200	\$100	\$4,920,000
Low finish	10,300	\$50	\$515,000
Total	59,500		<b>\$5,435,000</b>

## Demolition Cost Estimates

HIGH COST			
West	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
Upper floors	51,300	\$7	\$359,100
Basement	25,700	\$8	\$205,600
Total	77,000		<b>\$564,700</b>
East	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
Upper floors	49,200	\$7	\$344,400
Basement	10,300	\$8	\$82,400
Total	59,500		<b>\$426,800</b>
MEDIUM COST			
West	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
Upper floors	51,300	\$5	\$256,500
Basement	25,700	\$7	\$179,900
Total	77,000		<b>\$436,400</b>
East	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
Upper floors	49,200	\$5	\$246,000
Basement	10,300	\$7	\$72,100
Total	59,500		<b>\$318,100</b>
LOW COST			
West	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
Upper floors	51,300	\$4	\$205,200
Basement	25,700	\$5	\$128,500
Total	77,000		<b>\$333,700</b>
East	Area (sf)	PSF Cost	Total Cost
Upper floors	49,200	\$4	\$196,800
Basement	10,300	\$5	\$51,500
Total	59,500		<b>\$248,300</b>

## Asbestos Removal Cost Estimates

HIGH COST					
West	Area (sf)	% Asbestos	Asbestos Area	PSF Cost	Total Cost
Upper Levels	51,300	100%	51,300	\$25	\$1,282,500
Basement	25,700	100%	25,700	\$25	\$642,500
Total	77,000	100%	77,000		<b>\$1,925,000</b>
East	Area (sf)	% Asbestos	Asbestos Area	PSF Cost	Total Cost
High finish	49,200	100%	49,200	\$25	\$1,230,000
Low finish	10,300	100%	10,300	\$25	\$257,500
Total	59,500	100%	59,500		<b>\$1,487,500</b>
MEDIUM COST					
West	Area (sf)	% Asbestos	Asbestos Area	PSF Cost	Total Cost
Upper Levels	51,300	75%	38,475	\$25	\$961,875
Basement	25,700	75%	19,275	\$25	\$481,875
Total	77,000	75%	57,750		<b>\$1,443,750</b>
East	Area (sf)	% Asbestos	Asbestos Area	PSF Cost	Total Cost
High finish	49,200	75%	36,900	\$25	\$922,500
Low finish	10,300	75%	7,725	\$25	\$193,125
Total	59,500	75%	44,625		<b>\$1,115,625</b>
LOW COST					
West	Area (sf)	% Asbestos	Asbestos Area	PSF Cost	Total Cost
Upper Levels	51,300	50%	25,650	\$25	\$641,250
Basement	25,700	50%	12,850	\$25	\$321,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>77,000</b>	<b>50%</b>	38,500		<b>\$962,500</b>
East	Area (sf)	% Asbestos	Asbestos Area	PSF Cost	Total Cost
High finish	49,200	50%	24,600	\$25	\$615,000
Low finish	10,300	50%	5,150	\$25	\$128,750
<b>Total</b>	<b>59,500</b>	<b>50%</b>	29,750		<b>\$743,750</b>



## Appendix C: Economic and Demographic Data

**Figure 1: Population 2000-2023**

	2000	2010	2020	2023*
Port Edwards	1,944	1,818	1,762	1,736
Wood County	75,555	74,749	74,207	73,706
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	5,951,400

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

\*Source: WisDOA 2023 Population Estimates by Municipality

**Figure 2: Age**

	Median Age				Percent Under 18				Percent Over 65			
	2000	2010	2020	2022*	2000	2010	2020	2022*	2000	2010	2020	2022*
Port Edwards	41	44	46	41	26%	24%	24%	27%	22%	22%	25%	23%
Wood County	38	43	44	44	26%	23%	21%	21%	15%	17%	22%	21%
Wisconsin	36	39	40	40	26%	24%	22%	22%	13%	14%	18%	18%

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

**Figure 3: Race and Ethnicity - Village of Port Edwards**

Race	2000	2010	2020	2022*
White	93%	95%	91%	89%
Black or African American	1%	1%	1%	0%
American Indian	1%	1%	1%	0%
Asian	4%	1%	2%	0%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	0%	1%	1%	0%
Two or More	1%	1%	4%	10%
Ethnicity				
Hispanic or Latino	0%	2%	2%	1%

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

**Figure 4: Age Distribution - Village of Port Edwards**

Age Range	2000		2010		2022*	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Under 5 years	88	5%	111	6%	90	5%
5 to 9 years	143	7%	109	6%	114	6%
10 to 14 years	183	9%	123	7%	192	11%
15 to 19 years	157	8%	135	7%	122	7%
20 to 24 years	59	3%	81	4%	118	6%
25 to 34 years	180	9%	174	10%	152	8%
35 to 44 years	269	14%	220	12%	214	12%
45 to 54 years	245	13%	249	14%	171	9%
55 to 59 years	104	5%	114	6%	125	7%
60 to 64 years	86	4%	102	6%	94	5%
65 to 74 years	192	10%	176	10%	230	13%
75 to 84 years	131	7%	145	8%	119	7%
85 years and over	104	5%	79	4%	77	4%
Total Population	1,941	100%	1,818	100%	1,818	100%

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

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

**Figure 5: Poverty Rate**

	Families in Poverty				Individuals in Poverty			
	2000*	2010	2020	2022	2000*	2010	2020	2022
Port Edwards	6%	7%	6%	10%	8%	10%	10%	14%
Wood County	4%	6%	7%	7%	7%	8%	10%	11%
Wisconsin	6%	8%	7%	7%	9%	12%	11%	11%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.

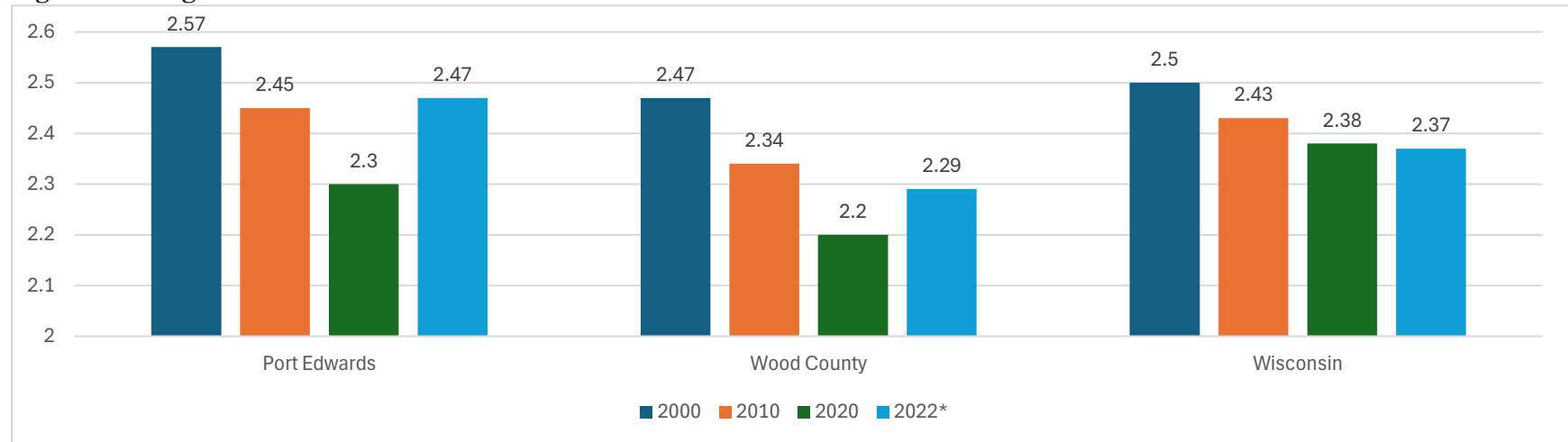
**Figure 6: Area Incomes**

	Median Household Income				Per Capita Income			
	2000	2010	2020	2022*	2000	2010	2020	2022*
Port Edwards	\$48,850	\$53,000	\$55,045	\$70,347	\$20,750	\$24,315	\$27,841	\$30,963
Wood County	\$41,595	\$47,204	\$55,684	\$63,273	\$20,203	\$24,893	\$32,037	\$36,712
Wisconsin	\$43,791	\$51,598	\$63,293	\$72,458	\$21,271	\$26,624	\$34,450	\$40,130

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

**Figure 7: Average Household Size**



\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

**Figure 8: Monthly Housing Costs and Values**

	Median Gross Rent			Median Monthly Owner-Occupied Costs (with a mortgage)			Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units		
	2000	2010	2022*	2000	2010	2022*	2000	2010	2022*
Port Edwards	\$512	\$655	\$840	\$921	\$1,079	\$1,112	\$83,500	\$96,700	\$125,600
Wood County	\$442	\$559	\$830	\$800	\$1,102	\$1,215	\$81,400	\$116,500	\$156,600
Wisconsin	\$540	\$713	\$992	\$1,024	\$1,433	\$1,602	\$112,200	\$169,000	\$231,400

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

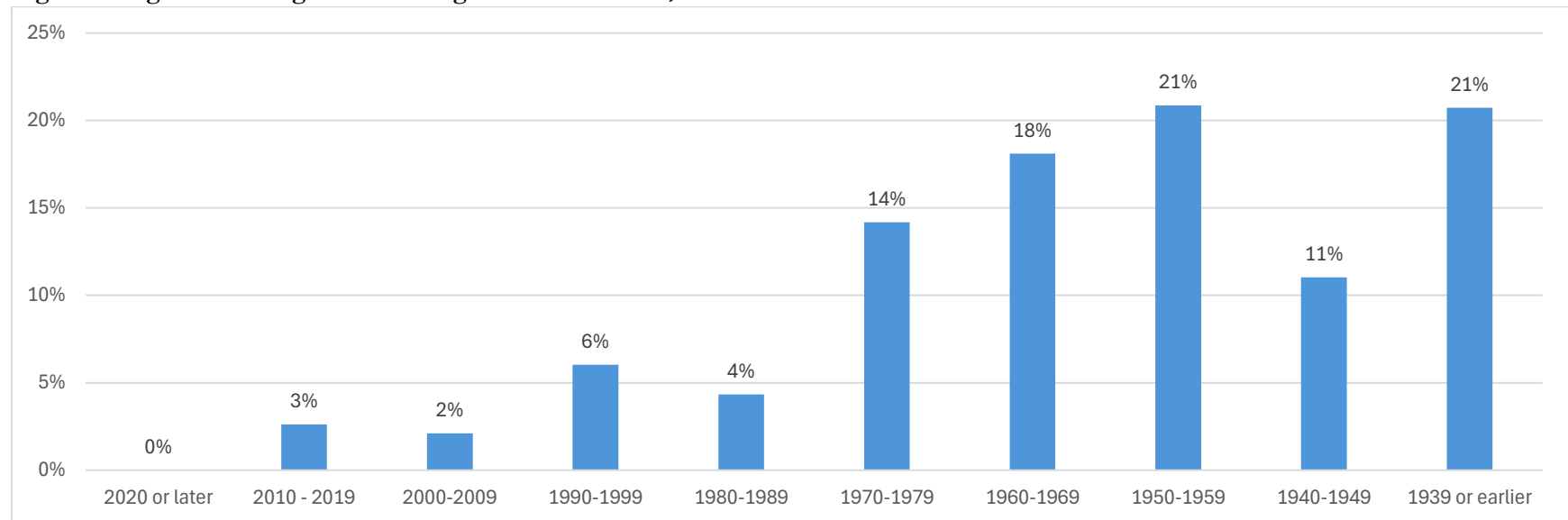


**Figure 9: Housing Units by Cost and Value - Village of Port Edwards, 2022**

Cost of Monthly Rent	Number of Units	Percent of Units	Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units	Number of Units	Percent of Units
Less than \$500	-	0%	Less than \$50,000	14	2%
\$500 to \$999	98	67%	\$50,000 to \$99,999	178	32%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	41	28%	\$100,000 to \$149,999	173	31%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	7	5%	\$150,000 to \$199,999	96	17%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	-	0%	\$200,000 to \$299,999	63	11%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	-	0%	\$300,000 to \$499,999	36	6%
\$3,000 or more	-	0%	\$500,000 to \$999,999	2	0%
Total	146		\$1,000,000 or more	-	0%
			Total	562	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Figure 10: Age of Housing Stock – Village of Port Edwards, 2022**



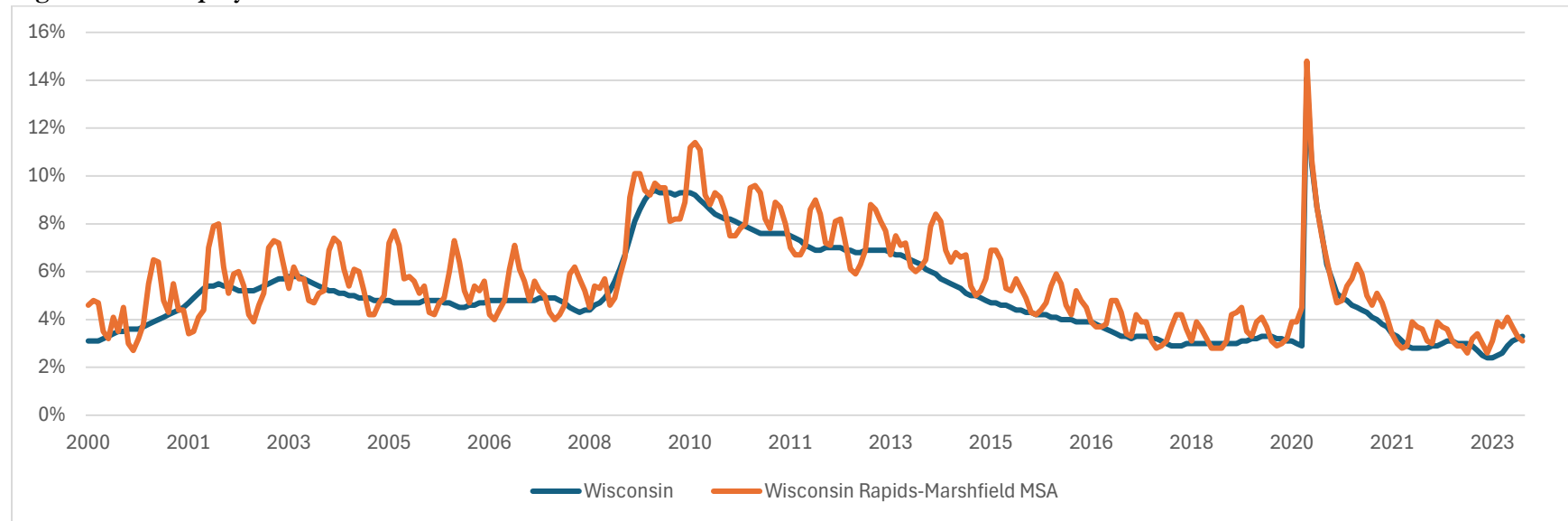
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Figure 11: Commuting Method, 2022**

	Car, Truck, or Van - Drove Alone	Car, Truck, or Van - Carpooled	Public Transportation	Walked	Other Means	Worked From Home
Port Edwards	83%	4%	0%	0%	4%	9%
Wood County	80%	8%	0%	2%	2%	8%
Wisconsin	77%	7%	1%	3%	2%	10%

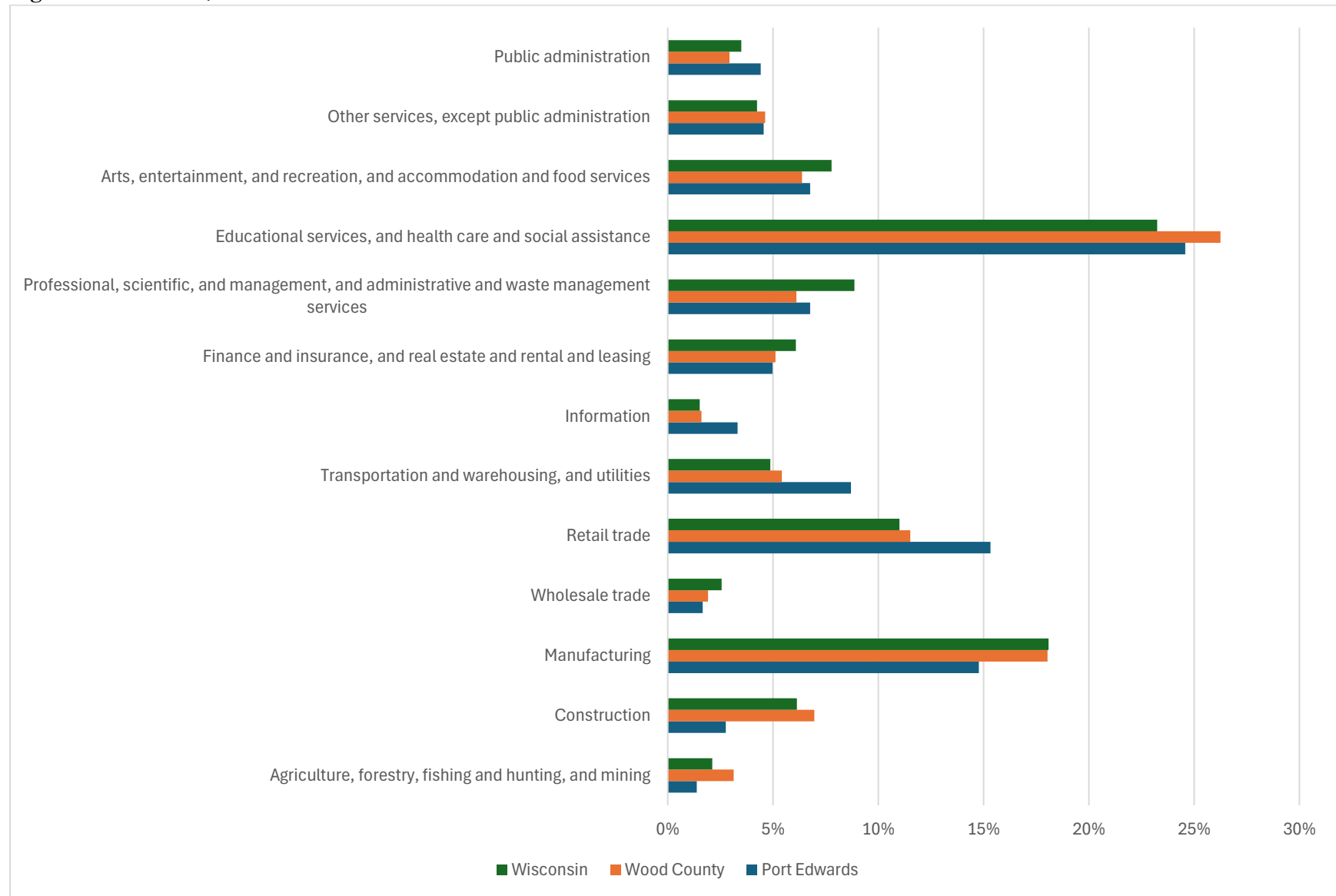
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Figure 12: Unemployment Rate 2000-2023**



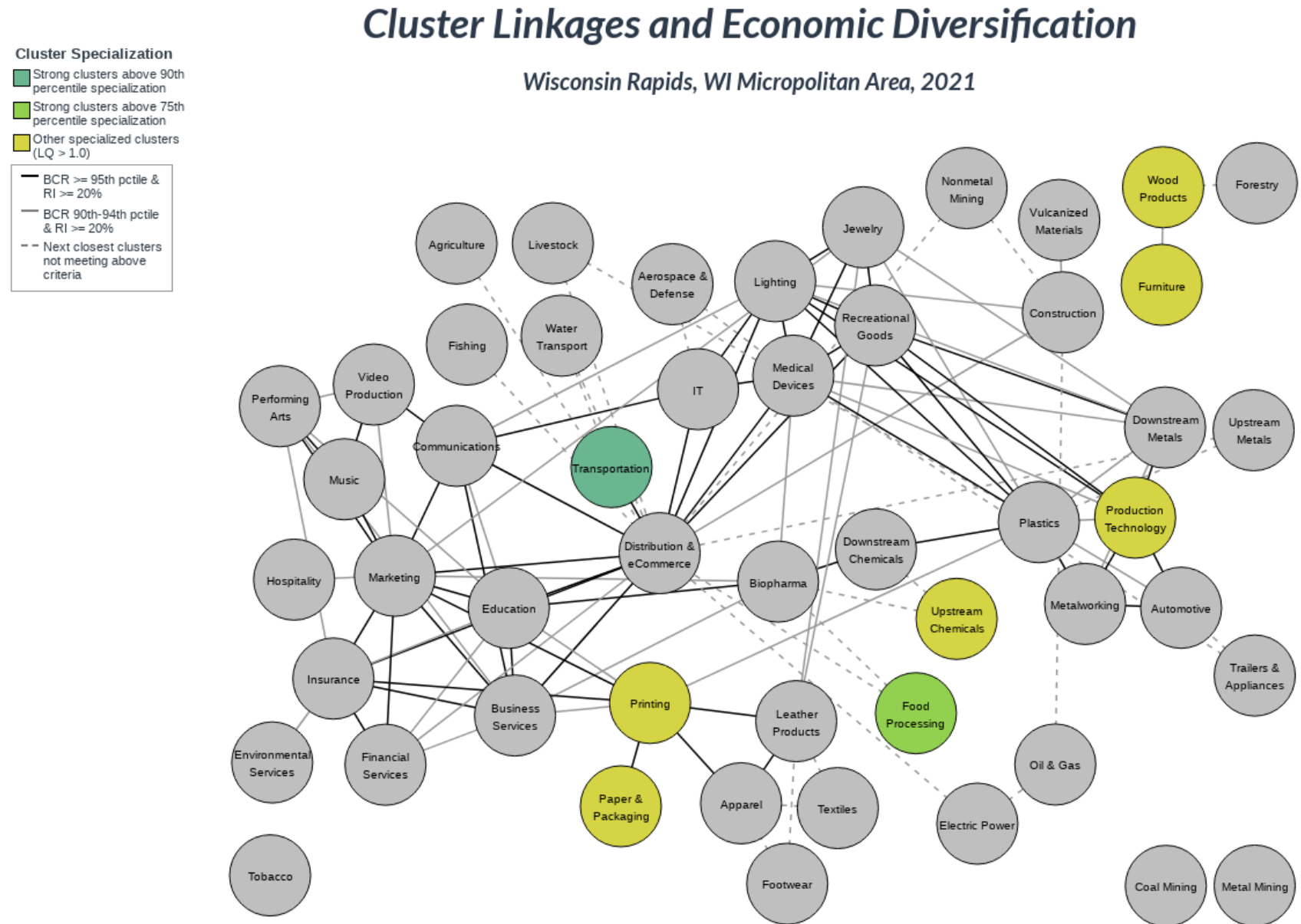
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

**Figure 13: Industries, 2022**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

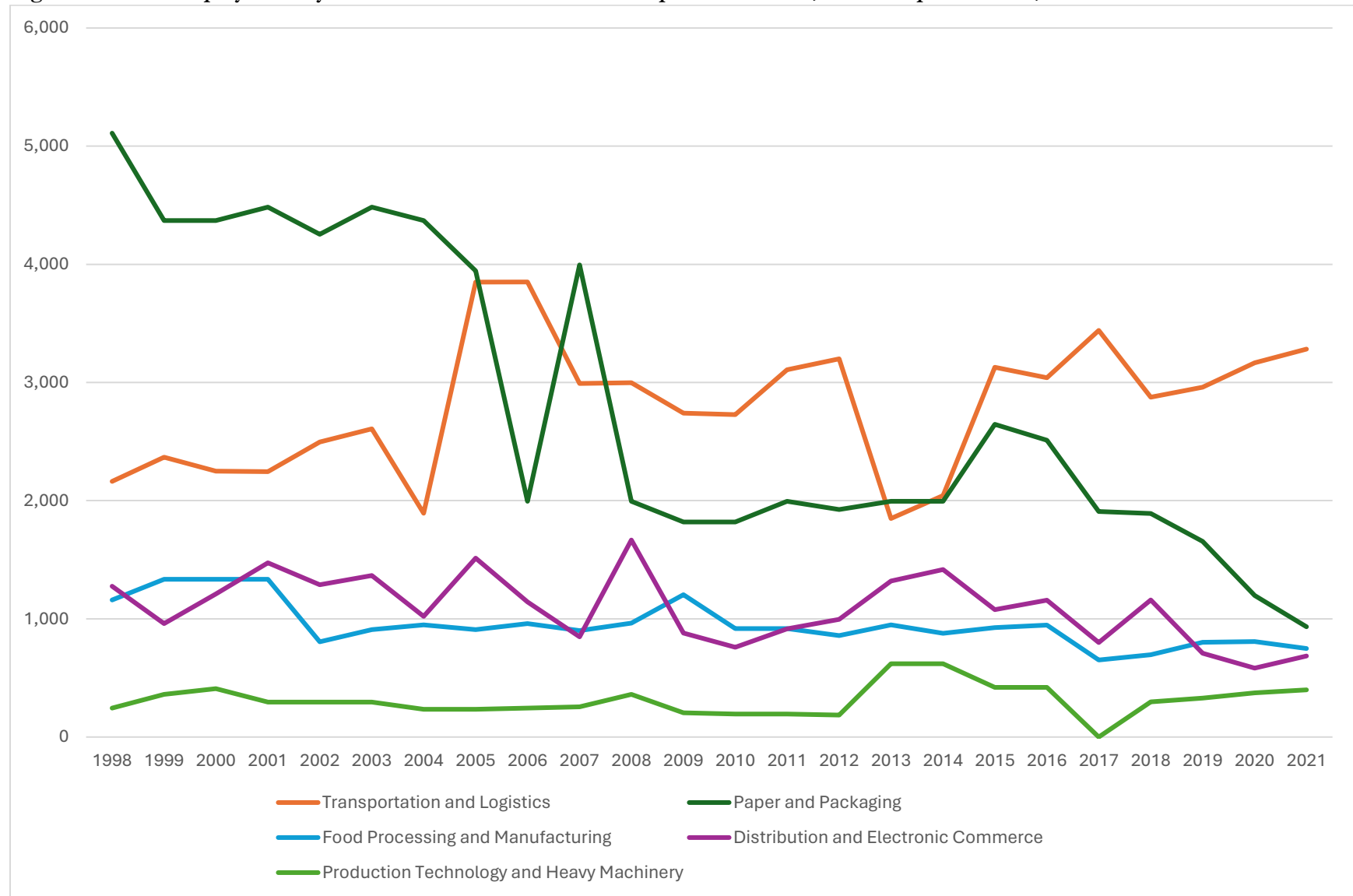
Figure 14: Cluster Analysis



Source: U.S. Cluster Mapping Project

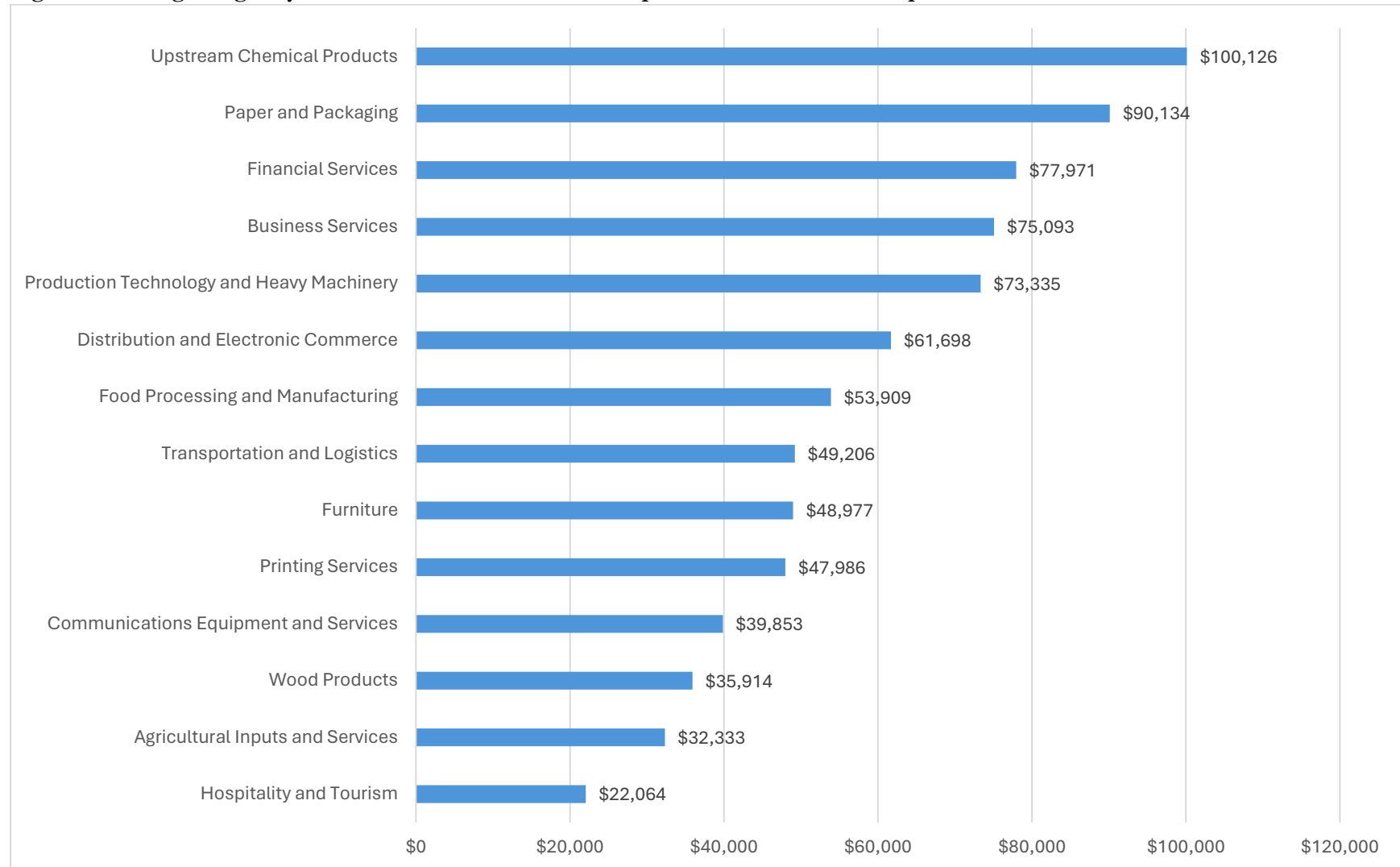


**Figure 15: Total Employment By Economic Cluster - Wisconsin Rapids-Marshfield, WI Micropolitan Area, 1998-2021**



Source: U.S. Cluster Mapping Project

**Figure 16: Average Wages by Economic Cluster - Wisconsin Rapids-Marshfield, WI Micropolitan Area, 2021**



*Source: U.S. Cluster Mapping Project*



**Wood County Economic Development  
(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**

400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495  
Phone: 715-421-8466

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## **Wood County (WI) Economic Development Funding Application Instructions & Grant Information**

The Wood County CEED (Conservation, Education, and Economic Development) Committee and the Board of Supervisors have made available a limited amount of economic development funds to be awarded each year to projects or proposals that seek to enhance the economic vitality of Wood County. This includes projects or proposals to encourage business growth and development, promote tourism and recreational opportunities, develop workforce retention or attraction strategies, and more.

**To be successful, proposals** should be clear and concise with a detailed description of the project's scope, program or activity, timeline, and 1:1 match funding. A successful proposal will -

1. **Align to REDI Plan Goals:** Wood County's economic development strategy ([The Rural Economic Development Initiative \(REDI\) Plan](#)) outlines strategic goals in key focus areas. Proposals should align with one of these strategic goals -
  - Supporting **Entrepreneurship**
  - Offering collaborative **Economic Development Networking**
  - Ensuring robust **Technology Infrastructure**
  - Addressing **Housing** needs throughout the County
  - Engaging in solutions for **Child Care** Accessibility & Affordability
  - Supporting **Asset-Based Branding & Tourism**
  - Developing combined county-wide **Recreational Mapping** to increase use and attract tourism
2. **Provide an ROI to Wood County:** Proposals should provide a detailed ROI (Return on Investment) description for the funds invested.
3. **Be Completed in One Year:** These economic development grant funds are not ongoing. Successful proposals will have a clear timeline and will be completed within the **2026** calendar year.
4. **Include a 1:1 Match:** Proposals should include at least a 1:1 match. The match can be monetary or in-kind contributions. A description of the match must be included in the application.

**Who Can Apply?** Applications are welcome from local municipalities or units of government, non-profit/community organizations, or project-based teams. Proposals should have a Wood County focus.

**Funds Available & Grant Size:** A total of \$325,000 is available in this fund for the budget year. There is no cap in place for these requests, but keep in mind there is a **1:1 match preference** and scoring will be based, in part, on the match details.

**What we do not generally fund:** Annual campaigns, Operating expenses or losses, Debt retirement, Endowments, Direct support of individuals, Lobbying, Sectarian causes

**Process:** All applications are due by 4:30pm on Friday, July 11, 2025. Applications are reviewed in August, approved by the County Board in November and grantees will be notified following approval of the County budget. Note that funds will not be released until a project results report is presented to the CEED Committee.

**Questions/More Information:** Contact Jason or Victoria in Wood County Planning & Zoning with questions. 715-421-8466, [jason.grueneberg@woodcountywi.gov](mailto:jason.grueneberg@woodcountywi.gov), [victoria.wilson@woodcountywi.gov](mailto:victoria.wilson@woodcountywi.gov).



**Wood County Economic Development**

**(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**

400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

Phone: 715-421-8466

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## **2026 Wood County (WI) Economic Development Funding Request**

**Proposal Title:**

**Applicant Organization:**

**Website:**

**Mailing Address:**

**Street Address:** (if different)

**Contact Name & Title:**

**Phone:**

**Email:**

### **Proposal Narrative**

**1. REDI Alignment** (select one)

If selected other, please describe:

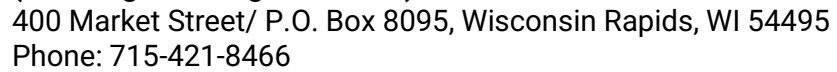
**2. Please provide a summary of your proposal.** Explain how it is consistent with and supports the Wood County REDI (Rural Economic Development Initiative) Plan.

**3. Have you received funds through this grant in the past?** (if yes, check box)

**Have you applied in the past?** (if yes, check box)

If yes, in which years did you receive funds and in which years did you apply?





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**Wood County Economic Development  
(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**

400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495  
Phone: 715-421-8466

## Funding Considerations/Request Summary

(provide separate spreadsheet/budget if needed)

Budget Summary		Budget Detail	
Total Organization Budget	\$	Revenue/Income	
Total Proposal Cost	\$		\$
Total Amount Requested	\$		\$
Total Match *	\$	Total Revenue/Income	\$
* Please provide a match explanation in question 6.     		Expenses	
			\$
			\$
			\$
		Total Expense	\$

## Project Reporting Requirement

As a reporting requirement of receiving an Economic Development Grant, a one-page summary project report will be prepared and presented to the CEED Committee. **This report must be submitted no later than Tuesday, October 1, 2026.** Funding will not be released to the applicant prior to the reporting requirement being met. Please also note that funds are not able to be carried over into the following year.

## Signatures

I attest that the information in this application submitted to Wood County is true and correct.

### Applicant

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Printed Name</i>	<i>Date</i>

### Highest Organization Elected Official/Board Chair

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Printed Name</i>	<i>Date</i>



**Wood County Economic Development  
(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**

400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495  
Phone: 715-421-8466

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## **Wood County (WI) ONGOING Economic Development Funding Application Instructions**

**About:** The Wood County CEED (Conservation, Education, and Economic Development) Committee and the Board of Supervisors have made available a limited amount of economic development funds to be awarded each year to projects or proposals that seek to enhance the economic vitality of Wood County.

**Ongoing Funding:** The CEED Committee recognizes that the County's airports, chambers of commerce, and other entities provide a direct and ongoing contribution to economic development in Wood County. As such, these entities receive year after year ongoing funding for economic development.

This application is for those entities. Organizations with more limited program/project requests should submit an *annual* Economic Development Funding application.

**Process:** All applications are due by 4:30pm on Friday, July 11, 2025. Applications are reviewed in August, approved by the County Board in November and grantees will be notified following approval of the County budget. Note that funds will not be released until a project results report is presented to the CEED Committee.

**Questions/More Information:** Contact Jason or Victoria in Wood County Planning & Zoning with questions. 715-421-8446, [jason.grueneberg@woodcountywi.gov](mailto:jason.grueneberg@woodcountywi.gov), [victoria.wilson@woodcountywi.gov](mailto:victoria.wilson@woodcountywi.gov).

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## **2026 Wood County (WI) ONGOING Economic Development Funding Request**

### **Contact Information**

**Organization:**

**Website:**

**Mailing Address:**

**Street Address:** (if different)

**Contact Name & Title:**

**Phone:**

**Email:**



**Wood County Economic Development  
(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**

400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495  
Phone: 715-421-8466

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## **Proposal Narrative**

**1. Please provide a summary of your organization's actions related to economic development in Wood County.** Explain how these actions support the REDI plan.

**2. Explain how your organization provides a Return on Investment (ROI) to Wood County.**

Please be as specific as possible. E.g. County funding will allow us to conduct 25 business prospects leading to the establishment of 2 new local businesses creating 10 full time jobs; County funding contributed to funding an entrepreneurial boot camp that led to the development of 12 business plans and the creation of 2 businesses employing 6 people

**3. Please describe any new programming you are planning for in 2026 related to economic development that you have not previously reported on.**





## Wood County Economic Development

### (Planning & Zoning/Extension)

400 Market Street/ P.O. Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

Phone: 715-421-8466

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## Budget / Requested Funds

Please attach an organizational budget.

## Project Reporting Requirement

As a reporting requirement of receiving economic development funding from Wood County, a summary report will be prepared and presented to the CEED Committee.

**This report must be submitted no later than Tuesday, October 1, 2026.** Funding will not be released to the applicant prior to the reporting requirement being met. Please also note that funds are not able to be carried over into the following year.

## Signatures

I attest that the information in this application submitted to Wood County is true and correct.

### Applicant

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Printed Name</i>	<i>Date</i>

### Highest Organization Elected Official/Board Chair

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Printed Name</i>	<i>Date</i>



**Wood County Economic Development  
(Planning & Zoning/Extension)**  
 Courthouse - 400 Market Street  
 P.O. Box 8095  
 Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-8095  
 Phone: 715-421-8466

## 2026 Wood County (WI) Economic Development Funding Request Scoring Rubric

<b>Proposal Title:</b>			
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Program provides a clear ROI for Wood County.	25		
Program is clearly described.	10		
Program demonstrates alignment to REDI category.	10		
Program includes a match. Match is clearly described, especially if in-kind.	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>		

### **Scoring/Points Awarded Explanation**

- 1-10 points possible for each of five criteria.
  - 1 (lowest score) = Very little detail provided, does not meet criteria at all, does not have a match, can not be completed in one year
  - 5 (average) = Limited details provided, has some detail, match explanation not clear, project alignment questionable, not clearly defined.
  - 10 (highest score) = Meets all criteria, strong ROI, clearly defined, match that meets or exceeds 1:1 expectation