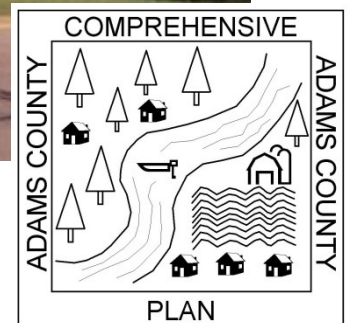


# **TOWN OF MONROE**

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Final 2017**



**Prepared by:**

**Town of Monroe Planning Commission with use of previous Comprehensive Plan by  
North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

**TOWN OF MONROE**

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**Draft May 2016**  
**Revised Draft August 2016**  
**Final Draft Feb 2017**  
**Adopted ... 2017**

**TOWN OF MONROE**  
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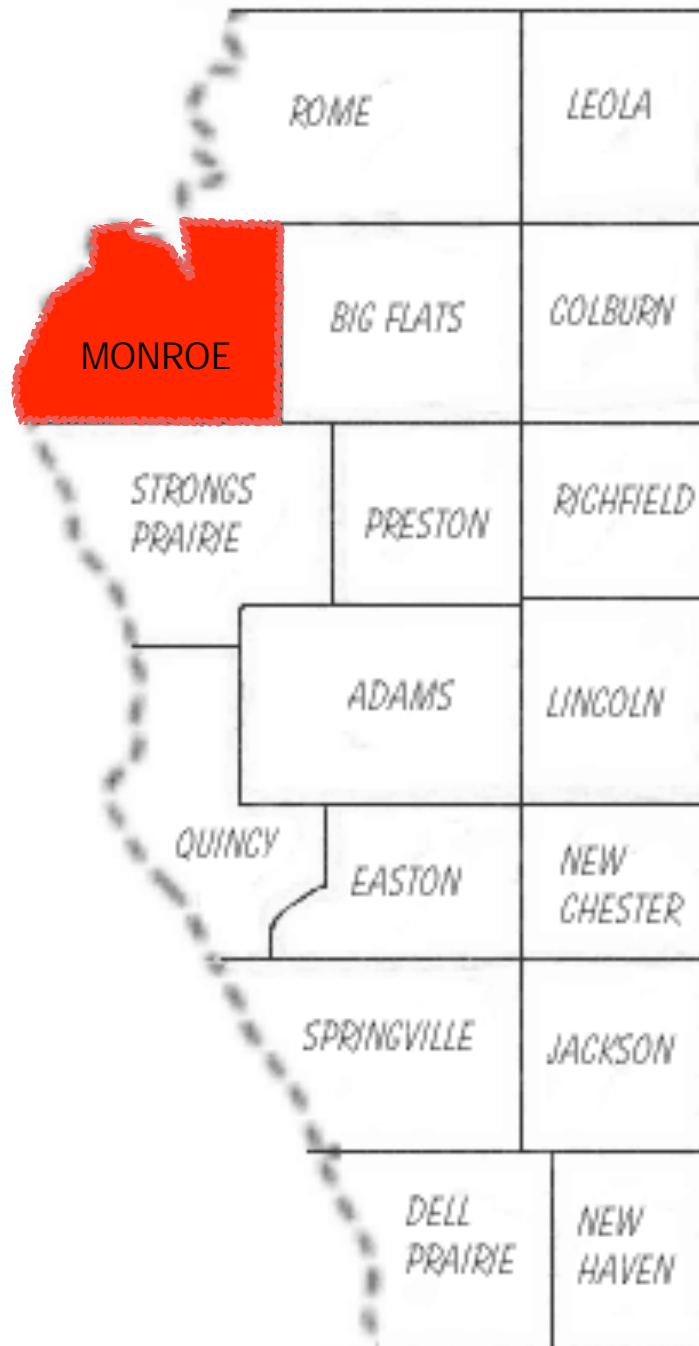
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Map 1 Location Map.



## **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Background**

The Town of Monroe is adjacent to Lake Petenwell in the northwest part of Adams County, Wisconsin. It measures approximately three miles by six miles with a sizable peninsula extending west into the Lake. The Town is bounded by The Town of Rome to the north, the Town of Big Flats to the east, the County of Juneau to the west, and the Town of Strongs Prairie to the south. It is one of the seventeen towns in the county. See the locational reference map.

Over the years the town had been dominated by forestry and scattered agricultural uses, more recently residential development has occurred along the Wisconsin River with increased tourism and recreation uses becoming more dominant.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan for more detailed information.

### **The Planning Process**

A Planning Committee was involved to oversee the development of the plan. The working group met to analyze and discuss information, each meeting was posted and open to the public.

### **Public Participation**

An important part of any planning process is public involvement. Public involvement provides the citizens of the town an opportunity to express their views, ideas, and opinions on issues that they would like addressed on the future development of their town. Local officials use this input to guide policies and decisions with greater awareness of the public's desires and consensus.

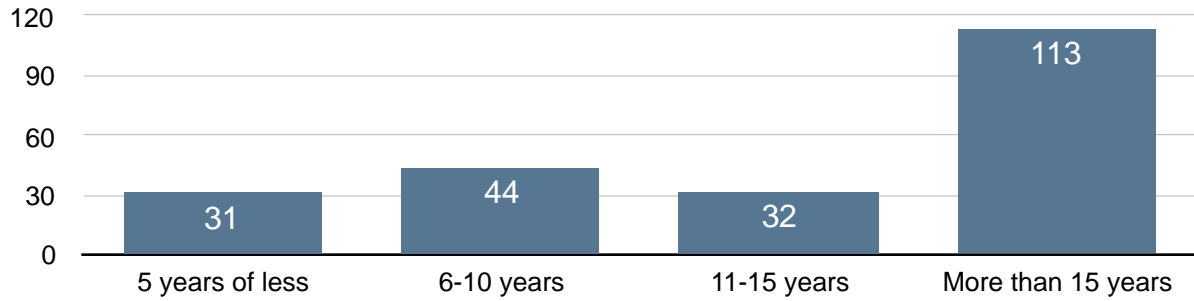
The Town of Monroe Planning Commission mailed 645 surveys in 2016 to all property owners in the Town. 309 surveys were returned providing a 48 percent response rate. This is the summary of how property owners in the Town of Monroe responded to the "TOWN OF MONROE COMMUNITY SURVEY". See Community Survey in Attachment A.

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

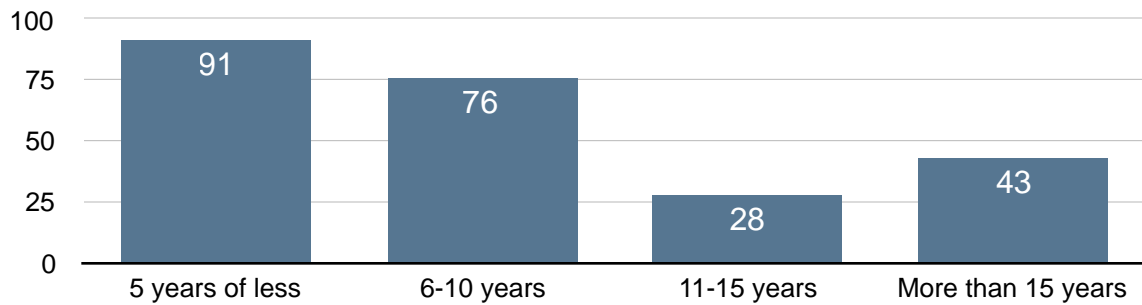
Respondents who own property in the Town did not always live in the Town. Identifying the residents, those who own property in the Town but live elsewhere, duration of ownership and type of property owned helps to analyze how these contrasting types of ownership influence survey results. 219 respondents stated they had a house on the property.

Town of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2017

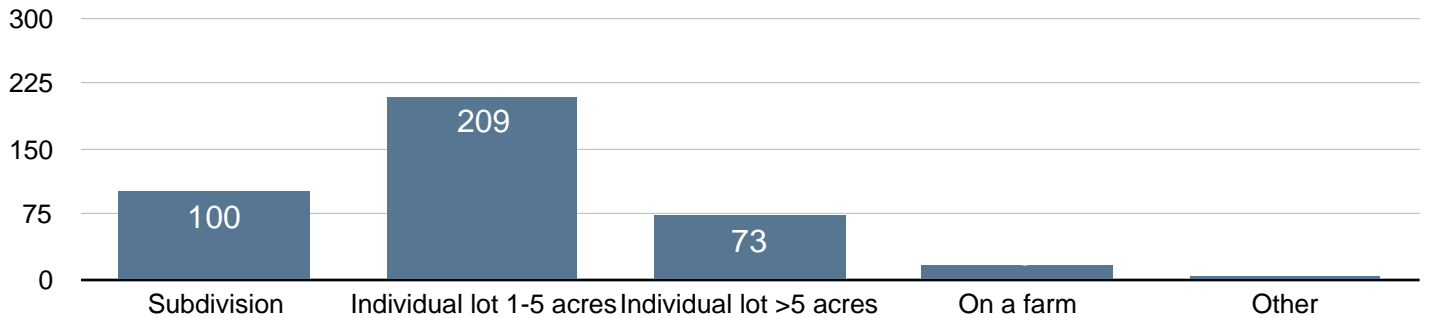
■ Number of years owned property in the Town of Monroe



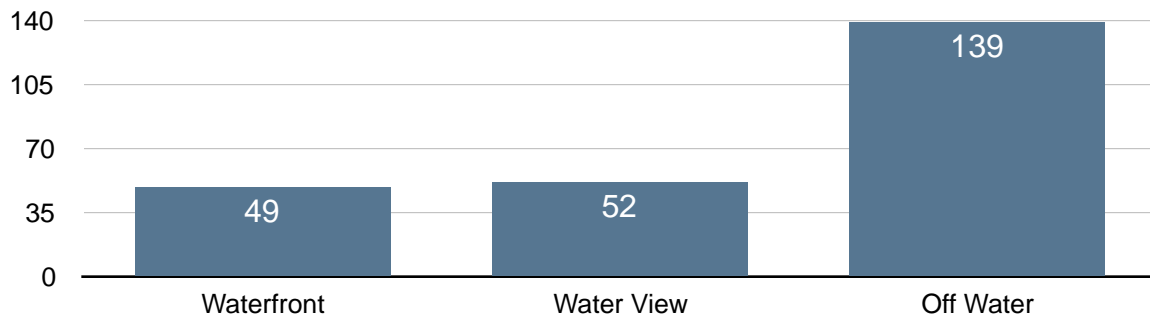
■ Number of years living in the Town of Monroe



■ Acreage of land owned



■ Property Description



## Town of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2017

Respondents stated that the Town of Monroe should have a say where growth should occur:

Yes- 229

No- 47

Don't know- 33

Development (residential, commercial and /or industrial) was felt the current pace to be right:

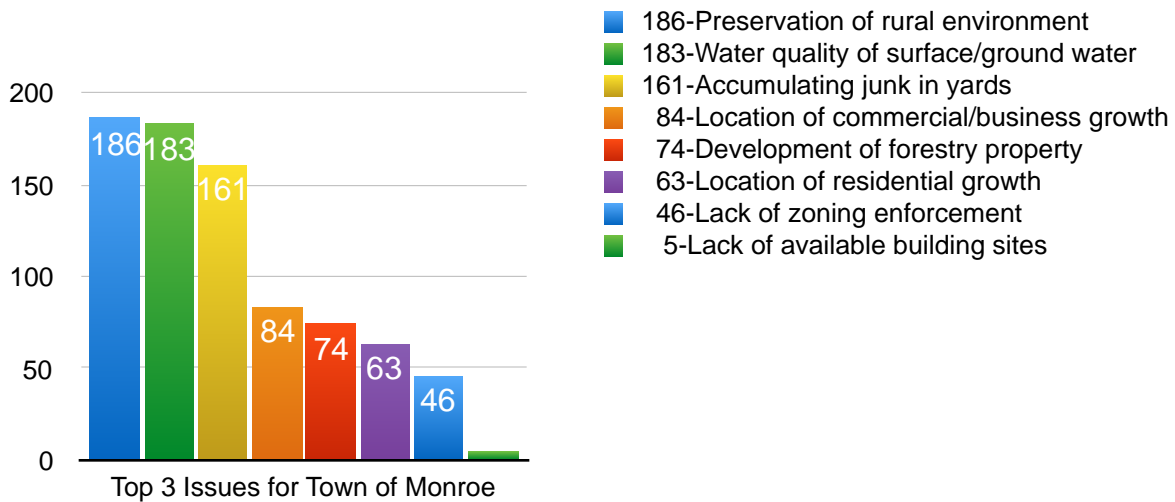
Too much - 27

More needed - 69

About right - 189

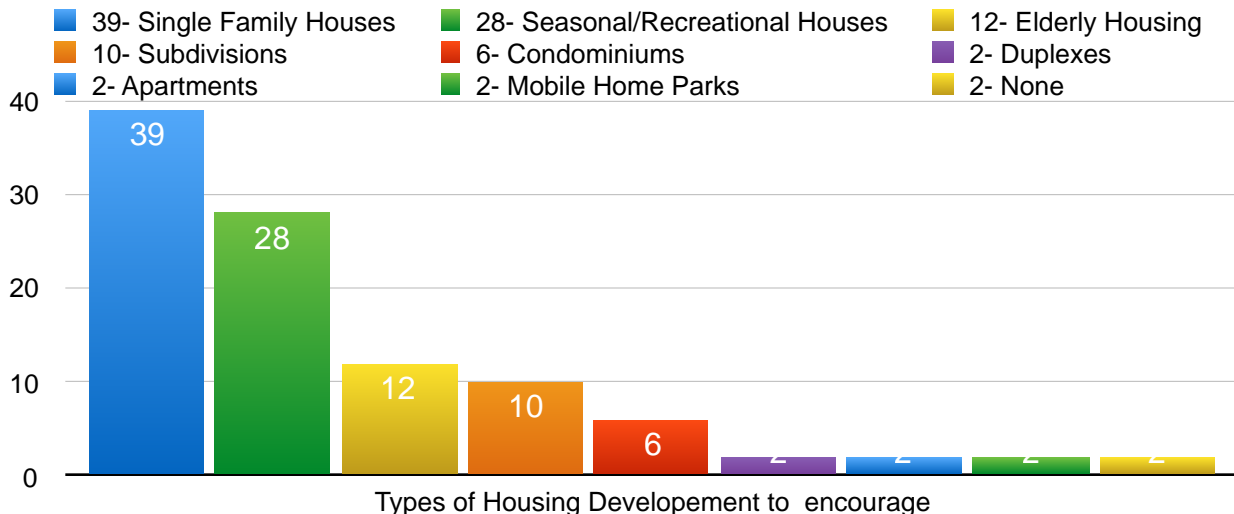
In the survey when asked for the top three issues facing the Town of Monroe, respondents top three answers were:

1. Preservation of the rural environment (22%)
2. Water quality & quantity (21%)
3. Junk accumulation in yards (19%)



Addition areas mentioned under other: Maintenance and care of roads, Hiking trails-2, Jobs, Mosquitos, High taxes, Industrial, Utility access-3, Brush-2, Burning barrels, Vandalism, No large farm, No high capacity well, Multiple campers, Fireworks, Abandoned town store, monthly newsletter,

Monroe will continue to grow, so respondents desired the following housing developments: 1. Single Family 38% 2. Seasonal/Recreational 27% 3. Elderly 12%





Types of development were given opinions of support, oppose or no opinion:

|             | SUPPORT | OPPOSE | NO OPINION |
|-------------|---------|--------|------------|
| Residential | 185     | 49     | 60         |
| Commercial  | 131     | 101    | 53         |
| Industrial  | 60      | 174    | 46         |
| Agriculture | 122     | 79     | 74         |

In hind sight, better description between family farm and large commercial agriculture should be provided.

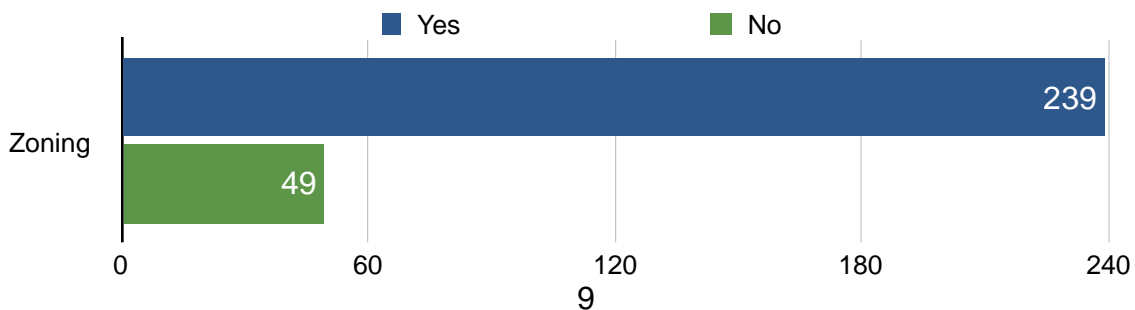
The Town Board should take steps to manage growth and development in Monroe:

- Strongly agree 110
- Agree 101
- Neutral 68
- Disagree 12
- Strongly disagree 9

Priority was given the following items regarding **new developments**:

|  | High Priority | Medium Priority | Low Priority |
|--|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Preservation of environmentally sensitive land and natural resources                                   | 238           | 46              | 14           |
| Preservation of farmland   | 135           | 132             | 14           |
| Discouraging scattered residential subdivisions by locating new development near other developed areas | 120           | 103             | 65           |
| Protection and enhancement of existing future parks and open space                                     | 219           | 50              | 15           |

A final question was posed if zoning would help manage growth and development or help maintain our agricultural/forest community, would the respondent be in favor of zoning:



## Relationship to County Plan

The Adams County Comprehensive Plan contains much of the detailed background information that is briefly mentioned throughout this document. Although this plan refers to the County Plan, there is no change in the existing relationship between the Town of Monroe and Adams County.

## Town Demographics

### A. Population

The Town's population has increased over the last ten years according to the Census. As displayed in Table 1, the Town experienced a 9.6 percent increase between 2000 & 2010. Meanwhile the county grew at the rate of 4.8 percent over the same time period. All of the surrounding Towns grew at slower rates. Between 2000 and 2010, Monroe added 35 persons. The Town continues to comprise about 2 percent of the total population of the county.

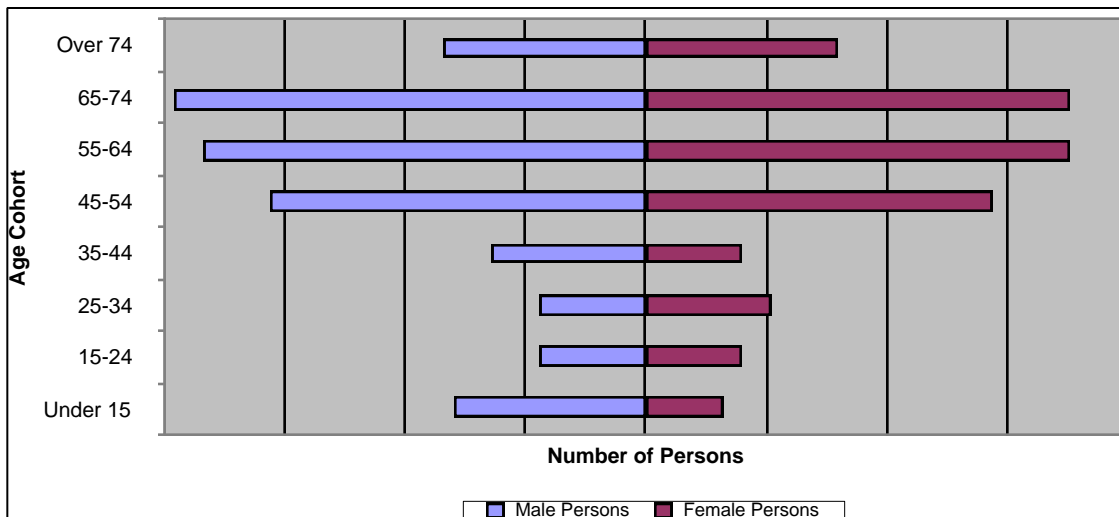
| <b>Table 1:<br/>Population</b> |            |            |            |                          |                            |                              |                             |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Minor Civil Division           | 1990       | 2000       | 2010       | 2000-2010<br>%<br>Change | 1990 - 2000<br>%<br>Change | 1990 - 2000<br>Net<br>Change | 2000 -2010<br>Net<br>Change |
| <b>Monroe</b>                  | <b>305</b> | <b>363</b> | <b>398</b> | <b>9.6%</b>              | <b>19%</b>                 | <b>58</b>                    | <b>35</b>                   |
| Rome                           | 1,674      | 2,656      | 2720       | 2.4%                     | 59%                        | 982                          |                             |
| Big Flats                      | 731        | 946        | 1018       | 7.6%                     | 29%                        | 215                          |                             |
| Strongs Prairie                | 1,028      | 1,115      | 1150       | 3.1%                     | 8%                         | 87                           |                             |
| Adams County                   | 15,682     | 19,920     | 20,875     | 4.8%                     | 27%                        | 4,238                        |                             |

Source: U.S. Census, 2010

The Town grew at a slower rate from 2000-2010 as did the county and surrounding towns.

## B. Age

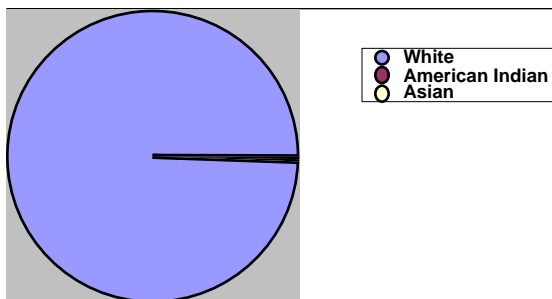
The number of people aged 65 and older that lived in the community increased from 62 in 1990, to 87 in 2000 - an increase of 40.3 percent. Meanwhile the number of persons 5 and under decreased by 38.1 percent that same period, from 21 in 1990 to 13 in 2000. Both of these statistics are an indication of an aging population in Monroe. According to the U.S. Census in 1990, Monroe's median age was 44 while in 2000 the median age was 53. In Adams County, the 1990 median age was 40 and in 2000 the median age was 44. Over the decade, Monroe's median age increased 9 years and stayed above the county's median age by nine years. Display 1 shows the majority of the population in 2010 to be in the upper age ranges with a bulge changed in 10 years from the 35-44 year range to the 65-74.



**Display 1: 2010 Age Cohorts**

Source: U.S. Census

## C. Race



In 1990, 300 of the Town's 305 residents were white and 5 were some other race. In 2000, 361 of 363 residents listed themselves as white, 1 as American Indian, and 1 as Asian. In 2010, 396 of the 398 residents listed themselves as white. Display 2 shows the percentage of race among the residents in Monroe.

**Display 2: 2010 Race Makeup**

Source: U.S. Census

#### D. Educational Level

Educational levels in 1990 showed that 157 residents had completed high school and of those 157, 26 had some college, 6 had an associate degree, 17 had a bachelor degree and 2 had a graduate or professional degree. The 2000 Census showed that 281 persons had completed high school and of those 281, 60 had some college, 15 had an associate degree, 38 had a bachelor degree and 4 had a graduate or professional degree. Only those 25 years of age and older are reflected in these statistics. Table 2 provides a summary of educational attainment in Monroe, Adams County, and the State from the 2000 census (2010 census information not available at the US Census).

| <b>Table 2: Educational Attainment, Persons Age 25 and Older, 2000</b> |                       |                     |                           |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Educational Attainment Level</b>                                    | <b>Town of Monroe</b> | <b>Adams County</b> | <b>State of Wisconsin</b> |
| Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade  | 3.7%                  | 4.1%                | 3.7%                      |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade, no diploma                  | 9.7%                  | 11.9%               | 6.9%                      |
| High School Graduate   | 39.9%                 | 42.7%               | 34%                       |
| Some College, no degree  | 22.8%                 | 22.9%               | 20.6%                     |
| Associate Degree   | 4.6%                  | 7.6%                | 9%                        |
| Bachelor's Degree  | 6%                    | 7%                  | 17.1%                     |
| Graduate or Professional   | 1.7%                  | 3.8%                | 8.6%                      |

Source: U.S. Census

The Town of Monroe in the 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates noted at [cecus.org](http://cecus.org) shows 88.6% of the population having high school graduate or higher level of education.

#### E. Households

The number of households in the town has grown from 132 in 1990 to 168 in 2000 to 201 in 2010. Of the 201 total households, in 2010, 66 percent were family households, while the other 34 percent were non-family households. Almost sixty-nine percent were married couple households. See Attachment F for household projections.

44 percent of all households included someone 65 years old or older, while 11 percent included someone 18 or younger. The average household size was 1.98 and the average family size was 2.37.

#### F. Employment

Between 1990 and 2000 the town's employed residents increased 50.0 percent, from 108 to 162. Between 2000 and 2010 the Town's employed residents only increased 2.9%. Of the 192 that are in labor force, 153 commute to work with an average of 32.1 minutes travel time.

| <b>Table 3: Total Employed</b> |             |             |             |                           |                           |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Minor Civil Division</b>    | <b>1990</b> | <b>2000</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>1990-2000 % Change</b> | <b>2000-2010 % Change</b> |
| <b>Monroe</b>                  | 108         | 162         | <b>167</b>  | 50.0%                     | <b>3.1%</b>               |
| Rome                           | 695         | 1,096       | <b>1104</b> | 57.7%                     | 0.7%                      |
| Big Flats                      | 254         | 370         | <b>382</b>  | 45.7%                     | 3.2%                      |
| Strongs Prairie                | 336         | 479         | <b>583</b>  | 42.6%                     | 21.7%                     |
| Adams County                   | 5,640       | 7,847       | <b>8354</b> | 39.1%                     | 6.5%                      |

Source: U.S. Census

#### G. Household Income

The 1999 median household income (MHI) in the town was \$34,500, which was more than Adams County, but less than the State, which were \$33,408 and \$43,791 respectively. The 2010 median household income in the Town was \$34,464 which is a decrease by \$6 and that 23% of families in the Town have an income below the poverty level. The 2000 Census indicated that poverty was concentrated among individuals over 65 years of age. The 2010 census shows a concentration in individuals 18-64 years of age. 23.7 percent of this population is below the poverty rate.

The median household income for the Town of Monroe is lower than the surrounding towns and also the county. The Town also has a lower 20 year net change than the surrounding towns and the county.

| <b>Table 4: Median Household Income</b> |                 |                 |                 |                |                           |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Minor Civil Division</b>             | <b>1990</b>     | <b>2000</b>     | <b>2010</b>     | <b>%Change</b> | <b>20 year net change</b> |
| <b>Monroe</b>                           | <b>\$24,583</b> | <b>\$34,500</b> | <b>\$34,464</b> | <b>0.1%</b>    | <b>\$9,881</b>            |
| Rome                                    | \$30,652        | \$44,000        | \$51,982        | 18.1%          | \$21,330                  |
| Big Flats                               | \$18,289        | \$27,800        | \$36,472        | 31.2%          | \$18,183                  |
| Strongs Prairie                         | \$21,447        | \$30,048        | \$45,000        | 52.7%          | \$23,453                  |
| Adams County                            | \$21,548        | \$33,408        | \$39,885        | 19.4%          | \$18,337                  |

Source: U.S. Census & NCWRPC.

H. Community Issues

There are a variety of influences in the Town, from population growth, to residential development, to the future of farming. These issues are critical to the long-term success of the town. A set of U.S. Census information can be found online at - [factfinder.census.gov](https://factfinder.census.gov). The following elements of the plan examine the many issues that impact the Town.

## 2. NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

### A. NATURAL

The Town lies in the mid-latitude continental climatic zone, which is characterized by long, snowy winters and short, warm summers. Spring and fall are often short with rapid changes from summer to winter and winter to summer. Annual precipitation throughout the area averages about 32 inches. About one-half to two-thirds of the annual precipitation falls between May and September. Snowfalls range between 45 and 80 inches annually, with a usual continuous snow cover from November to early April.



In terms of the physical landscape, the protection of certain natural features is necessary for the environment and for future generations. Certain environmental features and assets have more than merely aesthetic and leisure-time activity values. They are essential to long-term human survival and the preservation of life, health, and general welfare. As such, the protection and/or management of these environmental features and assets are clearly in the public's best interest.

The environmental features and assets that were examined in this plan include soils, wetlands, floodplains, water, and woodlands.

#### 1) Water, Wetlands & Floodplains

Together the ponds, lakes, streams and wetlands total about 11,405 acres in the Town or 46.3 percent of the total surface area. The major water body is the Petenwell Lake. These surface water resources replenish the groundwater as part of the hydrologic cycle. See the Water Features Map.

Under natural conditions, the aquifers generally receive clean water from rainfall percolating through the overlying soils. However, contamination of groundwater reserves can result from such sources as percolation of water through improperly placed or maintained landfill sites, private waste disposal located near the water table, leaks from sewer pipes, and seepage from some types of mining operations into the aquifer. Runoff from livestock yards and urban areas and improper application of agricultural pesticide or fertilizers can also add organic and chemical contaminants in

locations where the water table is near the surface. Protection of these groundwater reserves is necessary to ensure adequate water to domestic, agricultural and commercial uses. If groundwater is not protected, contamination could result; thus, endangering the quality and supply of the water in the town.



Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle, and local ecological systems. In a natural condition, they control floodwater by moderating peak flows, and some may act as groundwater recharge sites. All wetlands have valuable water purification capabilities and make significant contributions to surface and groundwater quality. They act as settling areas for inflowing streams as well as functioning in the reduction of water nutrients through uptake of these compounds into plant tissues. They also have a buffering effect on water acidity or alkalinity and are helpful in the elimination of harmful bacteria, which may be found in surface or groundwater. They also serve as breeding and nesting grounds for waterfowl and many other animals that depend on aquatic habitats; they are an important recreational, education, and aesthetic resource. In many instances, wetlands serve as the combined roles of flood moderation, water purification and aquatic

habitat, wetlands are important to the maintenance of downstream habitat as well. See the Water Features Map.

Wetlands generally occur in areas where water stands near, at, or above the soil surface during a significant portion of most years. Vegetation is generally aquatic in nature and may vary from water lilies and rushes in marsh areas to alder and

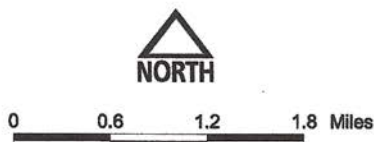
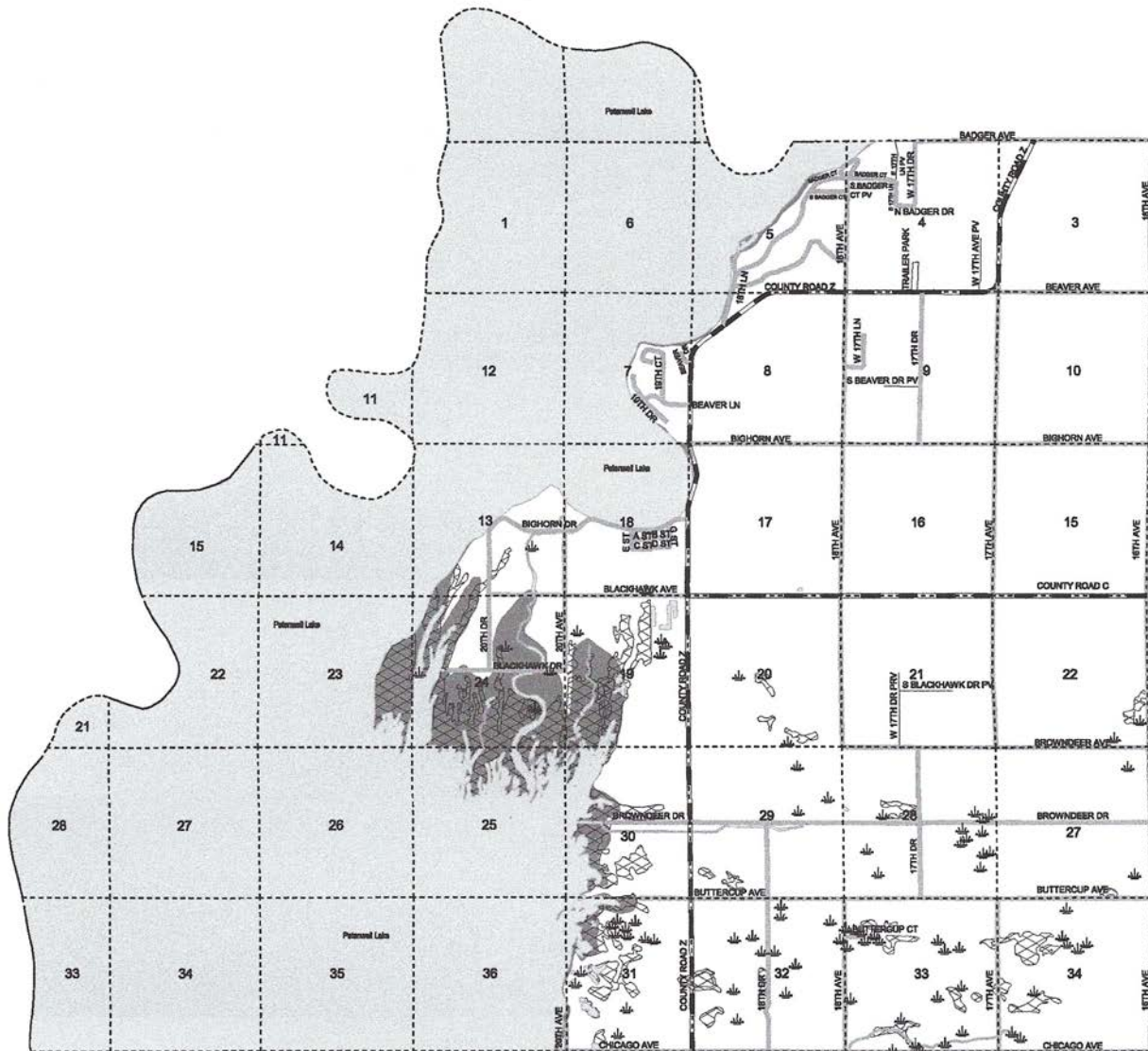






- Section Lines
- == US & State Highways
- == County Highways
- == Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Wetlands < 2 Acres
- Water
- Flood Way
- DNR Wetlands

## Map 2 Town of Monroe Water Features Adams County, Wisconsin



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



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

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tamarack in lowland forest. Swamps, bogs, marshes, potholes, wet meadows, and sloughs are all wetlands. The soils in these areas are usually saturated during the growing season within a few inches of the surface.

When drainage of wetlands occurs, or drainage patterns are altered, the water table is locally lowered and soils are exposed to oxidation at depths usually saturated. Nutrients held in the wetland soils can then be leached away. Heavy siltation can occur downstream as water previously held by the soils is swept away. Wildlife population and habitat in drained areas and downstream locations may be negatively affected, lowering the recreational and educational value. Eradication of wetlands can also occur in urban locations through the use of fill material. This can destroy the hydrologic function of the site and open the area to improper development. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) has delineated the location of wetlands and has standards for managing wetlands. There are no natural lakes in the Town.

Floodplains are a natural feature not conducive to development. Inappropriate location of roadways in floodplains can result in serious flood damage. Periodic roadbed saturation and embankment washing eventually lead to an increase in road maintenance costs. In addition to roads, floodwaters can create a number of problems by damaging foundations of homes, electrical equipment, heating units, etc. Basements constructed on permeable sands and silts of floodplains are especially susceptible to damage resulting from seepage through walls. Therefore, it is advisable to restrict development in such areas. In the Town, the areas that are designated as floodplains by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are mainly adjacent to Lake Petenwell. See the Water Features Map.







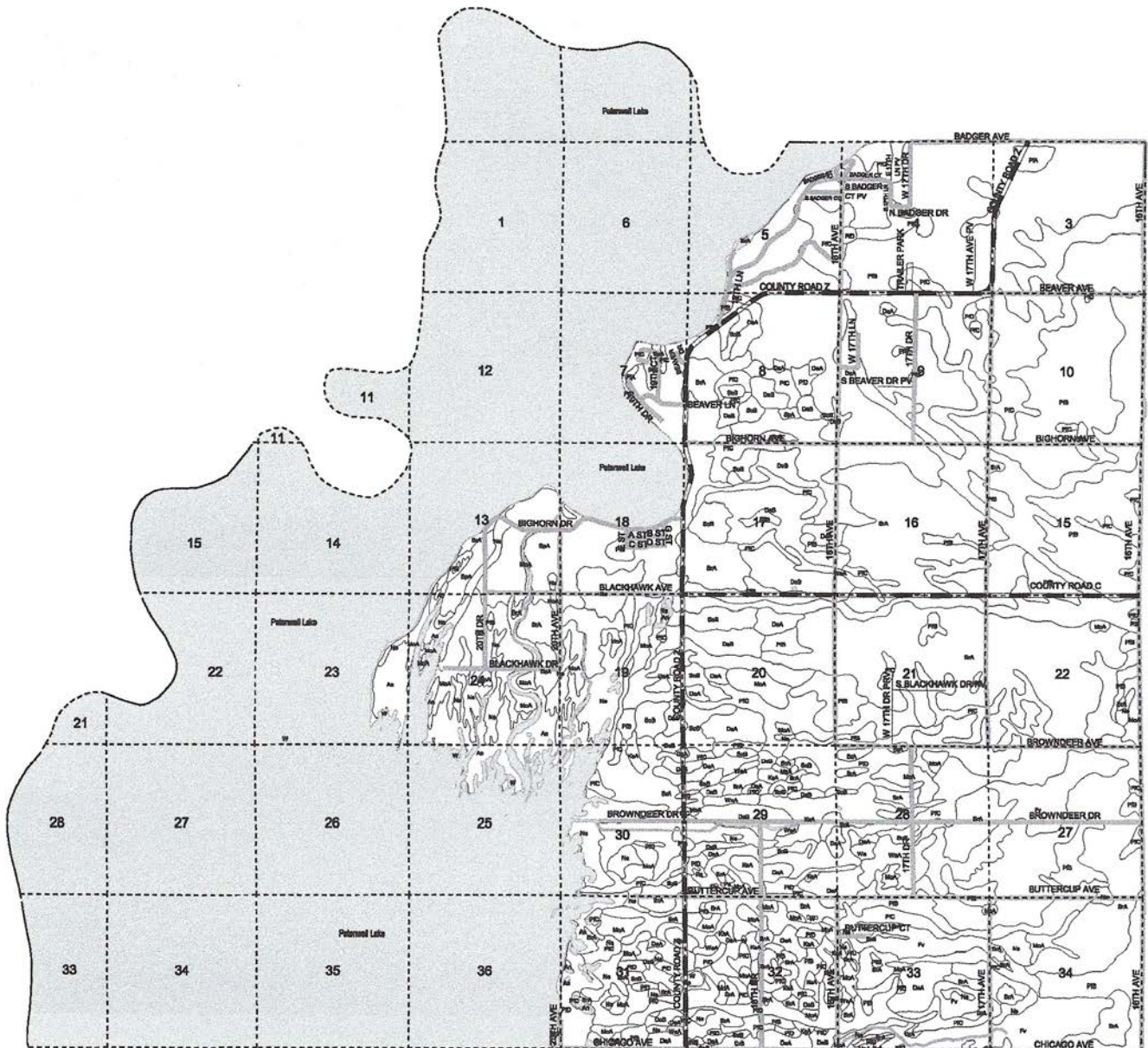
- Section Lines
- == US & State Highways
- == County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Water

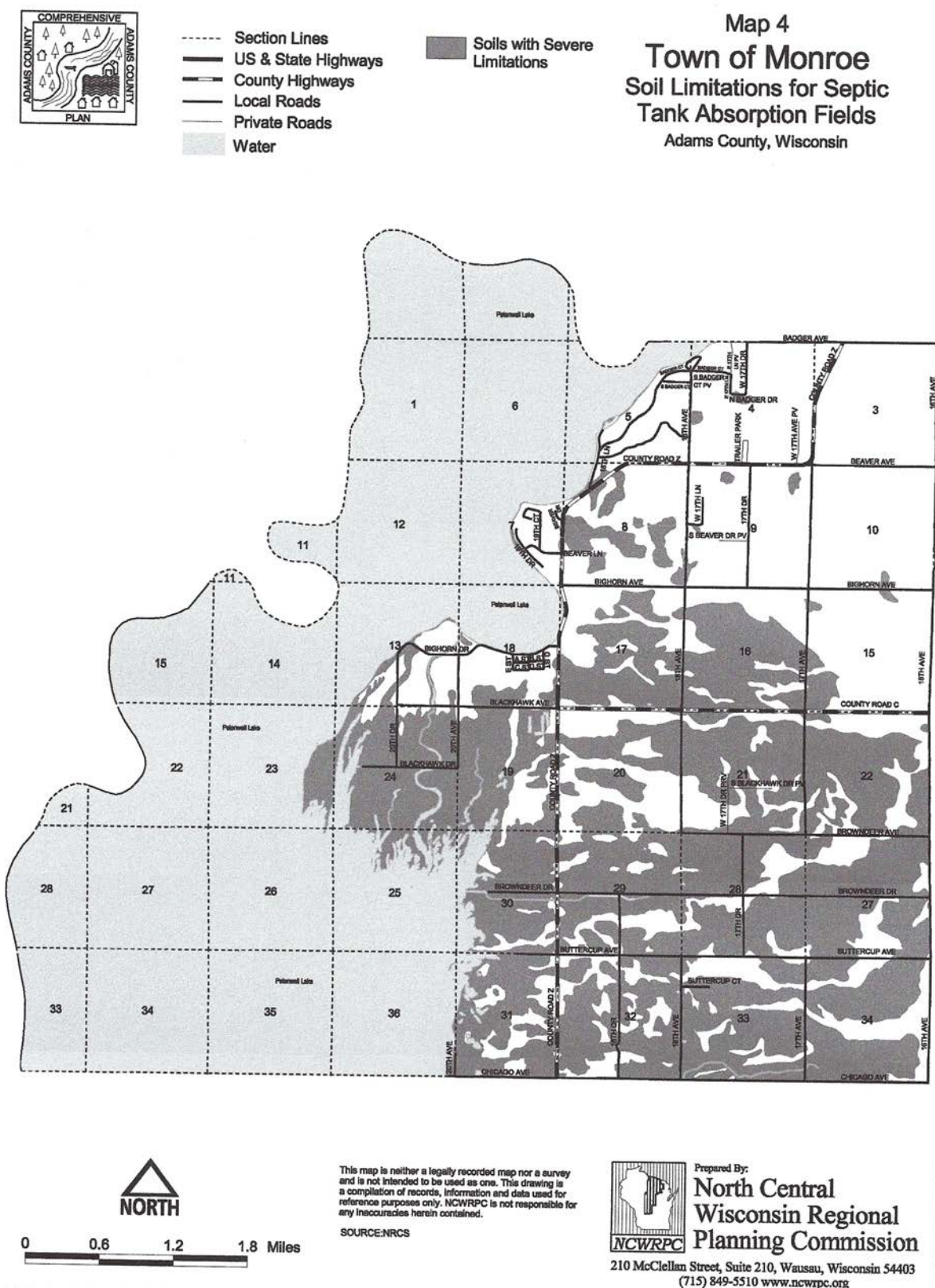
# Map 3

## Town of Monroe

### Soils

Adams County, Wisconsin





Map 4 Soil Limitations for Septic Tank Absorption Fields

2) Soils

As with most areas in Central Wisconsin, the Town of Monroe has a variety of soil types within the town. According to the 1984 USDA Soil Survey of Adams County, the soil patterns include concentrated areas of Aquents Sandy (An) and Newson Loamy Sand (Ne) along Lake Petenwell. These concentrated areas account for most of the areas classified as DNR Wetlands. Scattered throughout the Town is Plainfield Sand [(PfB), (PfC) and (PfD)], which is generally not suitable for cultivating crops or constructing houses. Some soils that are more suitable to accommodate farm uses in Monroe include Sparta Loamy Sand (SpA), Sisson Fine Sandy Loam (SoB), Brems Loamy Sand (BrA), Fisk Loamy Sand (Fv), Kibbie Silt Loam (KsA), Palms Muck (Pa), Wyeville (WeA), Grays Silt Loam (GrB), Delton Sand [(DeA) and (DeB)], Brems-Newson Loamy Sand (BsA), Meehan Loamy Sand (MoA), and Plainfield Sand (PfA). Those soil types suitable for the construction of on-site wastewater systems provided special precautions are taken include: Brems Loamy Sand (BrA), Sparta Loamy Sand (SpA), Delton Sand [(DeA) and (DeB)], Grays Silt Loam (GrB) and Sisson Fine Sandy Loam (SoB).

Soils are an important natural resource. Knowledge of the potential uses and/or limitations of soil types is necessary to evaluate crop production capabilities or when considering construction of buildings, installation of utilities, or other uses of land. Problems that limit development on certain soils include poor filtration, slow percolation, flooding or ponding, wetness, slope, and subsidence. A “severe” limitation indicates that one or more soil properties or site features are so unfavorable or difficult to overcome that a major increase in construction effort, special design, or intensive maintenance is required. For some soils rated severe, such costly measures may not be feasible. See the Soils with Limitations Map.

3) Woodlands

Forest cover provides many vital functions that are diverse in nature. Forested lands provide for recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, economic commodities (timber products), and wildlife habitat as well as protection of sensitive environmental areas. According to the *Wisconsin Land Use Databook prior to 2006*, Monroe’s 14,016 acres is 66.1 percent covered by forests (9,265 acres). In regard to the latter, tree cover is essential, especially for erosion control and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface water bodies and courses.

Some woodlands in the town are being maintained through the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program and the Forest Crop Law (FCL). This tax assessment program is available to landowners willing to manage their forest plot according to sound forestry practices as specified in a management plan. As of April 2016 per Wisconsin DNR out of Adams County office, the Town of Monroe has 3336.48 acres in Open MFL and 2387.18 acres in Closed MFL. More information exists in the Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resources element of the Adams County Comprehensive Plan.

Loss of wooded acreage out of the Managed Forest Law program, loss of woodland to residential development, loss of woodland to larger agricultural uses, and loss of





woodland to severe winds and storms all make retention of the woodland in the Town of Monroe a high priority.

**Goals:**

1. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, ponds, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
2. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
3. Preservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
4. Ensure that all new development in the town is compatible with surrounding uses and will not negatively impact environmental resources or adjoining property values.

**Objectives:**

1. New development in the Town should not negatively impact natural resources.
2. Minimize impacts to the Town's natural resources from non-metallic mineral mining.
3. Encourage and support the preservation of natural open spaces that minimize flooding such as wetlands and floodplains.
4. Promote development that minimizes groundwater impacts from on-site septic systems and other sources.

**Policies:**

1. New development should be discouraged from areas shown to be unsafe or unsuitable for development due to flood hazard, potential groundwater contamination, highway access problems, incompatibility with neighboring uses, etc.

2. Development of new non-metallic mining operations should be allowed only on lands where the expansion will not conflict with preexisting development.
3. Reclamation of non-metallic mining sites should conform to the land use plan map in regard to the reclaimed use.
4. Discourage the draining or filling of wetlands.
5. Encourage forest land owners to maintain and enroll their property in the state Managed Forest Law program.

## **B. AGRICULTURAL**

According to the *Wisconsin Land Use Databook prior to 2006*, the Town of Monroe's land area of 21.9 square miles was 25.2 percent agricultural. Of this agricultural area, 7.7 percent was used for row crops, 0.8 percent was used for foraging, and 16.6 percent was grassland. The report also found that 66.1 percent of the Town was in forest cover and 8.5 percent was wetlands.

In terms of farming trends, the town has lost 1.3 percent of farmland acres on tax rolls between 1990 and 1997. According to the *Wisconsin Land Use Databook* there were 6 active farms in 1997; none of which were dairy farms. Soils that produce high yields, cause little damage to the environment, and require minimal inputs are considered to be "prime" agricultural soils, there are no "prime" soils in the Town of Monroe. The best agricultural soils are limited in Monroe and are generally found between County Highway Z and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and in the southern eight sections of the Town.

The Town has large areas designated for farmland preservation on the Farmland Preservation Map. These areas were identified in the Adams County Farmland Preservation Plan, which is detailed in the Adams County Comprehensive Plan. The Town of Monroe has not been consulted on these areas and are not identified within our comprehensive plan.

*None of the Town's agricultural land, by definition, is considered to be "prime" farmland.*

At this time, the town of Monroe no longer has any dairy farms. Family farms continue with multiple over Century Farms. Current farms do solely crop farming and only several farming families plant and harvest their own crops. The overwhelming majority of family farming is done by rental of farm land to those out of the township.

Family farming continues to be encouraged. Enlarging of fields as needed requires sensitivity to maintaining wildlife habitat, reducing soil erosion from wind and water, and also protecting soil and water quality. Corporate large farms are discouraged d/t the need for increased clearing of the physical landscape. The Town of Monroe continues to value the protection of natural features for the benefit of the environment and for future generations, including but not limited to: water quality, woodland, wildlife, soil quality.

### **Goal:**

1. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and commercial forest while maintaining links between woodlands and fields around the farm and community and protection of the ground water.

### **Objectives:**

1. Support diversification of farming types and practices to maintain agriculture as a viable economic activity.
2. Existing agricultural uses and buildings should be taken into consideration when locating new development to avoid conflicts.



3. Encourage farmland for long-term agricultural uses.
4. Encourage use of field borders and hedgerows for agronomic, economic and wildlife benefits.

**Policies:**

1. Non-farm development, particularly subdivisions, will be encouraged in areas away from intensive agricultural activities, in order to minimize farm & non-farm conflicts due to noise, odors, nitrates in well water, pesticides, farm/vehicle conflicts on roadways, late night plowing, etc.
2. Consider the use of such tools to protect sensitive areas, such as transfer of development rights (TDR) or purchase of development rights (PDR).
3. Encourage landowners to develop forest management plans and enroll in the managed forest law program.
4. Inconveniences, such as aerial spraying, irrigation, dust, noise, odors, vehicles traffic, etc. that result from agricultural operations that are not a major threat to public health or safety, should not be considered a nuisance.
5. Consideration by farmers of town roads with use during transportation of crops, fertilizer, and other needed farming items.

## **C. CULTURAL**

There are five structures in the town that are on the Historic Registry. The James Thurber house is a Gabled Ell Style built in the 1870's. The former Monroe Town Hall, Monroe Center Church, and Bert Bredeson House are all Front Gabled Style homes built in the early 1900's. The E. Lawson house is a Two-Story Cube built in the 1920's. There are also several original farm homes and farm buildings in the town, which have not been examined for inclusion on the Historic Registry. Among these are the Town's three Century Farms; these farms were or still are owned by Gale Roberts, Frank Lawson, and Mark Jefferson and siblings respectively.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resources element for more detailed information on this topic.

### **Goal:**

1. Preservation of cultural, historic and architectural sites.

### **Objective:**

1. Work with the Adams County Historical Society and others to provide guidance in the identification and protection of historic and cultural resources.

### **Policy:**

1. Development proposals should be reviewed relative to the potential impacts to the historical and cultural resources of the Town.



Indian Baby 1854 grave – Town of Monroe

### **3. HOUSING**

#### **Background**

The 1990 Census indicates that there were 360 housing units in the town. All but 33 of these units had complete plumbing facilities, 27 lacked complete kitchen facilities and 3 of them did not have telephone service. One hundred and three of these units were built between 1980 and 1989, and twenty-four units were built before 1939.

In 2000, there were 402 housing units in the town, an increase of 11.7 percent since 1990. One hundred and sixty-eight of these were occupied, while only 8 were vacant. Two hundred and twenty-six units were identified as seasonal. Over 88 percent of all housing units in the town are owner-occupied. The average household size was 2.16.

In 2010 there were an estimated 513 total housing units with less than 50% occupation at 227 units. with only 46 units built after 2000 and 10 units built after 2005.

#### **Goals:**

1. Allow adequate affordable housing for all individuals consistent with the rural character of the community.
2. Encourage new cluster developments to keep or create green space to maintain the rural character of the community.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Ensure that local land use controls and permitting procedures do not discourage or prevent the provision of affordable housing opportunities.
2. Support development of senior and special needs housing within the Town.
3. Direct residential development away from existing agricultural uses and buildings to avoid conflicts.
4. Maintain the protection of environmental features and assets with further development.

#### **Policy:**

1. The Town should work with developers to provide a variety of housing types for all income and age groups while maintaining the rural aspect of the community.

## 4. TRANSPORTATION

### Background

The transportation system in the Town consists of county and local roads. There are no state highways in the Town. The local transportation network is an important factor for the safe movement of people and goods, as well as to the physical development of the Town. There is no public transit, rail, air or water transportation service within the Town's jurisdiction.

The nearest transit system is in the City of Wisconsin Rapids. Union Pacific provides commercial rail service. Amtrak passenger rail service is available in Wisconsin Dells. The nearest commercial air service is at the Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) in the City of Mosinee, and in Madison at Dane County Regional Airport (MSN). There are no water transportation facilities in the area.

### State and Regional Transportation Plans:

#### 1. State Plans

*Corridors 2020* was completed in 1989. The plan was designed to meet Wisconsin's mobility needs for the future. The 3,200-mile state highway network was comprised of two elements: a multilane backbone system and a two-lane connector system. The backbone system is a 1,650-mile network of multilane divided highways interconnecting the major population and economic centers in the state and tying them to the national transportation network. The connector system is 1,550 miles of high-quality highways that link other significant economic and tourism centers to the backbone network. All communities over 5,000 in population are to be connected to the backbone system via the connector network. Within Adams County, STH 21 is a Corridors 2020 connector route, and the only highway in the County designated as part of the Corridors 2020 system.

Another state plan was *Translinks 21*, completed in 1994. This effort began developing more detailed modal plans that include in-depth analysis of a specific mode and its relationship to the other modes. Completed plans include the *Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020*, the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*, the *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020*, the *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020* and the *Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report*. Each modal plan includes extensive analysis of land use related issues.

Another state level plan related to the highway system is the *Wisconsin Access Management System Plan*. This is a plan for managing access on portions of the State Trunk Highway System that designates 5,300 miles of state highways on which access will be managed through the purchase of access rights or the designation of "controlled access highways". It shows where WisDOT intends to control access points as new development occurs and to consolidate or eliminate existing access as necessary and feasible.

The access management plan is composed of two tiers. Tier 1 consists of the routes that make up the Corridors 2020 system, including STH 21 in Adams County. Access management on these routes is seen as essential to maintaining the required high level of service. Because these highways are generally the main routes between communities and

have higher traffic volumes than other state highways, they tend to experience the greatest development pressure. Tier 2 is comprised of other State Trunk Highways that meet specified criteria, including STH 13 and STH 73 in Adams County. These routes are roadways where limiting access is seen as a cost-effective strategy to improve safety, reduce congestion, facilitate planned access to developing land, and delay or avoid future construction expenditures.

## 2. Regional Plan

The Regional Comprehensive Plan: A Framework for the Future, 2002 – 2020 was adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in 2003. The RCP looks at transportation in all ten counties that make up the North Central Region, including Adams. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local government can address transportation issues.

The RCP identifies a number of transportation issues including growing traffic volumes and congestion. Moderate levels of congestion, see MAP 4 are expected by the year 2020 on STH 13 in Adams/Friendship and north of the lakes area in the Town of Rome as well as STH 21 west of STH 13, assuming no capacity improvements. Moderate congestion indicates that speeds and distance between vehicles are reduced, constricting traffic flow. Freedom of drivers to maneuver within the traffic stream or enter the highway is noticeably limited. Minor incidents can result in traffic jams because the traffic stream has little space to absorb disruptions. Traffic volumes continue to swell, especially in summer months due to the local tourism and seasonal housing growth. The RCP shows 72 to 77 percent increase in average daily traffic on major routes in Adams County between 1980 and 2000.

The RCP addresses other modes of travel as well as highways, including bicycle transportation. The North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan is incorporated in the RCP by reference. The plan envisions development of a regional system of new interconnected bicycle facilities for the ten county area including Adams. The proposed network will encompass routes on bicycle paths, bicycle lanes, paved shoulders and wide curb lanes which will link existing and potential traffic generation sites and points of interest, as outlined in the plan, to make bicycling a more attractive and safer transportation alternative. A map displaying highway suitability for bike routes is included in the attachments.

The goals of the regional bike plan are to generate public interest in using existing and developing new bike trails across the Region and state and to provide county and municipal officials with guidance in planning and establishing bike facilities at the local level.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Transportation element for more detailed information on this topic.

## **Road Network**

The road system in the Town of Monroe plays a key role in development by providing both access to land and serving to move people and goods through the area. The interrelationships between land use and the road system makes it necessary for the development of each to be balanced with the other. Types and intensities of landuses have a direct relationship to the traffic on roadways that serve those landuses. Intensely developed land often generates high volumes of traffic. If this traffic is not planned for, safety can be seriously impaired for both local and through traffic flows. See the Transportation Map.

The Town of Monroe road network consists of roughly 10.79 miles of county highway and 44.66 miles of local roads. Of the 44.66 miles of town roads, approximately 11.5 miles are unpaved. The town utilizes a WisDOT computer program to maintain an inventory of its local roads and monitor conditions and improvements of its roads. Ideally, this system will enable the town to better budget and keep track of roads that are in need of repair.

Traffic generated and attracted by any new land use can increase the volume throughout the road system and increase congestion and keep property from reaching its full potential value. Even without the creation of new driveways, changes in land uses can increase the number and types of vehicles on the roadway. Uncontrolled division of land tends to affect roadways by intensifying the use of abutting lands, which impairs safety and impedes traffic movements.

As development continues and land use changes, the cost of maintaining the road system must be increased. More traffic requires more maintenance and expansion of the local road system.

### **Goals:**

1. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
2. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.
3. Utilize software to inventory and rate the local roads.
4. Widen and Improve existing roads before constructing new roads.
5. Limit both town and private road development until existing infrastructure is brought up to a common level.

### **Objectives:**

1. Support and maintain a safe and efficient Town road system.

2. Promote the development of multi-use trails, trail linkages, or wide shoulders as part of new development proposals, where appropriate.
3. Support the Adams County Transit System.

**Policies:**

1. Prepare and update a 5-year Road Improvement Plan.
2. The Town should work with the county on any project that affects the Town.
3. Land uses which generate heavy traffic volumes will be discouraged on local roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use.
4. Roadway access will be better spaced along the existing Town road network to increase safety and preserve capacity.
5. Future road locations, extensions or connections will be considered when reviewing development plans and proposals.
6. All Town roads must accommodate access requirements for emergency services (fire, EMS, ambulance, etc.) as well as school bus and snowplows.

Roads and trails – Town of Monroe



## 5. UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### Background

As a small rural town, few public utilities exist in Monroe. There are no sanitary sewers, storm water systems, public water supplies, wastewater facilities, power plants, health care facilities, airports, child care facilities, schools, or libraries. A high voltage transmission line passes through town from northeast to southwest. Monroe does not provide for curbside solid waste collection; however, that service is made available with several private firms who offer curbside refuse and recycling collection for a fee. The Town now rents space at the transfer site to a utility tower for improved internet use and possible future use of cellular phone improvement.

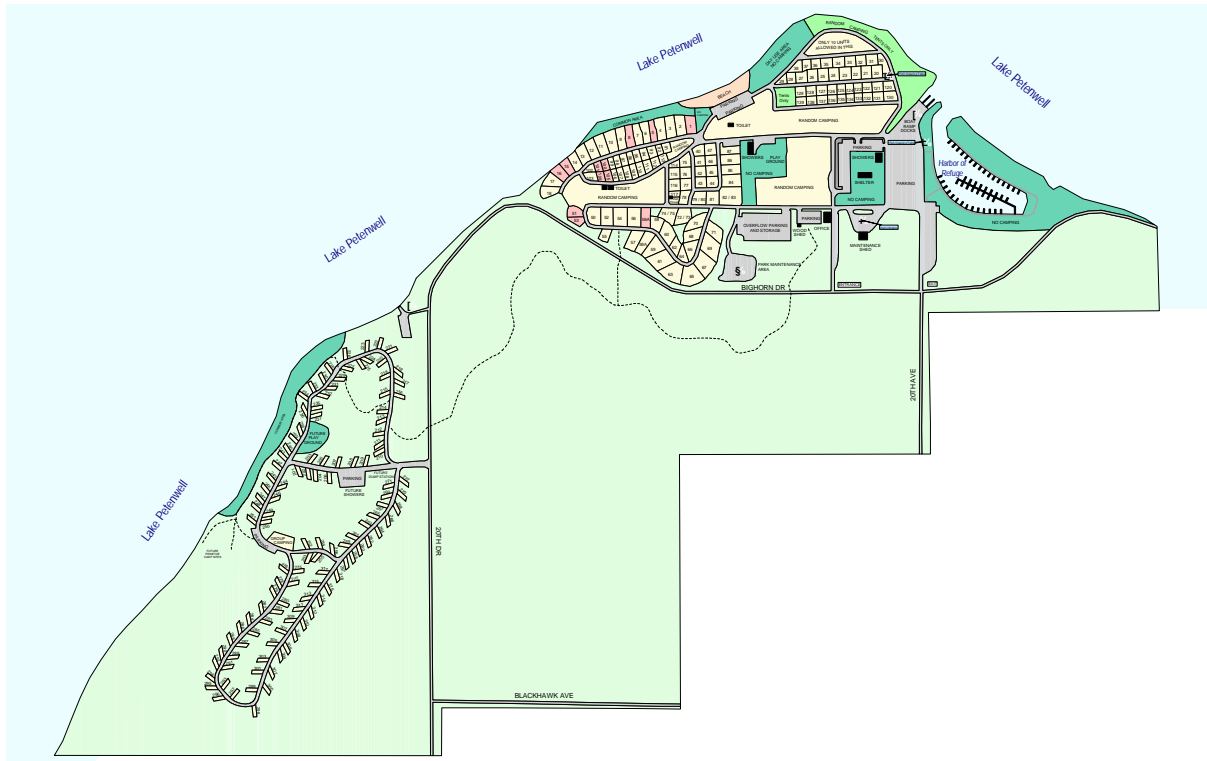
The Town contracts for fire protection from the neighboring Town of Big Flats and has constructed a fire substation in Monroe. The Town of Big Flats will maintain the substation and it will house a fire engine owned by Big Flats as well. First responders and ambulance services are obtained by contract. Law enforcement services are provided by the Adams County Sheriff's Office. The Town now maintains an area for med flight use at the Town Hall.



The Town Hall building is owned and maintained by the Town. The Town Hall also functions as a multi-purpose building. The Town of Monroe Park is nine acres in size. It has a shelter and bathrooms but is not served by running water. There is also an acre of land designated for another Town Park but this property has not been officially opened to the public and holds no facilities. There is one public-access cemetery in the Town named Spring Creek Cemetery.

**Petenwell County Park** is maintained by Adams County and is located on the northern shore of the Monroe peninsula. The park is open year-round with heated shower/restroom facilities. Lake Petenwell is the 2nd largest body of water in Wisconsin. This 431 acre park has a designated swimming area, boat launch/harbor of refuge, playground equipment and hiking trails, heated showers and restroom facilities. Park office includes a game room with concessions and firewood available. Seasonal boat slips are available for reservations.





Map 5 Petenwell County Park

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Utilities & Community Facilities element for more detailed information on this topic.

**Goals:**

1. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
2. Continue to provide ambulance, volunteer fire and first responder services to residents.
3. Encourage recycling by residents.
4. Enhance and develop year round recreational opportunities in the Town.

**Objectives:**

1. Make information available to residents on the proper maintenance of septic systems.

2. Consider the potential impacts of development and agriculture proposals on groundwater quality and quantity.
3. Explore opportunities to develop integrated, multi-use trail systems and recreational facilities that include uses for hikers, bikers, ATV's, snowmobiles as well as the disabled and elderly.
4. Share equipment and services across Town boundaries, where possible.

**Policies:**

1. Work with adjoining towns, the county, the state, and individual landowners to address known water quality issues.
2. The feasibility of wastewater collection and treatment systems on water quality should be considered by major developments.
3. Develop and maintain a Capital Improvements Plan for major equipment purchases.
4. Maximize the opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy the natural resources within the Town through encouraging development and/or maintenance of parks, trails and wildlife areas.

## 6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Background

Recreation, Tourism, Farming and Forestry are the dominant economic sectors in the Town of Monroe. Recreation and tourism are popular in Monroe.

There are a variety of county, regional, state and federal economic development programs available to businesses in the Town. These programs range from grants to loans, to general assistance.

#### 1. County:

##### *Adams County Rural & Industrial Development Corporation (ACRIDC)*

ACRIDC is a non-profit organization that promotes the economic development of Adams County, Wisconsin, and its respective cities, villages, and towns. ACRIDC is comprised of area businesspersons, citizens, local government, utility company representatives, state agencies and elected officials, educational institutions and other organizations essential to the growth of Adams County. ACRIDC is prepared to serve the needs of new businesses coming to the area as well as to assist existing companies.

##### *JAM Development Zone*

Adams County was awarded designation as a Wisconsin Development Zone in association with Juneau and Marquette Counties. Known as the JAM Zone (Juneau-Adams-Marquette), Adams County qualifies for special state incentives available to businesses that locate or expand within the Zone. The extent of the credits for any given business is determined during the certification process. This program is administered by the ACRIDC.

##### *Adams County Revolving Loan Fund*

A Wisconsin Department of Commerce Economic Development Grant was awarded to Adams County in 1996. This grant enabled Adams County to establish a revolving loan fund in order to assist local businesses and is administered by the ACRIDC.

##### *Adams County Chamber of Commerce*

The Adams County Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to the development of the business community in Adams County. The Chamber offers information on local business and industry and also provides a variety of programs designed to assist business development.

##### *Adams - Columbia Electric Coop (ACEC) Revolving Loan Fund*

The ACEC established a USDA - Rural Development IRP revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed-rate, low down payment, low interest financing. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism and other manufacturing and service industries.

#### 2. Regional:

##### *North Central Advantage Technology Zone Tax Credits*

Adams County has been designated a Technology Zone by the Department of Commerce. The Technology Zone program brings \$5 million in income tax incentives for high-tech

development to the area. The North Central Advantage Technology Zone offers the potential for high-tech growth in knowledge-based and advanced manufacturing clusters, among others. The zone designation is designed to attract and retain skilled, high-paid workers to the area, foster regional partnerships between business and education to promote high-tech development, and to complement the area's recent regional branding project.

3. State:

*Rural Economic Development Program*

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

*Wisconsin Small Cities Program*

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

*Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)*

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

*Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)*

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

*Other State Programs*

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

4. Federal:

*U.S. Dept. of Commerce - Economic Development Administration (EDA)*

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

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

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

agricultural and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their member services.

*Small Business Administration (SBA)*

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

Most of the town's residents commute to employment and retail areas outside of the Town. There are also industrial parks nearby in the Cities of Wisconsin Rapids and Adams as well as the Towns of Rome and Preston that also provide employment opportunities.

**Goals:**

1. Building of community identity by revitalizing community character and enforcing building standards.
2. Promote the stabilization of the current economic base.
3. Discourage retail commercial use that may create excessive traffic flow through the town.
4. Encourage new retail, commercial & industrial development to locate adjacent to county roads.
5. Industrial development must not negatively impact environmental resources or adjoining property values by location away from the lake, wetlands and residential areas.
6. Encourage new ordinances that establish minimum aesthetic standards to eliminate commercial, industrial, and agricultural property with excessive debris, blighted property, and dilapidated buildings.

**Objectives:**

1. Encourage new retail, commercial & industrial development to locate in designated areas.
2. Encourage businesses that are compatible in a rural setting.

**Policies:**

1. Accommodate home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, signs or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.

## Town of Monroe Comprehensive Plan 2017

2. Review the costs and benefits of a proposed development project prior to approval.
3. Commercial and industrial development should be directed to designated planned areas consistent with the Future Land Use Map.
4. Intensive industrial uses should be steered to areas that have the service capability to support that development.

Locally owned business – Town of Monroe





## 7. LAND USE

### Background

The Town of Monroe covers an area of about 24,611 acres in Adams County. The area is characterized by thin till and pitted outwash. The typical terrain is rolling and covered with a mix of softwoods and hardwoods or open for agricultural use with a general north to south drainage pattern. The natural resource base of the area is dominated by timber. Agricultural uses of the land are vitally important, consisting mostly of cash crop farming including alfalfa, potatoes, soybeans, and field corn.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Land Use element for more detailed information on this topic.

**Table 5: Existing Land Use, 2004**

| Land Use Type      | Acres  | Percent |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| Agriculture        | 1,684  | 6.8%    |
| Commercial         | 6      | 0.0%    |
| Governmental       | 19     | 0.1%    |
| Industrial         | 0      | 0.0%    |
| Open Grassland     | 187    | 0.8%    |
| Outdoor Recreation | 190    | 0.8%    |
| Residential        | 1,184  | 4.8%    |
| Transportation     | 564    | 2.3%    |
| Water              | 10,595 | 43.1%   |
| Woodlands          | 10,180 | 41.4%   |
| Total Acres        | 24,609 | 100.0%  |
| NCWRPC GIS         |        |         |

**Table 6: Existing Land Use, 2015**

| Land Use Type                  | Acres  | Percent |
|--------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Agriculture                    | 1,908  | 7.80%   |
| Commercial                     | 5      | 0.02%   |
| Governmental/<br>Institutional | 16     | 0.07%   |
| Mobile Home Park               | 4      | 0.02%   |
| Open Lands                     | 984    | 4.00%   |
| Outdoor Recreation             | 188    | 0.76%   |
| Residential                    | 719    | 2.90%   |
| Transportation                 | 540    | 2.20%   |
| Utility                        | 2      | 0.00%   |
| Water                          | 10,612 | 43.20%  |
| Woodlands                      | 9,614  | 39.00%  |
| Total Acres                    | 24,593 | 100.00% |
| NCWRPC GIS                     |        |         |

### Existing Land Use 2004

Knowledge of the existing land use patterns within the Town was necessary to develop a desired “future” land use pattern. The Existing Land Use Map was developed using air photos from a countywide flight in 1992/1998, with updates by the local government in 2004. Water dominates about 43 percent of the area, followed by Woodlands with about 41 percent, Agriculture with about 7 percent, and Residential with about 5 percent. Starting in 2016 the county is working with the USGS for updated land use patterns

In general, forest lands cover most of the Town mixed with agricultural lands in the western and southern parts. Residential development is distributed fairly evenly along the major road network and concentrated in the north and western parts of the Town, particularly along Lake Petenwell. The County maintains public open space on the northern shore of the Monroe peninsula.

### **Future Land Use 2016-2036**

The Future Land Use Plan Map represents the long-term land use recommendations for all lands in the Town. The map is advisory and is intended to reflect community desires and serve as a guide for local officials to coordinate and manage future development of the town.

The Plan groups land uses that are compatible and to separate conflicting uses. To create the Plan, nine basic future land use categories were defined. To ease future implementation of the plan, the majority of the classifications generally correspond to the districts within the Adams County Zoning Ordinance. The classifications are not zoning districts themselves and do not confer any regulatory authority in and of themselves. However, the preferred land use map and classifications are intended to be used as a guide for the Town. It would also become the basis for zoning should the Town ever choose to implement a zoning ordinance.

A general description of each classification follows:

- 1. Residential**

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

- 2. Rural Residential**

Identifies areas that are recommended for less dense residential development, consisting of larger minimum lot sizes than the residential category. These areas will also allow a mixture of residential uses, and provide a good transition from more dense development to the rural countryside.

- 3. Commercial**

Identifies areas recommended for commercial development, as well as existing commercial establishments located throughout the Town.

- 4. Industrial**

Identifies areas recommended for industrial development, as well as existing industrial areas located throughout the Town including; i.e., livestock facilities and large corporate farming.

- 5. Governmental/Public/Institutional**



Identifies existing or planned governmental/public/institutional facilities within the Town, including recreational facilities.

**6. Agricultural Areas**

Identifies areas to be encouraged for the purpose of general crop farming or the raising of livestock by smaller family farms.

**7. Forestry Areas**

Identifies areas of large woodlands within the Town.

**8. Transportation Corridors**

Identifies the existing road network along with the recommendations for improved and safe traffic movement in the town, including airports and rail facilities.

**9. Preservation & Open Space**

Contains sensitive environmental areas, such as 100-year floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, DNR wetlands, steep slopes of 12 percent or greater, and open water. This could include endangered species habitat or other significant features or areas identified by the Town.

Using these categories the Town of Monroe Planning Commission participated in a mapping exercise to identify the desired land use. Specifically, they used their broad knowledge of the town, the series of maps that were prepared as part of the planning process, and their interpretation of the current trends. The goal was to produce a generalized land use plan map to guide the town's growth in the next decade. The Year 2036 Land Use Plan Map represents the desired arrangement of preferred land uses for the future.

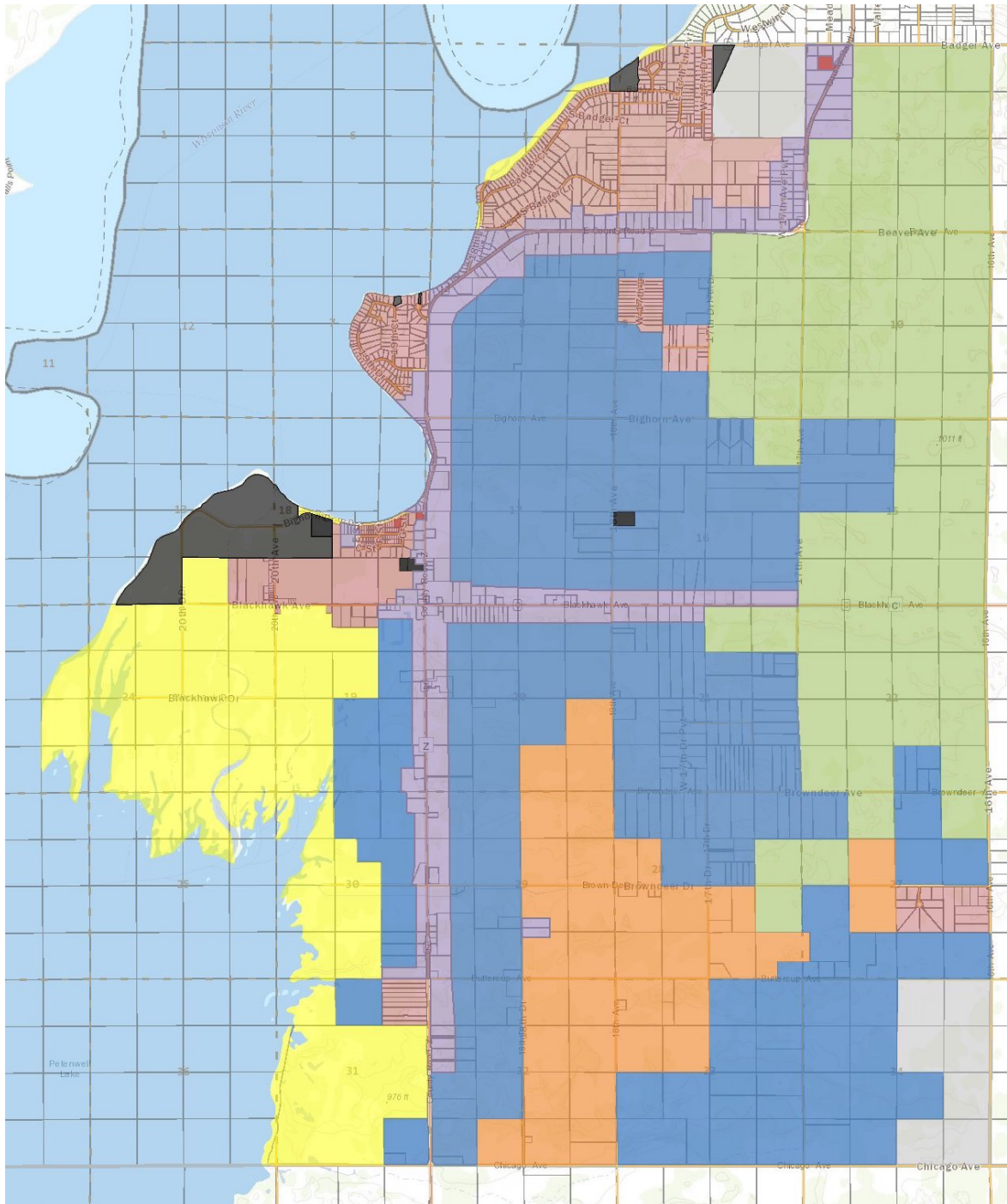
**Future Land Use Plan Map Overview**

The Future Land Use Map shows concentrations of residential uses in the north and northwestern fringe of the Town. These occur mainly on the west or north side of County Road Z, although there is a concentration south of County Z between 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 17<sup>th</sup> Drive. In the southern half of the Town, rural residential uses occur along several road fronts including County Z, Browndeer Drive, County C, and Buttercup Avenue; the land in the southeast of Section 21 is also shown as rural residential. The Town has one commercial node focused starting from the intersection of Bighorn Drive and County Z and continuing toward the County Park. Further areas would be along County Road Z south of County Road C. No industrial sites are identified on the map. There are governmental and institutional areas. Agricultural use appears mostly in the Southern part of the Town and much of the eastern part of the Town is in forest land use with the exception of the floodplain areas in the southwest and west parts of the Town adjacent to the Lake which are characterized as preservation areas.

The goal of this land use plan is to balance individual private property rights with the Town's need to protect property values community-wide, minimize the conflicts between land uses and keep the cost of local government as low as possible. An essential characteristic of any planning program is that it be ongoing and flexible. Periodic updates to the plan are needed to reflect the current trends of the community.

Map 6 2015 Aerial view





- Map 7 Future Land Use**
- Residential
  - Rural Residential/Agriculture
  - Preservation and Open Space
  - Commercial
  - Governmental/Public/Institutional

- Residential/Commercial
- Rural Residential
- Forestry Areas
- Agriculture

## **Zoning**

Currently the Town of Monroe is not zoned, except for shoreland areas, which are administered by Adams County.

### **No General Zoning (Shoreland Only)**

The Town of Monroe currently has no general zoning, neither with the County or its own. By state law it does fall under the County's shoreland zoning requirements. All counties are required to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the county outside of villages and cities. Those zoning regulations apply only to areas 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the landward side of a floodplain whichever distance is greater and within 1000 feet of a pond or lake.

The Town has other implementation tools that could be used to implement some of the recommendations from the comprehensive plan. Those tools may include such things as the purchase of land or easements, subdivision ordinances, mobile/manufactured home restrictions, nuisance regulations, design review for commercial and industrial developments, infrastructure improvements (sewer and water, utilities), road construction and maintenance, and public services, among others.

If there was a need to create general zoning the Town could either join County Zoning or create its own zoning. Both have advantages and disadvantages.

### **Join County Zoning**

The Town could pass a resolution to join County Zoning. The advantages of this would be that zoning could put in place, and the County would cover the cost for administration. The disadvantage would be that the Town would need to utilize the existing districts used within the County Ordinance.

### **Create Town Zoning**

The Town could draft their own zoning ordinance. This would require village powers, a referendum vote, and County Board approval to establish. Also, the County Board would continue to have "veto" power over future amendments to the Town's ordinance. The advantages of this option would provide for the greatest amount of "local control" over zoning decisions. The zoning districts and other ordinance provisions could be tailor made to best achieve the desired future conditions in each land use area. Administration of this option could be achieved in a variety of ways: 1) The Town could fund its own administration; 2) the County and Town could jointly administer this ordinance by having a Town zoning administrator that is also a County deputy-zoning administrator; 3) use 66.30 intergovernmental agreements to contract with the County or an adjacent town for zoning administration and enforcement.

Creating the Town's own zoning ordinance would be a more expensive option, as it would require the Town to fund zoning administration and enforcement (including legal expenses) instead of the County. The Town would likely need to hire at least a part time zoning



administrator, and would need to establish a Board of Adjustment. Even then, there would still be some overlap between shoreland zoning and Town zoning for shoreland and floodplain areas.



#### Land Use Vision

*The Town of Monroe offers a safe, peaceful, rural environment and a special place to live, raise a family and retire. The residents wish to ensure, preserve and conserve our most valuable resources of woods, water, air and family traditions. Together these abundant resources offer a variety of valuable life style and seasonal recreational opportunities to both residents and visitors.*

#### Goals:

1. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve the rural community.
2. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
3. Promote property development in accordance with Firewise recommendations.
4. Promote and encourage development of recreational opportunities for residence and visitors including but not limited to; bicycling, hiking, ATV use, snowmobiling, boating, skiing, fishing , hunting.



#### Objectives:

1. Maintain orderly, planned growth which promotes the health, safety and general welfare of residents and makes efficient use of land and efficient use of public services, facilities and tax dollars.

2. New development should not negatively impact the natural environment or existing property.
3. Provide for a mix of land uses within the Town.
4. Promote new land development that is consistent with this plan.

**Policies:**

1. The Town will maintain the comprehensive plan, which will serve as a guide for future land use decisions. New development will be permitted based on consideration of this Plan, as well as other Town, County, Regional, and state plans and other regulations.
2. If have County Zoning...The Town will actively participate in zoning and subdivision review decisions at the County level, which affect the Town. This plan will be cited as the basis for all such actions including "disapproval" of proposed zoning amendments.
3. Land uses and building locations that minimize the potential for conflicts between existing and proposed land uses will be encouraged.
4. Land uses and building locations that minimize clear cutting of large contiguous forest tracts will be encouraged.
5. Use conservancy zoning to protect natural resources in the Town.
6. Encourage conservation easements, green space and/or wooded buffer zones and other tools to protect environmentally sensitive or unique resources.
7. Update existing land use regulations to be consistent with this plan.

## **8. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

### **Background**

Vertical governmental relationships between federal, state and local units (county/city/town) are relatively well established in law. Unfortunately, there is little public policy in Wisconsin law that requires, horizontal governmental relationships such as Town to Town and municipality to County or Town. The result is that towns, municipalities, and counties often act more as adversaries than as partners.

School districts are one of the most common intergovernmental organizations since they cross-traditional local municipal boundaries. Adams County is served by five school districts. A school district map is included in the attachments.

Wisconsin Statute s.66.30, entitled "Intergovernmental Cooperation", does enable local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Typically, intergovernmental cooperation and coordination refers to the management and delivery of public services and facilities. It is also dependent upon a defined geographic area within which cooperation and coordination may be feasible. Often the area is a central city and its surrounding area, or several similar towns. This collection of local communities contains citizenry that are interdependent in terms of their employment, residence, health, and medical care, education, recreation and culture, shopping and other experiences.

A variety of other factors, some long-standing and some of fairly recent origin, are combining to force citizens and local governments in both urban and rural area to confer, cooperate, and in some cases, to join together in a search for better ways to deliver public services in their respective areas. These factors include:

- population settlement patterns;
- local government structure, finance, and politics;
- high population mobility;
- economic and environmental interdependence; and
- high cost, capital-intensive functions.

### **Adjoining Units of Government**

The Town of Rome completed its comprehensive plan in 2000 and again in 2014 and the border area identified no areas of conflicting land uses. The Towns of Big Flats and Strong's Prairie identified no areas of conflicting land uses.

The Town of Monroe and Adams County strive to maintain cooperation in road use in regards to Petenwell County Park access and usage.

The Town of Big Flats and the Town of Monroe cooperate with joining resources in Fire Protection. Refer to Big Flats/Monroe Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

### **Goal:**

1. Encouragement of coordination & cooperation among nearby units of governments.

**Objectives:**

1. Promote communication with other units of government, including adjoining towns, the county, the state, and federal government.
2. Join together with other units of government to provide services in a more cost-effective manner.

**Policies:**

1. Pursue cooperative agreements regarding boundary agreements, annexation, expansion of public sewer and water services, and growth management between the City/Village and the Town.
2. Identify alternative solutions to existing or potential land use, administration or policy conflicts that may hinder intergovernmental cooperation.
3. Regularly meet with adjoining unit of government to discuss issues of mutual concern.
4. Periodically review existing shared service agreements, and explore additional agreements.



## **9. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Background**

Implementation of this Comprehensive Plan depends on local officials. It is also important that local citizens and others become aware of this plan.

Some steps have already been accomplished toward implementing this plan, such as the adoption of written public participation guidelines, the formation of a Plan Commission, hosting an open house meeting, passing a Plan Commission resolution recommending Plan adoption by the Town Board, holding a formal public hearing, and approval of the Plan by ordinance by the Town Board.

The following recommendations are made to further implement this Comprehensive Plan:

#### Recommendation 1:

The Town Board should use this plan as a guide when making decisions, especially those that relate to growth and development. The Planning Commission and any other official committee of the Town should also use this plan in their efforts as well.

#### Recommendation 2:

The Town should encourage citizen awareness of the comprehensive plan by making copies available, making reference to at public meetings and Town newsletters, and displaying a copy of the future land use plan map in the Town Hall. Neighboring local units of government and others will receive copies of the plan.

#### Recommendation 3:

Consider County or independent Town Zoning along with Village Powers

The Town currently has no zoning, except for the shoreland areas covered under county zoning. Beyond that, there are some additional tools and approaches that can be utilized by the Town to achieve the goals of the plan. These include but are certainly not limited to the following: land division, official mapping, fee simple land acquisition, easements, deed restrictions, land dedication, and ordinances or programs regulating activities such as building permits, erosion control, or septic pumping, etc. The Town should consider these tools as needed. Although per the Town of Monroe 2015 Survey, the majority of the Town was in favor of zoning.

#### Recommendation 4:

Amendments to this Plan may include minor changes to the plan text or maps, and or major changes resulting from periodic review. Wisconsin Law requires that the same process used to adopt the plan will be used to make any amendments. The steps are outlined below:

- An amendment or change may be initiated by either the Town Board or Plan Commission, a request from a resident, or may result from a regular review of the plan.
- The Plan Commission prepares the specific text or map amendment being considered, holds a public meeting and votes to recommend approval or disapproval of the proposed amendment, by resolution to the Town Board.
- A copy of the proposed Plan amendment is sent to all affected government units, including Adams County.
- Town Clerk publishes a 30-day Class 1 notice announcing a Town board public hearing on the proposed changes.
- The Town Board conducts the public hearing and votes to either approve, disapprove or approve with changes, by ordinance.

Any approved changes are sent to affected government units, including Adams County. Frequent minor changes to accommodate specific development proposals should be avoided.

Recommendation 5:

Periodic updating of the plan is necessary to insure that it reflects the desires of the Town's residents. The Plan Commission should review the plan on an annual basis, and conduct an in-depth review of the plan every five years. At a minimum the plan must be updated every ten years.

The annual review should compare how decisions, especially land use related, made during the year relate to the goals, objectives, and policies of the plan. If decisions are inconsistent with plan, changes need to be made.

The update should consider the following to maintain consistency in the land development process:

- Revision should be made to bring decision-making back in line with Plan's goals, objectives, and policies.
- The goals, objectives, and policies should be reviewed to ensure they are still relevant and worthwhile in the Town.
- New implementation tools should be considered to gain more control over decisions.

The above recommendations provide a general process for the Town to best implement the findings of this plan. The process to develop the plan consisted of countless hours of time and effort of our elected and non-elected staff, and the general public. However, the ability to implement the plan lies with the Town Board. In the end, it is the Town Board's responsibility to uphold and promote this plan.

### Consistency Among Plan Elements

The comprehensive planning law requires that the implementation element describe how each of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan shall be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive Plan. The nine sections (elements) of this Plan were prepared simultaneously to achieve integration and eliminate any inconsistencies between the different sections.

## ATTACHMENT A

### 2016 Town of Monroe Community Survey

With the approval of the Monroe Town Board, the Planning Commission is undertaking a community survey to help the town gather information on how it should plan for future growth and change. This survey will address issues important to the town, such as existing land uses, environmentally sensitive areas and the physical appearance of the Town. As part of the data collection, this survey is designed to obtain community opinions and attitudes regarding the Town's future growth and development and to provide guidance in developing community goals and plan implementation strategies.

#### WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The legislature requires that all programs, decisions, and actions of cities, villages and towns that affect land use must be "consistent with" a comprehensive plan. Decisions are required to be based on their adopted comprehensive plan, according to the statutory requirements. If land use decisions do not reflect the goals of a community's adopted comprehensive plan; they may not be considered legally defensible under the statutes.

Please complete and return this survey as soon as possible. Your answers are confidential and all responses will remain anonymous. Your input is greatly appreciated. Please fold and return the completed survey in the self addressed stamped envelope by February 7th, 2015.

1. What do you like MOST about living in or owning property in the TOWN OF MONROE?

2. What do you like LEAST about living in or owning property in the TOWN OF MONROE?

3. How long have you lived and/or owned property in the Town of Monroe?

LIVED

41 5 years or less  
29 6 –10 years  
27 11–15 years  
43 more than 15 years

OWNED

31 5 years or less  
44 6 –10 years  
32 11–15 years  
113 more than 15 years

4. a. Is there a house on this property?

223 Yes 80 No

b. Do you have other buildings/campers on your property?

168 Yes 126 No # of buildings 166 # of campers 51

b. Do you have other property in the Town of Monroe?

56 Yes 240 No

d. Do you have buildings/campers on this property?

36 Yes 131 No # of buildings 51 # of campers 7

5. Which below best describes your Town of Monroe Property?

A.

100 In a subdivision

209 An individual lot 1–5 acres in size

B.

49 Waterfront

52 Water View

73 An individual lot greater than 5 acres in size (not farm) 139 Off water

16 On a farm

5 Other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

6. The Town of Monroe is expected to have population growth in the next 20 years. Should the town have a say in where this new growth should occur?

(Please check one)

232 Yes

49 No

35 Don't know

7. Which one of the following statements best describes how you feel about development in the Town of Monroe. **Development is defined as residential, commercial, and/or industrial growth.** (Please check one)

27 In general, there is too much development in the Town of Monroe

73 In general, more development is needed in the Town of Monroe

193 In general, the current pace of development is about right in the Town of Monroe

8. Would you support or oppose additional development in the Town of Monroe?

|             | Support    | Oppose     | No        |
|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Opinion     |            |            |           |
| Residential | <u>192</u> | <u>50</u>  | <u>60</u> |
| Commercial  | <u>137</u> | <u>103</u> | <u>53</u> |
| Industrial  | <u>63</u>  | <u>178</u> | <u>47</u> |
| Agriculture | <u>126</u> | <u>81</u>  | <u>75</u> |

9. Current land uses development regulations/ordinances are:

103 adequate

41 too weak

21 too strong

131 no opinion/don't know

Please specify your answer:

10. Please mark below what you think are the top three (3) issues facing the Town of Monroe. (Please add to the list if your issues are not included.)

63 Location of residential growth

84 Location of commercial/business growth

46 Lack of Zoning enforcement

183 Water quality of both surface (lakes, rivers) and ground water

186 Preservation of the rural environment (i.e. green space, wetlands and forestry)

74 Development of Forestry Property

5 Lack of available building sites

161 Accumulating junk in yards

\_\_\_\_ Other Maintainance and care of roads, Hiking trails-2, Jobs, Mosquitos, High taxes, Industrial, Utility access-3, Brush-2, Burning barrels, Vandalism, No lg farm, No high cap well, Multiple campers, Fireworks, Abandoned town store, monthly newsletter, stagnant prop values, excessive prop for sale

11. As Monroe continues to grow, what kinds of housing development would you like to see encouraged by the Town of Monroe (Check all that apply)

246 Single family houses

15 Apartments

62 Subdivisions

39 Condominiums

11 Mobile Home Parks

15 Duplexes

75 Elderly housing

165 Seasonal/recreational

houses

\_\_\_\_ Other None-10, Trailers allowed, No rental houses, Military VA

12. Please rate the level of priority of the following items about **new developments.**

a. Preservation of environmentally sensitive land and natural resources:  
(wetlands, floodplains, steep hillsides, forested areas, etc.)

243 High priority      49 Medium priority      14 Low priority

b. Preservation of farmland:

138 High priority      134 Medium priority      15 Low priority

c. Discouraging scattered residential subdivisions by locating new development near other developed areas of the town:

124 High priority      104 Medium priority      68 Low priority

d. Protection and enhancement of existing and future parks and open space:

226 High priority      50 Medium priority      15 Low priority

13. What do you consider to be the most important land-use issues facing the Town of Monroe?

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14. Please respond to the following statement: The town of Monroe Town Board should take steps to manage growth and development in the town of Monroe (Please check one)

110 Strongly agree      68 Neutral      12 Disagree  
101 Agree      9 Strongly disagree

15. If zoning would help manage growth and development or help maintain our agricultural/forest community, would you be in favor of zoning?

239 Yes      49 No