



Town of Texas Comprehensive Plan (Draft March 2019)



Town of Texas

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Prepared with the Assistance of the:

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission



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- A. Public Participation Plan & Resolution
- B. Adoption Resolution
- C. Adoption Ordinance
- D. Cooperative Boundary Agreement Map

Chapter 1

Background and Demographics

Background

The Town of Texas is located slightly north of the Wausau metropolitan area, and is located in Marathon County, Wisconsin. The Town is bordered to the West by the Wisconsin River, to the North by Lincoln County, and to the East by the Town of Hewitt. Rural landscapes dominate throughout the Town, as forests and agriculture are the dominant land cover. The Town contains three parks; Trappe River Dells Park, Jesse Park, and portions of the Wisconsin River Forest Unit. CTH W and CTH WW are the major highways within the Town. Both CTH W and CTH WW provide access to the Wausau area for residents, with CTH WW also serving as the only bridge across the Wisconsin River.

The Town contains many family farms and has a primarily manufacturing and construction based economy. Large farms within the Town include Hsu Ginseng Farms, Bauman Farms, Podgorski Sigmund, and Wilke's Dairy Farm. Major employers within the Town include Wausau Hardware & Machine Company and Stainless Steel Specialists.

Planning Process

The state planning law - 66.1001 - requires that comprehensive plans be updated every 10 years. In early 2018 the Town initiated a process to update its 2006 plan. The Town Plan Commission held meetings to review changes and discuss goals, objectives and policies. A public hearing was held and the Town Board adopted the plan.

Public Participation

An important part of any planning process is public involvement. Public involvement provides the citizens of The Town an opportunity to express their views, ideas and opinions on issues that they would like addressed regarding the future development of their community. Local officials use this input to guide policies and decisions with greater awareness of the public's desires and consensus. See the adopted **Public Participation Plan** in Attachment A.

The Town of Texas posted all Plan Commission meetings inviting the public and held a public hearing to collect public input.

Demographics

Population

The Town of Texas has decreased in total population by 5.5 percent since 2000, with population projected to slightly decline between 2010 and 2015. **Table 1.1** shows demographic change in Texas compared to Marathon County and Wisconsin. Population trends in the Town vary greatly from those of Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin. While the Town of Texas decreased in population between 2000 and 2015, Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin both experienced increases in population greater than 7 percent during that time. Between 2010 and 2015, changes in population slowed in the Town, County, and State.

The increase in total households since 2000 is higher than the increase in population. This is due to a decrease in household size, which reflects the national trend toward more households comprised of singles, couples without children, smaller families, and widows or widowers. Town of Texas households increased 6.7 percent since 2000, a slower rate than both Marathon

County (15.3%) and Wisconsin (13.8%). The estimated 2015 average household size in Texas (2.54) is larger than both Marathon County (2.51) and Wisconsin (2.50). Average household size has also decreased at a faster rate within the Town than in Marathon County and Wisconsin since 2000.

Table 1.1: Demographic Change						
		2000	2010	2015	% Change 2000-2015	% Change 2010-2015
Total Population	Texas	1,703	1,615	1,610	-5.5%	-0.3%
	Marathon County	125,834	134,063	136,510	8.5%	1.8%
	Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,783,015	7.8%	1.7%
Total Households	Texas	608	645	649	6.7%	0.6%
	Marathon County	47,402	52,708	54,657	15.3%	3.7%
	Wisconsin	2,084,544	2,279,768	2,371,815	13.8%	4.0%
Average Household Size	Texas	2.80	2.50	2.54	-9.3%	1.6%
	Marathon County	2.60	2.49	2.51	-3.5%	0.8%
	Wisconsin	2.50	2.43	2.50	0.0%	2.9%

Source: U.S. Census, Wisconsin Department of Administration

The estimated median age in Texas in 2015 was 44.3, which is older than the median age in Marathon County (40.6) and Wisconsin (39.0) as shown in **Table 1.2**. Since 2000, Texas has experienced an increase in median age that is higher than both Marathon County and Wisconsin. However, Texas also experienced a

decrease in median age since 2010, while the County and State both experienced an increase in median age. Large changes between 2010 and 2015 could be a result of using U.S. Census data for 2010 and estimates from American Community Survey for 2015.

Table 1.2: Median Age					
	2000	2010	2015	% Change 2000-2015	% Change 2010-2015
Texas	39.2	47.8	44.3	13.0%	-7.3%
Marathon County	36.3	39.4	40.6	11.8%	3.0%
Wisconsin	36	38.5	39	8.3%	1.3%

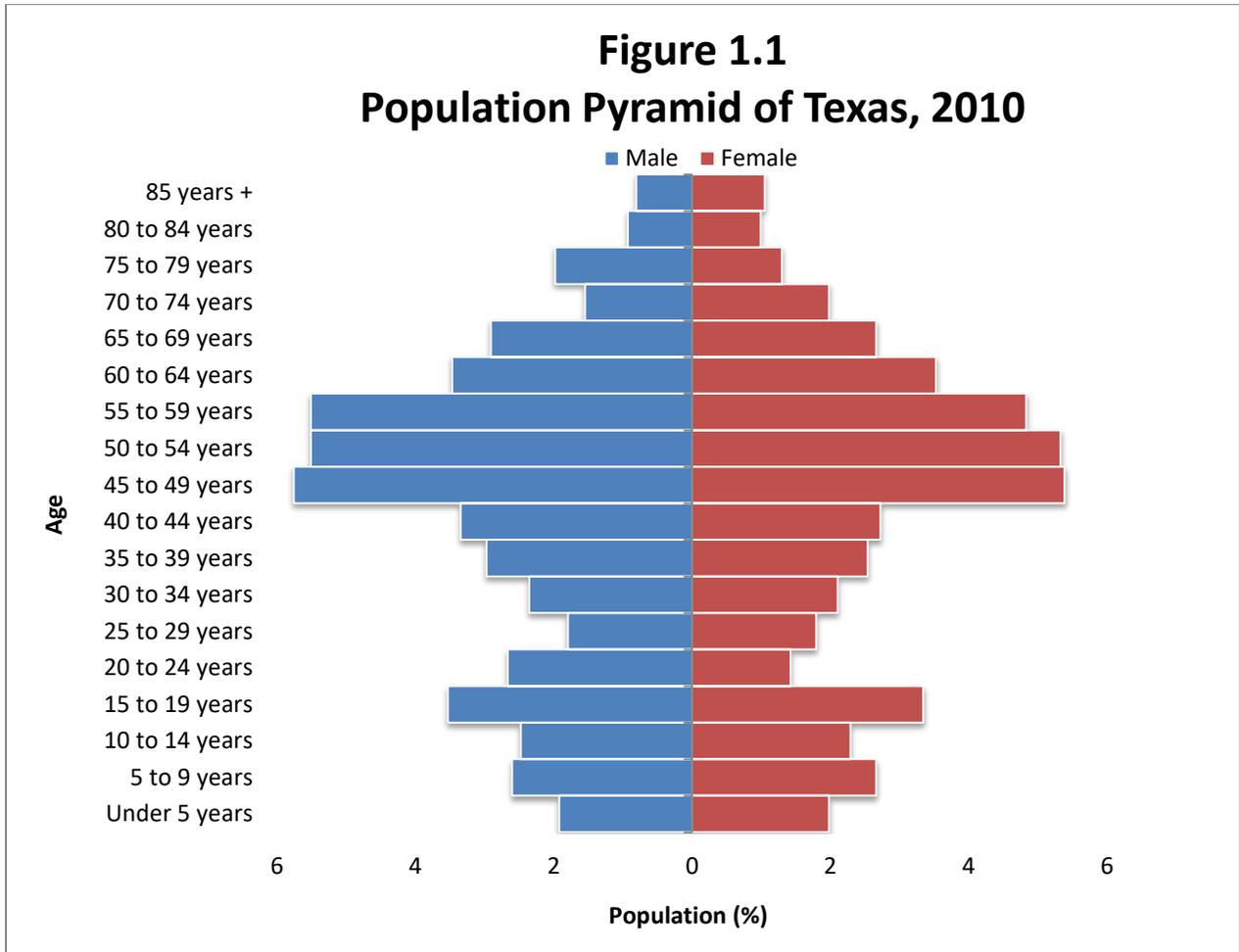
Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015

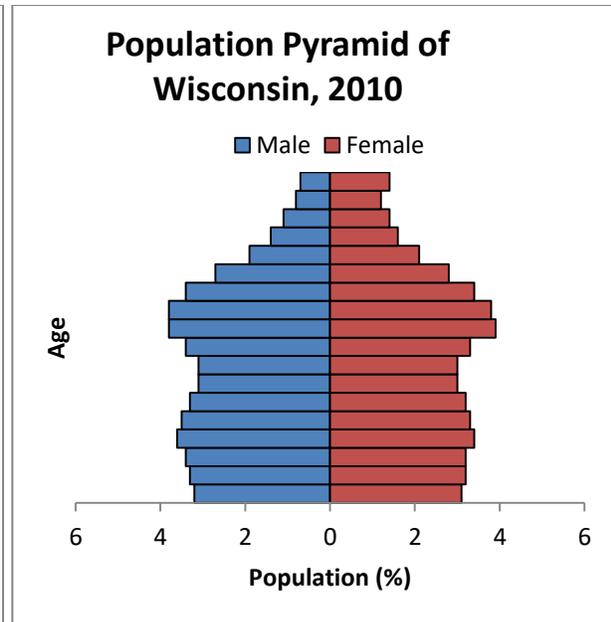
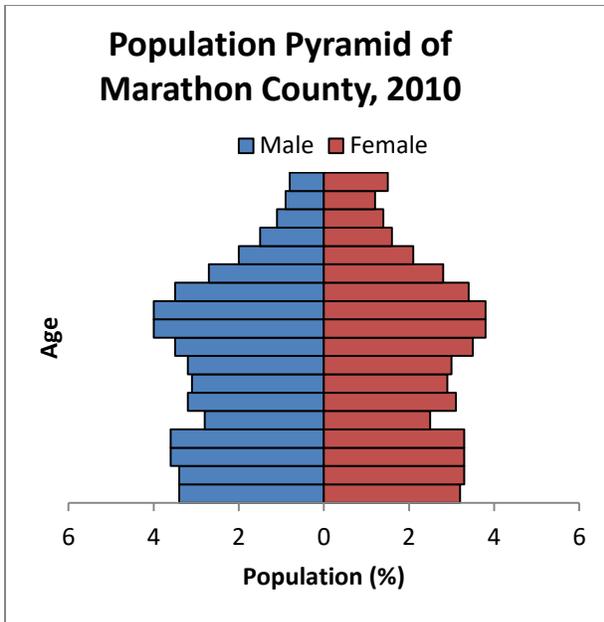
Figure 1.1 compares the age distribution of Texas with Marathon County and Wisconsin

in 2010 according to the U.S. Census. A noticeable difference in the pyramids is that

Texas has a much smaller percentage of its population in the 0 to 5 years and 25 to 29 years age cohorts, and a higher percentage

of its population in the three age cohorts between 45 and 59 years of age.





Source: US Census.

Population Forecasts

Between 2000 and 2010, the Town of Texas population decreased by 5 percent. Population projections estimate that the decrease in population will continue. State population projections were completed in 5-year increments between 2020 and 2040, as shown in **Table 1.3**. According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA), the population in The Town of Texas is estimated to decrease by 75

residents, or 4.6 percent between 2020 and 2040. In comparison, Marathon County is projected to increase by 7.4 percent over the same time period. The WDOA population projections are recognized as Wisconsin's official population projections in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 16.96. The WDOA uses the Cohort Component Method for projections, which takes into consideration base population, net migration figures, age, sex, birth/death rates.

Table 1.3: Population Projections

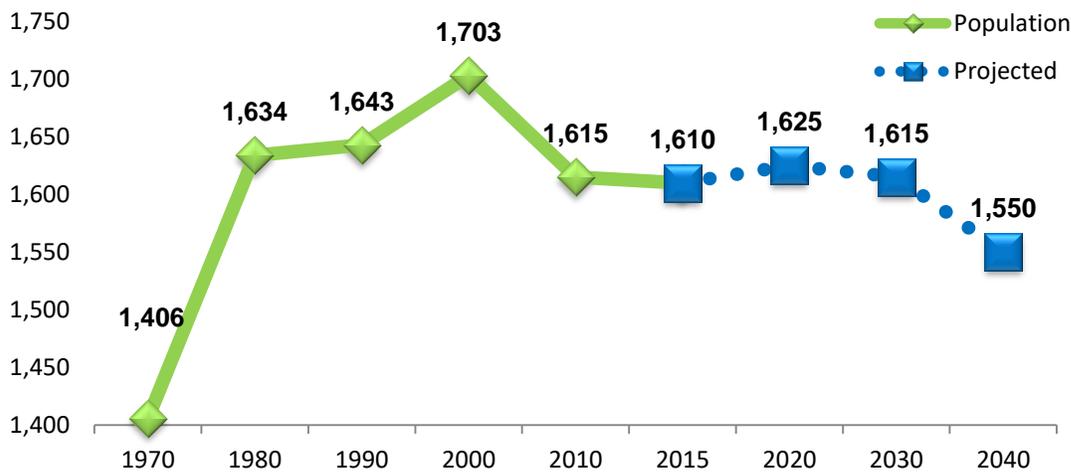
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Change 2010-2040
Texas	1,625	1,625	1,615	1,590	1,550	-4.6%
Marathon County	142,200	146,595	150,130	152,120	152,790	7.4%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

Figure 1.2 details population trends between 1970 and 2040 within the Town. Projections indicate that by 2040, the Town is expected to have increased by 10 percent from the 1970 total population. Population

peaked at 1,703 residents in 2000 and declined to 1,615 residents in 2010, and is expected to remain stable through 2030 before a decline in population.

Figure 1.2 Historical and Projected Population Growth, 1970-2040



Household Forecasts

Like population, household projections were completed in 5-year increments between 2020 and 2040. Like the population projection, the WDOA household projections are recognized as Wisconsin’s official population projections and are based on the

historical population trends of individual communities. **Table 1.4** includes household projections completed by the WDOA. During this time period, the number of households in Texas is estimated to decrease 0.6 percent, compared to number of households in Marathon County increasing 11 percent.

Table 1.4: Household Projections

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Change 2020-2040
Texas	661	667	670	667	657	-0.6%
Marathon County	57,394	59,611	61,524	62,958	63,730	11.0%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

Education and Income Levels

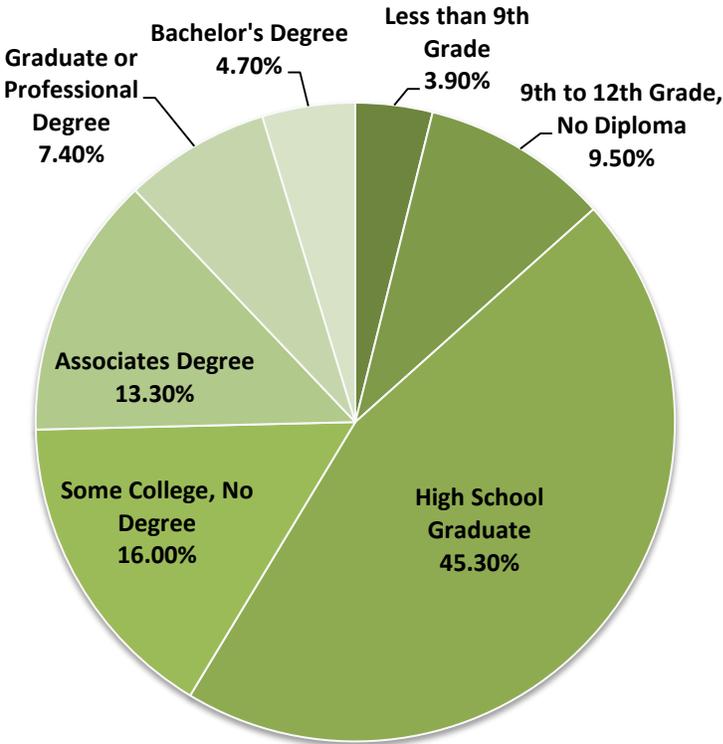
Table 1.5 compares levels of education attainment of Town residents to those of Marathon County and Wisconsin, while **Figure 1.3** displays educational attainment for the Town of Texas. According to the 2010 Census, 86 percent of Town residents

have a high school education or higher. This compares to 88 percent for the County, and 89 percent for the State. In the Town of Texas, 12 percent of residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher, which is also lower than the County and State with 20.8 percent and 25.8 percent respectively.

Educational Attainment	Texas	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Less than 9th Grade	3.90%	5.30%	3.70%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	9.50%	6.30%	6.90%
High School Graduate	45.30%	37.80%	34.00%
Some College, No Degree	16.00%	19.00%	20.60%
Associates Degree	13.30%	10.80%	9.00%
Bachelor's Degree	7.40%	13.90%	17.10%
Graduate or Professional Degree	4.70%	6.90%	8.60%
High School Graduate or Higher	86.60%	88.40%	89.40%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	12.20%	20.80%	25.80%

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 1.3 Educational Attainment, Texas, 2010



As shown in **Table 1.6**, median household income for Town residents was \$61,250 in 2010. This figure is higher than both Marathon County and the State overall. The

Town had a slightly higher median per capita income than the County, but had a slightly lower median per capita income than the State.

Table 1.6: Household Income, 2010			
	Texas	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Median Household Income	\$61,250	\$53,471	\$51,598
Median Per Capita Income	\$26,114	\$25,893	\$26,624
<i>Source: U.S Census</i>			

Poverty

In 2010, 2.2 percent of all individuals were below the federal poverty line in the Town of Texas as shown in **Table 1.7**. Poverty levels within the Town are significantly lower than

the County (8.7%) and the State (11.6%). The percentage of families below the poverty line in the Town decreased by over 46 percent between 2000 and 2010, compared to increases of over 30 percent for both the County and State.

Table 1.7: Percentage of Individuals Below the Federal Poverty Line			
	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
Texas	4.1%	2.2%	-46.3%
Marathon County	6.6%	8.7%	31.8%
Wisconsin	8.7%	11.6%	33.3%
<i>Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010</i>			

Employment Characteristics

Table 1.8 displays the breakdown, by occupation, of the employed population in 2010, age 16 years and older. In 2010 the largest occupation sector was the same across Texas, Marathon County, and Wisconsin with the Management, Business, Science, and Arts sector having the largest percentage. Production, Transportation, and Material Moving was the next largest sector in Texas, while Sales and Office was the next largest sector in the County and State.

The Service sector was the smallest sector within Texas, while the Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance sector was the smallest within the County and State. Agricultural occupations are grouped into the Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance sector. It is important to note that the number of employees in agricultural fields may be understated because this information utilizes the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development data, which does not include those who are self-employed or work in family businesses.

Table 1.8: Occupation by Sector, Percent, 2010			
Sector	Texas	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Management, Business, Science, and Arts	30.90%	30.30%	33.00%
Service	10.10%	14.20%	16.10%
Sales and Office	20.80%	24.40%	24.50%
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance	16.80%	10.00%	9.20%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	21.50%	21.20%	17.20%
<i>Source: U.S. Census</i>			

Between 2000 and 2015, the number of employed residents within the Town of Texas decreased by 6 employed residents or 0.6%, compared to the County and State both experiencing increases in number of employed residents during the same time period, as noted in **Table 1.9**. The Town of

Texas had a labor force participation rate of 65.1 percent in 2015, compared to 69.2 percent for Marathon County and 67.2 percent for Wisconsin. In 2015, the Town of Texas had a 3.9 percent unemployment rate, compared to 3.9 percent for Marathon County and 4.2 percent for Wisconsin.

Table 1.9: Total Employed Persons					
	2000	2010	2015	% Change 2000-2015	% Change 2010-2015
Texas	979	962	973	-0.6%	1.1%
Marathon County	66,550	69,980	69,834	4.9%	-0.2%
Wisconsin	2,734,925	2,869,310	2,883,390	5.4%	0.5%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 1.10 displays the breakdown of primary jobs within the Town of Texas in 2015. Manufacturing and Construction were the most common industry sectors within the Town with 88 and 49 jobs respectively.

Overall, the Town had a total of 203 year-round primary jobs in 2015. A total of 178 (87.7%) of these jobs had earnings totaling more than \$1,250 per month.

Table 1.10: Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector in Texas, 2015

NAICS Industry Sector	Count	Share
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	13	6.4%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	7	3.4%
Utilities	0	0.0%
Construction	49	24.1%
Manufacturing	88	43.3%
Wholesale Trade	0	0.0%
Retail Trade	0	0.0%
Transportation and Warehousing	5	2.5%
Information	0	0.0%
Finance and Insurance	0	0.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0	0.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1	0.5%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0.0%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	5	2.5%
Educational Services	11	5.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance	0	0.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0	0.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	8	3.9%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	13	6.4%
Public Administration	3	1.5%
Total	203	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap

Demographic Trends

- Population within Texas is projected to remain stable over the next 20 years, with changes in population projected to be less than 5 percent between 2020 and 2040.
- The population of Texas is significantly older, on average than the general population of the County or State, with a median age of 47.8 in 2010, compared to 39.4 and 38.5 for the County and State, respectively.
- About 87 percent of Texas residents have high school diplomas or higher, slightly lower than both the County (88.4%) and the State (89.4%). Only 12.2 percent of Town residents have bachelor's degrees or higher, which is significantly lower than both the County and State.
- The median household income in Texas (2010) is \$61,250, which is slightly higher than median incomes in both the County (\$53,471) and State (\$51,598).
- Most Texas residents work in management, sales, and production type occupations and commute to work in the Wausau area or Merrill. However most jobs located within the Town are in farming or farm related work.

Chapter 2

Natural, Agricultural Resources & Cultural Resources

It is important to consider the patterns and interrelations of natural resources on a broader scale because they do not follow geo-political boundaries. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administrated at the County, State, or Federal level. Thus an overview of recent county-wide natural resource planning efforts is described below, followed by a description of local natural resource conditions. Of particular interest are geographic areas of the landscape encompassing valued natural resource features grouped below by resource type, including, soil, and biological resources.

Relevant and Recent Planning Efforts

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

Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 2010

The Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of soil and water conservation in Marathon County from 2010

to 2020. The Land Conservation and Zoning Committee identified the following long-term program outcomes for the natural resource protection efforts in Marathon County:

1. *Land Use activities are well planned to enhance community development, minimize conflicts, maximize infrastructure investments and protect rural character.*
2. *Improve and protect the surface and ground water assets to enhance public health and safety, recreational opportunities and economic development.*
3. *Maintain the soil and water resources as productive assets through topsoil and organic matter conservation.*
4. *Marathon County agriculture and woodlot producers are economically strong.*

Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2013-2028

The Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan is required under Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The purpose of this plan is to guide and manage the preservation of farmland and agricultural production capacity. There are an abundance of agricultural areas in the

Town, making this program of overall importance to the county in general and may have an impact on Town residents, for example, related to emerging trends such as the local foods movement.

Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan, 2006-2020

The Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan is a management guide for the Marathon County Forest and is updated every ten years. The mission of the plan is to manage and protect natural resources on a sustainable basis for the ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future residents throughout the county. The report includes a number of recommendations for timber management, wildlife habitat and game management, land acquisition and forest boundary management, biodiversity management, watershed management and tourism.

Marathon County Groundwater Protection Guide, 2001

The Groundwater Protection Guide was an extension of a 1988 groundwater plan. In April 2001, the guide was created to assist county and local officials in setting policy related to groundwater. It also serves as a resource for information about groundwater and strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection. The County is considering a new groundwater planning effort.

USGS Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater through Comprehensive Planning, 2007

In a joint effort by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the

University of Wisconsin System and the U.S. Geological Survey, a website has been made available with data and information on geology, general hydrology and groundwater quantity and quality. The website was developed to aid government officials and planners in addressing groundwater in their comprehensive plans. The most recent data available for Marathon County was published in 2007. The full Marathon County report can be found at their website: https://wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/find/marathon/index_full.html.

Natural Resources

The environmental features and assets that are examined in this plan include water, wetlands, floodplains, soils, and woodlands. 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 preservation of life, health, and general welfare.

The Town of Texas has a continental climate, which experiences four distinct seasons with long, cold 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. Average annual snowfall in the Town is about 60 inches, with continuous snow cover from November to early April.

The Town covers about 28,608 acres of land, with a total surface area of about 45 square miles. Topography within the Town varies from generally flat, to gently rolling and some hilly areas. Elevation ranges from 1,190 feet above sea level along the Wisconsin River in the southwest corner of the Town, to about 1,490 feet in the southeast corner of the Town. Steep slope areas are scattered throughout the Town, mainly along the Wisconsin and Trappe Rivers, and may hinder some types of development. See the [Natural Resources Map](#).

Water Resources

Marathon County contains abundant water resources. Many have remained in a fairly pristine state and others need focused efforts to improve water quality. Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) designations are derived from an amendment to the U.S. Clean Water Act, which directed states to identify waters that were largely unaffected by pollution and should remain that way. States were required to develop “anti-degradation” policies to protect these waters from pollution. As a result, wastewater entering an ORW must be as clean as the water in the “outstanding” water body. The anti-degradation policies only apply to point sources of pollution, such as an industrial discharge pipe. However, Wisconsin has other programs in place to control non-point source pollution, such as animal waste and pesticides in farm runoff, urban runoff, and failing septic systems.

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board also wanted to extend higher levels of protection to top trout waters. As such, the WDNR established a second category of

waterways to be protected under the anti-degradation policy; these are the ERW. Wastewater entering ERW must meet minimum clean water standards, although higher standards are encouraged where feasible.

The Wisconsin River is currently the only waterbody within the Town that is currently considered to be impaired per the Wisconsin DNR’s 303(d) list of impaired waters.

Currently there no waterbodies within the Town classified as an Outstanding Resource Water. However, the following three waterbodies are classified as Exceptional Resource Waters: Cain Creek, Little Trappe River, and Little Cain Creek.

Resources in Texas

Streams/Rivers – The Wisconsin River forms the western border of the Town. Other waterbodies within the Town include the Trappe River, Little Trappe River, Cain Creek, Little Cain Creek, Camp Creek, and Lentz Creek. The Town is located in two different watersheds. Most of the Town lies in the Trappe River watershed, while the southern edge of the Town lies in the Lower Eau Claire (Marathon Co.) River watershed.



The Trappe River
Image Source: Miles Paddled

Floodplains – Floodplains consist of land likely to be covered by floodwater during the regional (100-year) flood. Floodplain areas are based on information compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The floodplain includes the floodway and the flood fringe. In the Town of Texas, mapped floodplains are mainly located along the Wisconsin and Trappe Rivers.

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

Programs in three levels of government – local, State and Federal - regulate activities in wetlands. There are dozens of wetland types in Wisconsin, characterized by vegetation, soil type, and degree of saturation or water cover. Some of the more prominent wetland types are:

- **Aquatic Bed** wetlands contain plants growing entirely on or in a water body no deeper than 6'. Plants may include pond weed, duckweed, lotus, and water lilies.
- **Marshes** are characterized by standing water and dominated by cattails, bulrushes, pickerel-weed, lake sedges, and/or giant bur-reed.

- **Sedge or “Wet” Meadows** wetlands may have saturated soils, rather than standing water, more often than not. Sedges, grasses, and reeds are dominant, but look also for blue flag iris, marsh milkweed, sneeze weed, mint and several species of goldenrod and aster.
- **Scrub/Shrub** wetlands include bogs and alder thickets and are characterized by woody shrubs and small trees such as tag alder, bog birch, willow, and dogwood.
- **Forested** wetlands include bogs and forested floodplain complexes. They are characterized by trees 20 feet or more in height such as tamarack, white cedar, black spruce, elm, black ash, green ash and silver maple.

Wetlands are scattered throughout the Town, with larger concentrations in the southeastern corner of the Town. The DNR has identified the location of wetlands on their WISCLAND database. According to this, the Town of Texas has 4,007 acres of wetlands, or about 14 percent of the Town’s total area. Most of the wetlands within the town are considered to be forested wetlands.

Watersheds – A watershed is an area of land that drains all the streams and rainfall to a common outlet such as the outflow of a reservoir, mouth of a bay, or any point along a stream channel. The word watershed is sometimes used interchangeably with drainage basin or catchment. Ridges and hills that separate two watersheds are called the drainage divide. The watershed consists of surface water, including lakes, streams, reservoirs, and wetlands, and all the underlying groundwater. Larger

watersheds contain many smaller watersheds. It all depends on the outflow point; all of the land that drains water to the outflow point is the watershed for that outflow location.

There are two watersheds that cover the Town. Most of the Town lies in the Trappe River Watershed. The Lower Eau Claire (Marathon Co.) River Watershed covers the southern edge of the Town.

Groundwater – Depth to groundwater is mostly shallow and generally available in adequate volumes throughout the Town. A depth to groundwater of 20 feet or less is considered to be shallow. Additional growth and development surrounding these water resources and watersheds should take into account the impact on the natural systems, and address potential pollution problems through natural resource management practices administered by Marathon County and the Wisconsin DNR such as shoreland buffers and environmental corridor protection. Additional management practices should also be designed to control storm water runoff rates and private septic system discharge quality to help protect these water resources.

Soils

Soils are an important natural resource. To better guide development and land use within the Town of Texas it is important to know and understand soil properties and their limitations. Soil properties affecting potential land use decisions include depth to bedrock, slope, drainage/permeability, shrink-swell potential, and susceptibility to flooding. Soil characteristics can vary widely across a given area, but generalizations can be made based on a soil series or

association. A soil series has profiles that are almost alike, while a general soil association is made up of two or more geographically associated soils.

There are a variety of soil types within the boundaries of the Town of Texas. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Web Soil Survey, two dominant soil associations were identified within the Town: Freeon Silt Loam, and Magnor Silt Loam. See the [General Soils Map](#).

The USDA defines Freeon Silt Loams as follows:

“Very deep, moderately well drained soils which are deep to a densic contact. Surface runoff potential ranges from low to high. Permeability ranges from moderate to very slow. The soils in this association are considered to be prime farmlands or farmlands of statewide importance.

The USDA defines Magnor Silt Loams as follows:

“Very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils which are deep to a densic contact. Surface runoff potential ranges from medium to very low. Permeability ranges from moderate to very slow. The soils in this association are considered to be prime farmland.

Steep Slopes – Steep slopes are defined as slopes with gradients over 12 percent. Steep slopes within the town are mostly located adjacent to the Wisconsin River. Generally, development is restricted or prohibited on steep slopes.

High Bedrock – The south/southwestern part of the Town has areas with high bedrock which limit the type of septic systems that can be used. As a result, many property owners in these areas use mound

on-site waste disposal systems to overcome any potential limitations from high bedrock.

Much of the Town consists of soils that have some limitations for development. Soil suitability ratings for dwellings are determined by several factors, including a high water table, flooding, and/or shrink-swell potential. Problems that limit development on certain soils include poor filtration, slow percolation, flooding or ponding, wetness, slope, and subsidence.

Woodlands

Woodlands are the predominant land cover within the Town of Texas, covering 15,353 acres, or approximately 54 percent of the Town's total area. Forest cover provides many vital functions, which are diverse in nature; forested lands provide for recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, economic commodity (timber products), and wildlife habitat as well as protection of sensitive environmental areas. Tree cover is essential, especially for erosion control and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface water bodies and courses.

Wildlife Resources and Habitat

Wildlife resources include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that typically live in Marathon County. Common types of wildlife include deer, wild turkeys, raccoon, squirrels, songbirds, and waterfowl, among others. Wildlife resources are abundant in the many undisturbed sanctuaries, refuges, reserves, and scattered habitats located throughout the County. Numerous other species of migrating birds use habitat in Marathon County for food, shelter, and resting stops during seasonal migration.

There is a significant amount of wildlife habitat in Marathon County. In addition to County parks and forest units, major wildlife habitat areas include: the George W. Mead Wildlife Area, the McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, Burma Road Forest Unit, Nine Mile Recreation Area, School Forest, and Rib Mountain State Park. Large wildlife habitat areas within the Town of Texas include Trappe River Dells Park and portions of the Wisconsin River Forest Unit. Private undeveloped land and even urban park systems serve as important habitat and corridors for wildlife, and it is essential for these features to be connected to serve as habitat and migration corridors.

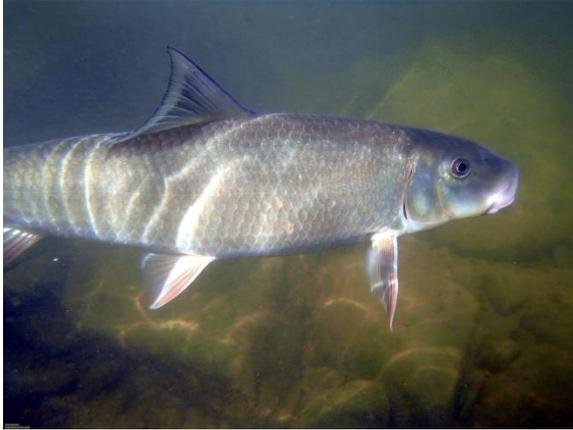


*The Wisconsin River Forest Unit
Image Source: Marathon County*

Threatened and Endangered Species

The National Heritage Inventory (NHI) map provides generalized information about endangered resources (rare, or endangered species and high-quality natural communities) to the section level. The Black Redhorse (*Moxostoma duquesnei*), a species of fish, is currently the only listed endangered species with a documented

population within the Town. The common Wood Turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*) is the only listed threatened species with a documented population within the Town.



Black Redhorse, an Endangered Species present in Texas.

Image Source: North American Native Fishes

Non-metallic Mining

There are currently eight non-metallic mining operations currently in the Town. Five of the mines are located in the northwest quadrant of the Town, one mine is located near the center of Town, while the other two mines are located in the southeast quadrant of the Town.

Agricultural Resources

Marathon County ranks first among Wisconsin's 72 counties for the value of milk and dairy products, second for the value of crops and hay, and third in total value of agricultural products sold. Marathon County is also the nation's leading producer of ginseng. According to the Ginseng Board of Wisconsin, Marathon County is responsible for about 95 percent of all ginseng produced in Wisconsin. Wisconsin is the nation's top ginseng producing state, accounting for

about 90 to 95 percent of all ginseng produced in the United States.



Marathon County leads the nation in ginseng production.

Image Source: Hsu Growing Supply

Nearly 20,000 acres of farmland have been converted to other uses since 2000 in Marathon County. The number of farms has declined while the average farm size has increased. The number of dairy herds and total number of cows has decreased. As farmland has been fragmented and converted to residential uses. More conflicts occur between rural residents and farm operators.

Agricultural lands are the second most predominant land cover within the Town of Texas, covering 9,484 acres, or approximately 33 percent of the Town's total area. Active farmlands are located throughout the Town. The Town is also a popular location for ginseng gardens. Hsu Ginseng Farms and Baumann Ginseng Farms are the major growers of ginseng within the Town.



Active farmlands make up nearly one-third of the landscape in Texas.

Much of the land within the Town is classified as prime farmland. Being classified as a prime farmland indicates that these soils are good productive farmland. However, not all prime farmland is used for farming, as the town has multiple areas of prime farmland currently being used for woodlands, residential, and other uses.

Cultural Resources

“Cultural Resources” is a broad term that can encompass many aspects of our heritage. Cultural resources may include archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to American Indians or other cultural groups. Cultural resources are those elements around us that signify our heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinctive. Cultural resources include buildings, sites and landscapes that help communities retain their sense of identity in an increasingly homogenized society.

Brief History of the Town of Texas

The Town of Texas was established in 1856. A sawmill was built on the Trappe River in that decade and a small settlement

of American Indians were located in the vicinity, engaged in logging and lumbering. Early farms were located along the Merrill Road that climbed steeply from Wausau past Marshall Hill (CTH W and Shady Lane Road). German immigrants settled in Texas by the 1860s and soon predominated.

The Town of Texas was known for its granite industry as early as the 1880s. The first quarry was located at Granite Heights, approximately seven miles north of Wausau, where stone was cut for paving blocks for the City of Chicago. Several companies quarried stone in this location along the Wisconsin River. By 1901, the Marathon County Granite Company relocated its works to Wausau. Another firm was the Lake Wausau Granite Company, which opened a quarry in Texas around 1914. Several other firms located in the Town to take advantage of the granite that was available there.

In addition to the settlement around Granite Heights, the former Village of Brokaw developed at the southwest edge of the Town of Texas. Brokaw began at the turn of the century with the development of the Wausau Paper Mill, which was recently shut down in 2012.

Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

There are no properties in the Town of Texas listed on the NRHP. The Town does not have a local historic preservation commission.

The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains the Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI) that identifies any properties

that may have been surveyed in the past; the Inventory does not convey special status and may not be current. There are 6 historic properties in Texas that have been previously surveyed and included in the AHI.

Cemeteries, Burial Mounds, Other Burials

Wisconsin Statute 157.70 provides for the protection of all human burial sites, including all marked and unmarked burials and cemeteries. There are currently 2 known cemeteries within the Town of Texas; German Methodist Episcopal/Mission and Trinity/Neitzke. The Restlawn Memorial Park Cemetery was recently annexed by the Village of Maine. Suspected burial mounds or unmarked burials must be reported to the State Burial Sites Preservation Office. If human remains are uncovered during excavation, all work must cease pending review of the Burial Sites Preservation Office. All cemeteries and burials in Marathon County should be catalogued under Wis. Stat. 157.70 to provide maximum protection of these sites.

Issues

- **Water Contamination** – Concerns have been raised about high levels of nitrates and radon in certain areas. The specific cause(s) of these conditions has not been pinpointed; however areas with high bedrock appear to be more prone to problems.

Goals, Objectives, & Policies

The following goals, objectives, and policies are intended to provide a guide for the future development of the Town.

Goal 1: Protect and enhance the sensitive natural resource areas in Texas.

- **Objective 1:** Minimize intensive development in areas that could affect the water quality and habitat of rivers, streams and wetlands in Texas.
- **Objective 2:** Continue working with the WDNR and Marathon County to ensure appropriate preservation of wetlands and shorelines.
- **Objective 3:** Encourage use of the Managed Forest Law to prevent fragmentation of large sections of woodland and to encourage good forest practices.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** Provide leadership in disseminating information about resource preservation and management to Texas residents.

Goal 2: Guard against contamination of potable water resources.

- **Objective 1:** Limit uncontrolled runoff to the extent possible, over use of fertilizers, and other waterway contaminants that could impact surface water.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** Enforce Town codes to clean up junkyards and toxic substances that

could pose potential water contamination problems.

- ❖ **Policy 2:** Encourage residents to conduct regular well testing to ensure safe water supplies.

Goal 3: Protect and preserve prime farmland for agricultural production.

- **Objective 1:** Encourage use of agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce soil erosion, decrease sedimentation into surface waters, and increase proper nutrient crediting to protect soil quality.
- **Objective 2:** Participate in regional programs through agencies such as Marathon County and the UW-Extension that promote the preservation of prime agricultural land and assist farmers in maintaining economically viable farms.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** Support preservation of farmland within the Town.

Goal 4: Protect and enhance the Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) and wetlands in Texas.

- **Objective 1:** Minimize intensive development in areas that could

negatively affect the water quality and habitat of ERWs in Texas (e.g., Little Trappe River, Little Cain, and Cain Creek).

- ❖ **Policy 1:** Support and encourage protection and enhancement of local ERWs.

Chapter 3

Housing

Background

Housing characteristics and trends are an important component of a comprehensive plan. The physical location of housing determines the need of many public services and facilities.

Housing is a crucial component of livability and understanding dynamics in the market likely to affect housing development in the future provides a basis for the formulation of policy to coordinate transportation facilities with a sustainable pattern of residential development. The connection between home and work is a fundamental function of any transportation system, and understanding the factors affecting people's decisions on meeting their own housing needs provides a basis for how these home-work connections can be efficient, reinforce and strengthen community ties, foster economic development, and environmental sustainability.

Previous Plans and Studies

Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan, 2015-2019

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the State in accessing formula program fund of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS. "The Consolidated Plan provides the framework for a planning process used by States and

localities to identify housing, homeless, community, and economic development needs and resources, and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs."

Marathon County Comprehensive Plan, 2016

The Marathon County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2016 and prepared by Marathon County staff with assistance from the NCWRPC. The county comprehensive plan closely examines the state of housing throughout six regions of Marathon County (The Town of Texas is included in the "Lumberjack" region of the county, also including the Towns of Easton, Hewitt, Wausau and Weston, and the Villages of Maine and Weston). The plan addresses issues of affordable and safe housing options in order to meet a goal of enhancing community character.

Regional Livability Plan, 2015

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

- an aging population,
- smaller household sizes,
- a lack of housing options, and
- an increase in housing costs related to incomes.

Inventory & Trends

Most of the housing in the Town of Texas is located along the western border of the Town, with heavier development located in the Town’s “panhandle”, which is located in the southwest corner of the Town, and along CTH’s W and WW. Small lots are common along the western edge of the Town, while large lots are common further east.

Housing Type and Tenure

In 2010, The Town of Texas had approximately 645 occupied housing units, 93.2 percent of which were owner occupied, see **Table 3.1**. The average household size in Texas was 2.50 persons per household, slightly higher than in Marathon County and in Wisconsin. In 16.3 percent of households the householder lived alone and 24.2 percent of households had an individual age 65 or older; both of these percentages have increased significantly since 2000.

Table 3.1: Number of Housing Units by Type and Tenure, 2010

	Texas	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Total Occupied Housing Units	645	53,176	2,279,768
Owner Occupied Units	601	39,090	1,551,558
Renter Occupied Units	44	14,086	728,210
Average Household Size	2.50	2.49	2.43
% Owner Occupied	93.2%	73.5%	68.1%
% Householder Living Alone	16.3%	18.8%	21.0%
% With Individuals 65 years or older	24.2%	22.7%	22.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Changes in Housing Stock

American Community Survey estimates that the total number of housing units in Town of Texas increased 19.5 percent to a total of 740 housing units between 2000 and 2015, as shown in **Table 3.2**. The percentage of renter occupied units increased at a faster rate than the percentage of owner occupied units during this period. The number of duplexes increased more dramatically than the number of single family homes, while multiple family units (3+ Families) dropped to 0 total units during this time period.

It is important to note that data for 2015 was collected from the American Community Survey, which while more current than U.S. Census data, is not as accurate as U.S. Census data. Differences in accuracy between the two sources may explain large

increases in the data between 2010 and 2015.

Housing Age

The age of the housing stock in The Town of Texas is displayed in **Table 3.3**. According to American Community Survey, about 47 percent of the housing stock in Texas was built before 1970. Older homes typically are smaller and on smaller lots than newer homes. Older homes may also be in need of more maintenance or renovation to meet modern standards. Approximately 9.2 percent of all housing in Texas was built after 1999.

	1990	2000	2010	2015	Change 2000-2015	
Total housing Units	552	619	697	740	121	19.5%
Occupied Housing Units (Households)	529	603	645	710	107	17.7%
Vacancy %	4.0%	3.0%	5.6%	4.1%	1.1%	36.7%
Owner Occupied Housing Units	483	561	601	650	89	15.9%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	46	42	44	60	18	42.9%
Owner Occupied Housing Units as percent of Total	91%	93.0%	93.2%	91.5%	-1.5%	-1.6%
Number of Homes for Seasonal/ Rec Use	9	7	6	11	4	57.1%
Number of Single Family Homes	516	598	691	710	112	18.7%
Detached**	514	590	687	705	115	19.5%
Attached***	2	8	4	5	-3	-37.5%
Number of Duplexes	12	7	0	19	12	171.4%
Multi Family Units 3-9 Units	0	2	0	0	-2	-100.0%
Multi Family Units 10+	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990, 2000, 2010, American Community Survey 2011-2015
 ** This is a 1-unit structure detached from any other house
 *** In row houses (sometimes called townhouses), double houses, or houses attached to nonresidential structures, each house is a separate, attached structure if the dividing or common wall goes from ground to roof.

Total Units	Year Built								
	2010 or later	2000 to 2009	1990 to 1999	1980 to 1989	1970 to 1979	1960 to 1969	1950 to 1959	1940 to 1949	1939 or earlier
740	3	65	86	90	149	90	75	48	134
100%	0.4%	8.8%	11.6%	12.2%	20.1%	12.2%	10.1%	6.5%	18.1%

Source: American Community Survey, 2011-2015

Physical Housing Stock

Some physical characteristics of housing in Texas are displayed in **Table 3.4**. The median number of rooms in a house in Texas is 6.4, slightly more than Marathon County and the State, and has increased from 6.1 rooms in 2000. Single family homes make up a greater percentage of the housing stock in Texas and Marathon County than they do in Wisconsin. Texas has a greater percentage of homes lacking

complete plumbing and kitchen facilities than both Marathon County and Wisconsin.

Housing Values

Median home value estimates how much the property (house and lot) would sell for if it were for sale, and only includes owner-occupied, single-family houses on less than 10 acres and without a business or medical office on the property. Median home value for Texas in 2015 was slightly higher than that of Wisconsin and significantly higher

than that of Marathon County, as shown in **Table 3.5**.

The range of housing values in Texas, Marathon County, and Wisconsin are further broken down in **Table 3.6**. About 3.2 percent of all housing units in Texas are

currently valued below \$50,000, a percentage that is lower than both Marathon County and Wisconsin. Approximately 38.5 percent of housing units in Texas are valued at over \$200,000, which is slightly higher than in Wisconsin, and significantly higher than Marathon County.

Table 3.4: Physical Housing Stock, 2015

Community	Median Rooms	Characteristic (%)			
		1 unit, detached or attached	In buildings with 10 or more Units	Lacking complete plumbing facilities	Lacking complete kitchen facilities
Texas	6.4	96.0%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%
Marathon County	5.9	74.5%	7.3%	0.5%	0.9%
Wisconsin	5.5	71.0%	10.2%	0.5%	0.9%

Source: American Community Survey, 2011-2015

Table 3.5: Median Home Value

	Median Value
Texas	\$170,800
Marathon County	\$144,500
Wisconsin	\$165,800

Source: American Community Survey, 2011-2015

Table 3.6: Range of Housing Values, 2015

House Value	Texas	Marathon County	Wisconsin
\$49,999 or less	21	1,906	86,903
%	3.2%	4.8%	5.6%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	70	7,589	224,900
%	10.8%	19.3%	14.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	165	11,414	341,383
%	25.4%	29.0%	22.1%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	144	7,941	325,457
%	22.2%	20.2%	21.0%
\$200,000 or more	250	10,556	568,554
%	38.5%	26.8%	36.8%

Source: American Community Survey, 2011-2015

Housing Affordability

Rent and mortgage payments, maintenance expenses, lot sizes, and required or desired amenities are a few of the factors which influence housing affordability. Available housing options are further refined by household size and income. Affordability is particularly an issue for the elderly, disabled, and low-income residents of a community.

Median monthly costs for homeowners, with and without a mortgage, and for renters are shown in **Table 3.7**. For homeowners with a mortgage, costs are slightly lower in Texas than in Wisconsin, but are slightly higher than in Marathon County. For homeowners without a mortgage, costs are slightly lower in Texas than in Marathon County and

Wisconsin. Texas had a higher median gross rent cost in 2015 than both Marathon County and Wisconsin.

The percent of a community paying more than 30 percent of their household income on housing is a common measure of housing affordability. The more money spent on housing, the less disposable income is available to spend on education, food, retail, and recreation. In Texas, 19.7 percent of home owners and 31.7 percent of renters spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs, as shown in **Table 3.7**. Percentage of homeowners who pay more than 30% of household income in Texas is lower than that of Marathon County and Wisconsin. Percentage of renters in Texas who pay more than 30 percent of their household income for rent is lower than both Marathon County and Wisconsin.

Table 3.7: Housing Affordability, 2015

	Median Selected Monthly Owner Costs			Median Selected Monthly Renter Costs	
	With Mortgage	Without Mortgage	30%+*	Median Gross Rent	30%+*
Texas	\$1,328	\$465	19.7%	\$816	31.7%
Marathon County	\$1,255	\$481	20.8%	\$697	46.2%
Wisconsin	\$1,402	\$532	24.4%	\$776	47.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2011-2015
 * Percent paying over 30% of household income on housing

Senior and Special Needs Housing

In Marathon County, housing for seniors and populations with special needs is primarily provided in the urbanized areas in and around Wausau. The Marathon County Aging and Disability Resource Center, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and the Marathon County United Way all maintain a list of these housing options throughout the County. As the number of elderly persons increases in the coming years, there will most likely be an

increased need for these types of housing options. This trend will be seen throughout Marathon County, the State of Wisconsin, and the Nation.

The USH 51 area is the center of Marathon County for population, jobs, and housing opportunities. As such, most of Marathon County's senior housing opportunities are centered in and around this area as well. There are approximately 110 different senior and special needs housing programs and facilities in and around the Wausau metropolitan area.

There are currently no senior housing developments within The Town of Texas. However, Brotoloc Health Systems on Butternut Road and Sylvan Crossings on Evergreen Drive are in close proximity to the Town.

Assistance Programs

There are a variety of State and Federal housing programs geared at addressing a variety of housing issues. Grants and low interest loans are available for counties, communities, or individual homeowners. The following housing resources are available to participants as specified by program.

State Programs

WDOA

The CDBG program, administered by the WDOA, Division of Housing (DOH), provides grants to general purpose units of local government for housing programs which principally benefit low and moderate income (LMI) households. These funds are primarily used for rehabilitation of housing units, homebuyer assistance and small neighborhood public facility projects. CDBG dollars are flexible and responsive to local needs.

In addition to addressing LMI housing needs, CDBG can be used to leverage other programs or serve as a local match. The grant also can be used as an incentive to involve the private sector in local community development efforts or to respond to area needs. The CDBG program often serves as a catalyst for other community development projects.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. It provides an incentive for private entities to develop affordable housing. The credit reduces the federal taxes owned by an

individual or corporation for an investment made in low-income rental housing. LIHTC provides funding for the construction of new buildings or the rehabilitation or conversion of existing structures. To qualify, a property must set aside a certain share of its units for low-income households.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

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

WDOA, Division of Housing

- Housing Grants and Loans
- Shelter for Homeless and Transitional Housing Grants
- Wisconsin Fresh Start
- Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness
- Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program
- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program
- Emergency Solutions Grant Program
- Continuum of Care Supportive Housing Program
- Housing Rehabilitation Program – Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- CDBG Emergency Assistance Program
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program (CDBG)

Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Energy Services

- Home Energy Assistance Program
- Low Income Weatherization Program

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection

- The Trade and Consumer Protection Division is responsible for the investigation of unfair and deceptive business practices and handles individual consumer complaints involving landlord/tenant complaints, and home improvement transactions.

Federal Programs

USDA-RD

The Section 502 Homeownership Direct Loan Program of the Rural Health Service (RHS) provides loans to help low-income households purchase and prepare sites or purchase, build, repair, renovate, or relocate homes.

The Section 502 Mutual Self-Help Housing Loans are designed to help very-low-income households construct their own homes. Targeted families include those who cannot buy affordable housing through conventional means. Participating families perform approximately 65 percent of the construction under qualified supervision.

The Section 504, the Very-Low-Income Housing Repair Program, provides loans and grants to low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes. Improvements must make the homes more safe and sanitary or remove health or safety hazards.

The Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance Program provides an additional subsidy for households with incomes too low to pay RHS-subsidized rents.

The Section 533 Rural Housing Preservation Grants are designed to assist sponsoring organizations in the repair or rehabilitation of low-income or very-low-income housing. Assistance is available for landlords or members of a cooperative.

US Department of Housing and Urban Development

The Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program finances land acquisition and site development associated with self-help housing for low-income families. Loans are made to the nonprofit sponsors of development projects and are interest-free. Portions of the loans are forgiven if promised units of housing are completed within a given period. These forgiven “grant conversion” funds may be used to subsidize future development projects.

The HOME Investment Partnership Program aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. HOME funds may be used for rental assistance, assistance to homebuyers, new construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of rental housing.

Housing Trends

- The 2010 Census showed that the Town of Texas had 697 housing units, an increase of 78 units from the 2000 Census. Approximately 93 percent of the Town’s housing units were occupied, with about 93 percent of occupied units being owner-occupied, as opposed to 7 percent being occupied by renters.

- 20.1 percent of the housing stock was built in the 1970s in Texas, more than any other decade.
- Approximately 99 percent of the Town's housing stock is classified as being single family housing.
- According to the ACS, there has been about a 10 percent increase in the housing stock since 2000, with very little increase since 2010.
- According to the ACS, the median value of a home in Texas was \$170,800 in 2015.

- **Objective 3:** To ensure timely and consistent enforcement of property maintenance codes.
- **Objective 4:** To encourage housing rehabilitation in older areas of The Town with R-1 Single Family Residential zoning by implementing / promoting changes in yard requirements and bulk limitations that allow greater flexibility to owners in rebuilding / remodeling and avoid non-conforming status.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will strive to maintain and improve its housing stock.

Housing Issues

During the planning process a variety of issues were identified. Issues from the previous planning effort were also reviewed as part of this update.

- **Minimum Lot Size** – The Town is considering increasing the minimum lot size from its current 3-acre minimum to address concerns about potential water contamination.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

The following goals, objectives and policies are intended to provide a guide for the future development of The Town.

Goal 1: Improve the condition of the housing stock in The Town.

- **Objective 1:** To determine whether The Town should establish a loan program or other incentives to support housing rehabilitation and/or home ownership.
- **Objective 2:** To work with Marathon County and area housing agencies to pursue and administer funds for housing programs.

Goal 2: Provide a variety of housing types as well as land for new residential development.

- **Objective 1:** To ensure development regulations (land use plan, zoning) allow for a variety of housing types in locations throughout The Town.
- **Objective 2:** To continue to provide housing opportunities for residents in all stages of life, including young families, singles, and seniors.
- **Objective 3:** To work with Marathon County to provide information to residents regarding area housing agencies that serve special housing needs (i.e., seniors, low-income).
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will strive to maintain a variety of housing types while doing what it can to open new areas for development and revitalizing areas in decline.

Goal 3: Promote a variety of safe and affordable housing options that meet the needs of all community members.

- **Objective 1:** To increase the number of multifamily housing units in The Town.

- **Objective 2:** To encourage builders to design universal homes that include friendly design features in renovations and new construction.
- **Objective 3:** To provide support for an aging population to successfully age in their homes.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will strive to provide opportunities to meet the varied housing needs of Town residents.

Chapter 4

Utilities and Community Facilities

This section describes the existing conditions and issues relative to utilities available to the Town of Texas, including sewage disposal, water supply, power supply, and telecommunication facilities and services. It also describes existing conditions with regard to surface water management.

Previous Plans and Studies

Marathon County All Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2017

This document examines general conditions, including an inventory of utilities, community facilities, and emergency services throughout the county. Risk assessment is at the heart of the All-Hazards Mitigation program. In order to mitigate the risks, it is necessary to assess their relative importance. The report looks at a series of mostly weather-related disasters; how they have affected the county in the past, how future instances are likely to affect the county, and how local government should respond to such occurrences. The report concludes with suggested mitigation measures that might be taken by local governments to reduce the risk from the identified hazards. Counties and incorporated municipalities are required to adopt such plans with updates every five years and the Marathon County program includes the Town of Texas.

Private Utilities

The Town of Texas does not provide public sewer or water service. All development is on private wells and septic systems. The Town, which has its own zoning, requires a minimum lot size of three acres in agriculturally zoned areas and 20,000 square feet in residentially zoned areas for installation of wells.

It is noted that portions of the southern part of Texas are within the *208 Sewer Service Area defined in the Wausau Urban Area Sewer Service Plan for the Year 2025*. Thus, some portions of Texas are identified as areas where public sewer service may be extended. Therefore, when and if sewer service is provided, the property would likely no longer be under the jurisdiction of the Town of Texas. Likewise, the Town shares a border with the Village of Maine, and is thus vulnerable to annexation in that area, subject to the boundary agreement already agreed upon between Maine, Texas, and Brokaw.

On-Site Waste Disposal Systems

Chapter 15 of the *General Code of Ordinances for Marathon County* requires private sewage systems on all premises intended for human habitation or occupancy that are not served by public sewer. The County Code incorporates by reference rules, regulations, and laws in the Wisconsin Statutes and Wisconsin Administrative Code governing private sewage systems, including:

- Chapter SPS 83 – This refers to Chapter SPS 83 (formerly Comm83) in the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce. It sets standards for regulation of private sewage systems. SPS 83 was last updated in 2013 and allows the use of new concepts and technologies through a system of individual component approval. Standards for effluent are based on the standards for drinking water, except nitrates and chlorides are partially exempted for effluent.

Septic tanks can be steel, concrete, fiberglass or plastic, but they all must now be equipped with a filter to prevent the movement of solids out into the soil absorption component. In addition, rock in drainfields may now be substituted with engineered foam peanuts bound in mesh or plastic chambers.

On-site waste disposal systems generally fall into four categories:

- Conventional Systems – these systems include an absorption field that is buried under the natural ground level. These systems cannot be built in areas where soils do not allow percolation due to high clay content or bedrock where groundwater is too near the surface, or where soils percolate too rapidly and thus pose problems for groundwater contamination.
- Mound Systems – these systems include an absorption field that is constructed above ground, creating a “mound”. This type of system is generally used where clay soils, groundwater, rapid permeability or

bed rock prevent construction of conventional systems.

- Mechanical Treatment Components – these generally replace or augment the septic tank component and may include aerobic treatment tanks and/or self-contained artificial media or sand filters to clean the effluent prior to its discharge into the soil absorption component.
- Holding Tanks – Holding tanks are considered the system of last resort and are only allowed if other types of septic systems cannot be used. Temporary holding tanks (e.g. less than 2 years) are sometimes allowed in areas where public sewer is approved for installation in the near future.

Most private systems in the Town consist of mound systems or holding tanks due to high bedrock. High clay content in the soils on the east side of the town also results in the use of holding tanks (80%) with new development.

Permit Requirements

The Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning, and Zoning reviews and issues permits for private sewage systems. Soil and site evaluations are required to determine if the proposed septic system is suitable for the specific property and location before a permit will be issued. If deemed necessary, floodplain and/or wetland delineation may also be required prior to permit issuance. In addition, a maintenance agreement must be submitted prior to permit issuance. All septic tanks installed on or after July 1, 1980, are required to be inspected and/or pumped at least once every three years.

It was noted that the Town has a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) to spread septic waste in a field east of CTH WW.

Water Supply

All development in Texas receives water from private wells. Some wells must be very deep because high bedrock limits access to water. Water quality is generally very good, however, some wells experience high levels of nitrates and iron.

Some wells have high nitrate levels. As a result, residents in some areas need to filter their water. The potential sources of nitrates have not been scientifically verified. It was also noted that the old paper mill spread sludge onto some farm fields before shutting down.

In areas with high bedrock, particularly on top of the CTH WW hill, higher than average levels of radon have been reported. While there may be some risk of water contamination from radon in these areas, most radon exposure occurs through inhalation.

Surface Water Management

In 2010, Marathon County adopted an updated Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP) in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). The primary intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County and outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources.

The County is particularly concerned about nonpoint sources of pollution, including failing septic systems, urban runoff, and issues often identified with rural areas such

as soil erosion, animal waste, and pesticides. While nonpoint pollution is best addressed at the watershed, governmental jurisdictions do not often follow watershed boundaries. The North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition was formed from communities in North Central Wisconsin to better utilize a regional approach to managing stormwater. Marathon County is a member of the North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition.

Marathon County encompasses portions of 22 watersheds. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has ranked these watersheds according to water pollution impacts and designated five as “priority” watersheds to receive special planning and funding through the voluntary, State-funded Priority Watershed Program. These priority watersheds include:

- Springbrook in the Town of Harrison
- Upper Yellow River in the Town of Spencer
- Upper Big Eau Pleine in western Marathon County
- Lower Big Eau Pleine in the south-central part of the County
- Lower Big Rib River

Electric and Gas Utilities

The Town of Texas receives electric power and gas from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS). Most private residents use LP fuel tanks.

Telecommunication Facilities and Services

- Television/Cable providers – Charter Communications.

Cable is only provided to properties located along N. Troy and CTH W.

- Telephone/Fiber Optics - Verizon
- Cell towers – The Town does not have a cell tower ordinance, but does regulate tower height. Currently there are cell towers on CTH WW, CTH W, and one on Brokaw Hill.

Solid Waste Management

The Town of Texas contracts with Harter’s for garbage and recycling curbside pickup. Solid waste pickup in the Town is on Wednesdays.

Municipal, commercial, and industrial waste is accepted at the Marathon County Landfill in Ringle. The Marathon County Solid Waste Management Department is in charge of waste management for non-hazardous solid waste. The Department opened a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility in May 1997, where County residents can drop off hazardous waste free of charge.

Solid waste management is best dealt with in a hierarchical structure under the following hierarchy: reduce, reuse, recycle, waste to energy, incinerate, and landfill. Studies have shown that it is possible to significantly reduce the volumes of both solid and hazardous waste generated by the United States.

Likewise, recycling reduces the amount of waste that might otherwise have to be disposed of in a landfill. Waste to energy, incineration, and gasification have proven to be effective as part of a larger waste disposal strategy. Land disposal is the least desirable means of managing solid and hazardous waste because the amount of

space they require and the dangers associated with them create adverse effects to human and ecosystem health. Composting can help reduce food waste and provide beneficial mulch or soil as a byproduct.

Community Facilities and Services

The **Utilities and Community Facilities Map** displays all community and utility facilities located within Texas.

Schools

The Town of Texas is served by the Wausau School District. The Wausau School District is served by nine 4-K programs, 13 elementary schools (including Hewitt-Texas Elementary located within the Town), 2 middle schools, 2 high schools, and 3 charter schools. As shown in **Table 4.1**, enrollment in the district has fluctuated in the past 8 school-years, with enrollment reaching a peak of 8,010 students in the 2013-2014 school year, and decreasing to 7,865 students in the 2017-2018 school year.

Year	Enrollment Pre-K-Grade 12
2010-2011	7,903
2011-2012	7,890
2012-2013	7,945
2013-2014	8,010
2014-2015	8,002
2015-2016	7,837
2016-2017	7,897
2017-2018	7,865

Source: Wausau School District

The University of Wisconsin – Marathon County (UW-MC), located in Wausau, offers lower level (freshman/sophomore) college classes, leading to a baccalaureate degree. Associate Degrees are offered in Arts & Sciences, and Bachelor’s Degrees (through collaborative programs with UW Oshkosh and UW Stevens Point) offered in Business Administration, General Studies, and Nursing. Enrollment in 2014-2015 was approximately 1,100 students.

Northcentral Technical College (NTC), located in Wausau offers 40 one and two-year programs and certificates in business, technical, health and industrial fields. Enrollment across all NTC campuses during the 2013-2014 school year was approximately 24,766 people.

Police

The Town uses the Marathon County Sheriff Department for police protection and law enforcement. The Town also has a constable who handles nuisance and animal control complaints.

Fire/ Emergency Response

The Town has a volunteer fire department with 12 firefighters and 3 first responders. The Town has mutual aid agreements with the Towns of Hewitt, Easton, and Wausau, as well as the Village of Maine in Marathon County and the Town of Pine River and City of Merrill in Lincoln County. Ambulance service is provided by the City of Wausau.

E-911 Dispatch Service

The Marathon County Sheriff’s Department Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and EMS agencies in Marathon County. The Communications Division services 85 user

agencies and also provides alert paging support for the Emergency Management Office, District Attorney, and Medical Examiner’s Office.

The users are served by a microwave linked voted repeater radio system, consisting of a control center at the Sheriff’s Department, and nine remote radio tower sites spread throughout the County. The system is also utilized by the Marathon County Highway Department and the Wausau Fire Department to support their radio communications.

Town Hall

The Town of Texas Town Hall is located at the corner of CTH WW and River Hill Rd. The address of the Town Hall is 158644 River Hills Rd, Wausau WI 54403.



Town of Texas Town Hall

Hospitals

There are two major hospitals in Marathon County, Aspirus Wausau Hospital at 425 Pine Ridge Boulevard in Wausau and Ascension St. Clare’s Hospital in Weston. Wausau Hospital was created in the 1970s from a merger of St. Mary’s Hospital and Memorial Hospital. The Wausau Hospital is a multi-specialty regional health center.

Parks, Trails, and Open Space

Local Parks, Trails and Open Space

The Town of Texas owns one park, described below:

- **Jesse Park:** Jesse Park is located on Wisconsin River Road, off CTH W. Facilities include ballfields, volleyball court, a shelter, and an outhouse. This park was initially developed by the 4H and a volunteer group oversees maintenance and vandalism prevention.

A public golf course – the Trappe River Golf Course – is also located in Texas on CTH WW.



Trappe River Golf Course

There are also two county-owned parks within the Town; the Wisconsin River Forest Unit and Trappe River Dells Park. The Wisconsin River Forest Unit is split between the Village of Maine and Town of Texas. Long-range plans for the Wisconsin River Forest Unit include creating an artificial lake for recreation, and developing facilities for picnicking, camping, swimming, hiking, and boat launch/access to the Wisconsin River. Trappe River Dells Park is an undeveloped

park set aside as 80-acres of open space, and there are no current plans in place to develop the space into a functioning park.

County or State Parks, Trails and Open Space

Several County and State Parks are located within driving distance of Texas. These include:

- **Ice Age Trail:** The Ice Age National Scenic Trail is a thousand-mile footpath that highlights these landscape features as it travels through some of the state's most beautiful natural areas. The trail is entirely within Wisconsin and is one of only eleven National Scenic Trails.
- **Mountain-Bay State Trail:** The Mountain-Bay Trail is built on a former railroad right-of-way stretching 83 miles from the Village of Weston to Green Bay. The trail connects the Wausau area with Green Bay. The current western-most trailhead is adjacent to the Village of Weston Municipal Center, where parking and trail passes are available. The trail has a crushed granite surface and passes through the Village of Hatley and rural areas in the Town of Norrie within Marathon County.
- **Rib Mountain State Park:** Rib Mountain State Park is located within the Town of Rib Mountain. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1,924 feet above sea level is one of the highest elevations in the State of Wisconsin.

The park surrounds the mountain and has the following facilities: a picnic area, an amphitheater that can be reserved for events, hiking trails, a nature trail, and Granite Peak Ski Area which offers downhill skiing and snowboarding during winter.

- Council Grounds State Park: Council Grounds State Park is located just west of the City of Merrill in Lincoln County. The park is adjacent to the Wisconsin River, and offers visitors 508 acres of forest, water access, excellent fishing, and over 2.5 miles of trails to enjoy. Park amenities include over 50 camp sites, a boat launch, a fishing pier, a beach, restrooms, showers, and biking and hiking trails.
- Ackley Wildlife Area: Located approximately 12 miles west of the City of Antigo in Langlade County, the Ackley Wildlife Area is over 27,000 acres in size. Ackley Wildlife Area provides visitors excellent opportunities for hunting and viewing waterfowl, as there are 27 waterfowl flowages combining for over 400 acres of prime waterfowl habitat. Ackley Wildlife Area also provides excellent hunting for other game species such as deer and grouse.

Issues

- Septic System Failure – There are concerns about failure of older septic systems and/or those located in areas with high bedrock and the subsequent potential for water contamination.

- Water Contamination – Concerns have been raised about high levels of nitrates and radon in certain areas. The specific cause(s) of these conditions has not been pinpointed, however areas with high bedrock appear to be more prone to problems.
- Internet Access – Not all areas of Town have access to the internet. Likewise, cable is only provided in a limited area in the southern portion of the Town. Cell phone service is also unavailable or inadequate in some portions of the Town.
- Vandalism – Some vandalism and lack of clean-up has been reported in Jesse Park. The Town also has concerns about dumping of trash on public lands, such as County forest and road sides.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

The following goals, objectives and policies are intended to provide a guide for the future development of The Town.

Goal 1: Plan for environmentally sensitive on-site sanitary waste disposal.

- **Objective 1:** Ensure that lot sizes are adequate for private waste disposal systems, particularly in areas with high bedrock and clay soils.
- **Objective 2:** Encourage residents to routinely inspect and pump their septic tanks to minimize septic system failures and guard against potential groundwater contamination.

- **Objective 3:** Continue to explore options for waste disposal.

- ❖ **Policy 1:** Strive to minimize environmental impacts related to on-site sanitary waste disposal.

Goal 2: Support and maintain existing community facilities.

- **Objective 1:** Maintain the Town Hall as the seat of local government and community meeting hall.

- ❖ **Policy 1:** Recognize the importance of the Town Hall as a community gathering place and as the center of Town government.

Goal 3: Protect the Town's water resources, including groundwater sources of potable water.

- **Objective 1:** Continue to work with the Village of Maine to follow regulations established in the Wellhead Protection Plan originally in place with the former Village of Brokaw.

- **Objective 2:** Discourage concentrated development in areas with limited water availability.

- **Objective 3:** Encourage residents to conduct regular well testing to ensure safe water supplies.

- **Objective 4:** Work with the Village of Maine and City of Wausau to proactively

identify areas that may have public water systems in the future.

- ❖ **Policy 1:** Strive to protect drinking water supply.

Goal 4: Support Parks and Recreation that serve Texas residents.

- **Objective 1:** Encourage adequate funding for maintenance and improvements of Marathon County parks and forests.

- **Objective 2:** Ensure that park maintenance and upkeep costs are included in annual budgeting.

- **Objective 3:** Explore opportunities to improve park surveillance to minimize the potential for vandalism.

- ❖ **Policy 1:** Support the Marathon County park system as an important asset to the community.

- ❖ **Policy 2:** Support efforts to maintain and improve Jesse Park.

Chapter 5

Transportation

Transportation is necessary for the effective movement of people and goods within and with connections outside of the Town. Transportation is also critical to development and land use. The transportation system in a community consists of a variety of roads; some are owned and maintained by local officials, others are part of the County or State road systems. In addition to roads, the transportation system consists of facilities for pedestrians (sidewalks), bicyclists (trails), railroads, airports, and in more urban areas, public transit. This section describes the transportation system in the Town of Texas and related improvements or issues affecting the system.

The Town is served primarily by CTH W, a north/south transportation corridor which serves as the main thoroughfare through Texas. CTH WW is the other primary transportation corridor, and connects the Town to USH 51. CTH J forms the border shared between the Towns of Texas and Hewitt.

Previous Plans and Studies

Transportation planning in Marathon County is coordinated between the Marathon County Department of Conservation Planning and Zoning (CPZ) staff and the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); the body designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation

(US DOT) to be responsible for transportation planning in the metropolitan area. Marathon County provides staff for the Wausau Area MPO.

Regional Livability Plan, 2015

The 2015 RLP, written by the NCWRPC, addresses issues of livability in the areas of housing, transportation, economic development, and land use. The RLP identifies three major transportation issues.

- Modes of Transportation to Work – The Region's workforce is extremely dependent on the automobile. In 2012, over 80 percent of the region's workforce drove alone to work on a daily basis. Another 10 percent carpooled, leaving less than 10 percent for the non-automobile methods such as walking, biking, and using transit. The average commute time in the central sub-region, which includes Marathon County, was 18.7 minutes.
- Age of Drivers in the Region – The region is seeing a change in the number of licensed drivers by age groups. Between 2004 and 2013, the region saw a 20 percent decrease in the number of drivers age 17 and age 19. During the same years, the region also had a 20 percent increase in drivers over age 65. These changes mean communities will have a need for multimodal options for the younger

ages and options to increase safety as drivers age.

- **Transportation Maintenance Cost** – It is expensive to maintain the transportation infrastructure in the region. The current reliance on fuel tax and registration fees is inadequate, unstable and may soon be outmoded. The inability to fund improvements and maintenance on transportation infrastructure will impact the ability to transport goods and provide safe, reliable and efficient roads.

Connections 2030

This is Wisconsin's latest long-range, statewide, multimodal transportation plan. It identifies a series of system-level priority corridors that are critical to Wisconsin's travel patterns and the state economy.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

This 2018 plan is a region-wide effort to improve bicycling and walking across the communities. The plan assesses existing conditions related to bicycling and walking, identifying other potential trail and route user groups, identifying routes and describing policies and programs to assist local governments in improving bicycling and walking to promote connectivity between communities and destinations throughout north central Wisconsin.

Marathon County Functional/Jurisdictional Highway Classification Study (1998)

This plan identifies and groups classes of roadways that provide similar levels of service. The plan recommended that the unit of government having the greatest

basic interest in the roadway's function would carry out the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the classified roadways.

Road Network

Functional Classification of Roads

According to Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), a functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. At the upper limit of the system (principal arterials, for example), are those facilities that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel), whereas at the lower limits are those local roads and streets that emphasize access.

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

- **Principal Arterials** serve corridor movements having trip lengths and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban areas with a population greater than 5,000 or connect major centers of activity, the highest traffic volumes and the longest trip desires.
- **Minor arterials**, in conjunction with principal arterials, serve cities, large communities and other major traffic generators providing intra-community continuity and service to trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials.

- **Collectors** provide both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas and industrial areas. The collector system distributes trips from the arterials through the area to the local streets. The collectors also collect traffic from the local streets and channel it onto the arterial system.
- **Local Streets** comprise all facilities not on one of the higher systems. They serve primarily to provide direct access to abutting land and access to the higher order systems. Local streets offer the lowest level of mobility, and through-traffic movement on these streets is usually discouraged.

Jurisdiction

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

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

The Town of Texas road network consists of nearly 21 miles of county highway and over 57 miles of local roads. There are no state or federal highways located within the Town. A breakdown of the jurisdictional and functional classification of roads within the Town is shown in **Table 5.1**.

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

Table 5.1: Road Mileage by Jurisdiction and Functional Class

	Arterial	Collector	Local	Totals
State	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
County	0.00	20.93	0.00	20.93
Town	0.00	12.17	44.98	57.15
TOTALS	0.00	33.1	44.98	78.08

Source: WisDOT and NCWRPC

Major Road Facilities

Following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in Texas. All major roads are summarized by functional classification, jurisdiction, and Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), when available. See the [Transportation Map](#).

- **CTH W** is a major collector through most of Texas. However its designation changes to a minor arterial near Arrow Drive heading into Wausau. This north-south oriented road parallels the Wisconsin River and US 51. The AADT volume near Granite Heights Road was 2,200 in 2004 and 1,800 in 2010. Between the CTH WW west and east intersections, CTH W had an AADT volume of 2,910 in 2010.
- **CTH WW** is designated as a minor collector through the Town. East of CTH W, CTH WW had an AADT volume of 2,900 in 2004 and 2,400 in 2010. West of CTH W, CTH WW had an AADT volume of 1,600 in 2004 and 1,300 in 2010. South of Green Valley Road, CTH WW had an AADT volume of 810 in 2010, and an AADT volume of 420 just south of Kiwanis Road in 2010. Between County Line Road and Little Trappe Road, CTH WW had an AADT volume of 290 in 2004 and 280 in 2010. These counts suggest that traffic volumes within the Town have been decreasing over time.
- **CTH J** is a major collector and forms the eastern boundary of the Town of Texas. CTH J connects to STH 52 to

the south. North of the intersection with STH 52, CTH J had an AADT volume of 1,100 in 2004 and 860 in 2010. Between Trappe Road and Shorthorn Road, the 2004 AADT volume was 580 and the 2010 AADT volume was 480. These counts indicate that traffic volumes within the Town have been decreasing over time.

- Several locally owned roads are designated as minor collectors through the middle and southern sections of Texas.

Road Maintenance

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

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

Table 5.2 shows pavement conditions in Texas. Roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below “fair” must be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary. The roads that display a surface rating of “good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to promote safe travel conditions.

Table 5.2: Summary of Pavement Conditions		
	2004	2017
Surface Type	Miles	Miles
Unimproved	1.53	1.53
Sealcoat or Gravel Road	15.57	15.71
Asphalt and Concrete	61.38	60.84
Surface Condition Rating	Miles	Miles
Very Poor	0	2.59
Poor	3.55	10.77
Fair	23.87	16.59
Good	27.17	19.37
Very Good	10.67	19.22
Excellent	5.07	9.57
No Data	8.15	0
<i>Source: WisDOT 2004, 2017</i>		



County Highway WW

Traffic Safety

Several intersections within the Town pose potential safety concerns, including Shady Lane and CTH W, and Buck Trail and CTH WW. The Trappe River Golf Course also generates a lot of traffic. In an effort to improve safety at the CTH W – Shady Lane intersection, an extra turn lane was added onto CTH W. There is also a project scheduled to redo CTH W that will begin in 2019. There are also concerns about bicyclist safety, as some local roads are experiencing high levels bicyclist traffic.

Land Use and Transportation

Land use and transportation have a reciprocal relationship. Both the use and pattern of land use affects the demand for transportation to and from a given geographic area and the viability of the various modes of transportation. Likewise, improved transportation facilities can affect

land use decisions. Scattered development can make public transportation inefficient and can isolate populations that are unable to drive.

Land Use and Development

Most development in the Town consists of low-density residential development, which is primarily located along CTH W and CTH WW. On average, single-family residential uses generate about ten trips per dwelling unit per day. The US Census Bureau indicated that there were 645 households in 2010, for a total trip generation of 6,450 trips per day in the Town. By 2040, another 12 households are projected.

The amount of traffic generated from new households and employment will depend on the location of new development in relation to typical trip destinations. The Town expects many of the new households to be located on the west side of the Town, further increasing potential traffic on CTHs W and WW.

Access Management

Wisconsin was one of the first states to recognize the relationship between highway operations and the use of abutting lands. Under Chapter 233, the WDOT was given the authority to establish rules to review subdivision plats abutting or adjoining State trunk highways or connecting highways. Regulations enacted by WDOT establish the principles of subdivision review. They require new subdivisions to: (1) have internal street systems; (2) limit direct vehicular access to the highways from individual lots; (3) establish building setbacks; and (4) establish access patterns for remaining unplatted land.

Marathon County issues driveway permits and implements access restrictions on all properties fronting a lettered County road. The County Trunk Highway Access-Driveway Policy addresses the requirements regarding culverts, access width, slope, visibility and spacing. The policy is available through the Marathon County Highway Department. The Town approves driveway permits on local roads and installs culverts.

Trip Patterns

According to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS), a significant percentage (90%) of employed Texas residents work outside of the Town, while about 86% remain in Marathon County for work. Most residents who do not farm work in the nearby urban areas. The ACS also found that the average travel time to work amongst Town residents is 25.1 minutes. Over a quarter (27%) of all payroll employed residents within the Town traveled 30 minutes or more to work. The majority,

50.8%, have an average commute time between 15 and 24 minutes to work.

Town residents generally shop, work, and recreate in the Wausau metro area. However, some residents work and/or shop in Merrill. Primary routes to work for Town residents are CTH's W and WW to Wausau and CTH X to Weston.

Other Transportation Modes

Pedestrian – There are no public sidewalks in Texas, and thus pedestrians use road shoulders for walking. However, since many road shoulders are narrow, walking or jogging in the driving lines is fairly common and is a safety concern.

Bicycle – All roads within the Town are open to bicyclists. However, the Town does not have any existing designated bicycle routes or trails within the Town. The 2017 North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan has identified a proposed on-road bicycle route through the Town. The on-road bicycle route would enter the Town in the south along Granite Road, and follow the following roads; Granite Road, to Buffalo Ridge Road, and to River Hills Road before connecting to CTH J.

ATV – All roads within the Town are open for ATV use. However, the Town does not currently have any designated ATV routes or trails within the Town.

Transit – There is no regular transit service in the Town. Elderly, needy, and disabled transit service is provided throughout the County through North Central Health Care (NCHC). The services include semi-fixed routes that are scheduled, and demand

services available with a 48-hour notice. Information and services are available by calling 848-4555.

Rail – The Wisconsin Central Railroad (Canadian National Railroad [CN]) runs parallel to the Wisconsin River along the western edge of the Town. The rail line connects with Tomahawk to the north and Wausau and Mosinee to the south.

Airports – Area airports are described below.

- Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) – The CWA is a joint venture of Marathon and Portage Counties. It is the only airport within Marathon County or neighboring counties that provides scheduled air passenger services. The CWA is located east of Mosinee and accessible via I-39.

The terminal has been modernized and highway access reconstructed to be more convenient. Service is provided through American Airlines, United Airlines, and Delta Airlines, offering daily flights that connect through Minneapolis, Chicago, and Detroit. There are also daily air freight and express flights.

- Wausau Municipal Airport – The Wausau Municipal Airport, located in the City of Wausau, provides general aviation services and is fully equipped to receive large corporate jets, charters, and privately owned aircraft. Air charter, flight instruction, aircraft rental, scenic rides, as well as aviation line services such as refueling, transportation, lodging, and catering are some of the services available.

Issues

- Speeding – Vehicles travelling at high speeds on local and County roads decrease pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Town residents have questioned whether to reduce speed limits in some areas and/or posting signs to increase awareness of pedestrian and bicyclist use of roads would help minimize the problem.
- River Crossing – Creating a new river bridge north of the City of Wausau is currently being discussed as part of on-going regional transportation efforts. Such a crossing would likely occur in conjunction with creation of a northern east-west route connecting US 51 with the proposed “east arterial” on CTH X. One potential alignment currently under consideration would follow Evergreen Road and connect to CTH W in the Town of Texas.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

The following goals, objectives and policies are intended to provide a guide for the future development of The Town.

Goal 1: Improve traffic safety within the Town.

- **Objective 1:** Work with Marathon County to investigate safety issues such as road geometry, speed limits, driveway access and other factors along county roads.

- **Objective 2:** Continue to use existing guidelines to review driveway access along Town roads.
- **Objective 3:** Develop a “toolbox” of traffic-calming methods or devices that could be implemented to better manage traffic flow and speed limits in the Town.
 - ❖ **Policy 1:** Strive to maintain a safe and adequate roadway system in the Town.

Goal 2: Maintain and improve Town roads.

- **Objective 1:** Continue to conduct an annual budget process to prioritize and allocate funding for road maintenance and improvements.
- **Objective 2:** Conduct an annual road analysis, using PASER to rate local road conditions and prioritize maintenance scheduling.
- **Objective 3:** Develop a policy to address when to blacktop new roads, based on things such as traffic volume, funding availability, and other factors.
- **Objective 4:** Continue to seek adequate and consistent sources of revenue to fund needed road improvements.
- **Objective 5:** Work with the Marathon County Sheriff’s Department to enforce weight limits on Town roads.
 - ❖ **Policy 1:** Strive to ensure that roads in the Town are well maintained and designed to accommodate current and anticipated traffic volumes.

Goal 3: Ensure that new development will not have negative impacts on the local road network or create traffic issues within the Town.

- **Objective 1:** Use existing road standards to guide road planning and access to Town roads in new development.
- **Objective 2:** Require roads in new subdivisions to be designed to accommodate future expansion where appropriate.
 - ❖ **Policy 1:** Strive to minimize the impacts of new development on existing roads and traffic

Chapter 6

Economic Development

Background

The economic development chapter provides an overview of the local economy and identifies goals, objectives and policies to improve the local economy. Enhancing economic competitiveness is one of the principles of livability. A community can improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.

Texas is home to several local companies and farms, which provide employment opportunities for residents as well as people living nearby. The Town contains a variety of commercial/retail businesses that serve local customers, including; Xtreme Audio & Custom, Hsu Growing Supply, Comfort Gallery, Stainless Specialists, and New Millennium Candle.

The Town of Texas, along with the Village of Maine will undergo an Economic Development Adjustment Strategy following comprehensive planning phases in both municipalities that will provide significantly more detailed guidance for economic development for the Town of Texas in the coming years.

Previous Economic Development Plans and Studies

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), 2017

Marathon County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin

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

Key components from this regional level plan include an inventory of the physical geography of the Region and its resident population. Labor, income, and employment data are reviewed as well as an in-depth analysis of the economic status of the Region.

Regional Livability Plan, 2015

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

Available Labor Force and Employment - Businesses need a workforce with the proper education to meet the demands of the changing job market. High labor needs combined with an older workforce preparing for retirement will result in a labor force shortage and inability to meet the workforce needs of area businesses. The future availability of a quality labor force is a major concern for the business community.

Living Wage - Over the past 10 years, the region's cost of living (i.e. home prices and rent) have increased faster than per capita and household incomes. Consequently, many working adults must seek public assistance and/or hold multiple jobs in order to meet the basic needs of their families. Occupations paying a living wage provide families resources for savings, investments, education, and the purchasing of goods which improves the local economy and increases the quality of life of the region's population.

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

Economic Adjustment Strategy, 2019

After Brokaw and the surrounding area (Village of Maine and Town of Texas) experienced significant negative financial and economic impacts as a result of the closure of the Wausau Paper Mill, the Village of Maine, Town of Texas, and the former Village of Brokaw entered into a Cooperative Boundary Agreement that created the framework for Brokaw to dissolve into the Village of Maine. The closing of the Wausau Paper Mill has had a significant impact on the tax base, employment and overall economy of both the Village of Maine and Town of Texas. As part of this effort the communities approached the NCWRPC and the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration for funds to prepare an economic strategy. A grant was prepared and funded to create this Economic Development Strategy.

The Economic Adjustment Strategy for the Village of Maine and Texas assesses current economic conditions and provides guidance to address those conditions. One aspect of this strategy report is the identification of internal and external challenges to the local economy, as well as overall opportunities for adjusting to new economic conditions, and a summary of key findings. The strategy report also identifies several locations in the Village of Maine and Town of Texas as either Primary Development and Reinvestment Areas or Secondary Development Areas.

This strategy report provides a strategic direction for the formulation of goals and strategies which are recommended in order to adjust the local economy to current economic conditions. Goals and strategies outlined in this report include: expanding Northside Business Park, redevelopment of the paper mill site, potentially creating a new Tax Increment Financing District, and enhancing marketability and the potential for development/redevelopment in areas identified as Primary Development and Reinvestment Areas.

Inventory & Trends

Economic Sectors

In 2015, there were 973 residents employed in the eleven basic economic sectors in The Town of Texas. Employment among Town of Texas residents has decreased 0.6 percent since 2000 as shown in **Table 6.1**. Between 2000 and 2015, the three fastest growing sectors were Professional & Business Services, Leisure & Hospitality, and Other Services. The three fastest declining sectors were Public Administration, Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, and Information. In terms of total employment, the Manufacturing industry is the largest segment of the economy, followed by the Trade, Transportation, and

Utilities industry. It should be noted that the number of employees in certain sectors, particularly those workers engaged in Natural Resources and Mining which includes agriculture, forestry, and fishing, may be understated in this data set.

Table 6.1: Employment by Sector

Sector	2000	2010	2015	Percent Change
Natural Resources & Mining	49	46	43	-12.2%
Construction	84	112	92	9.5%
Manufacturing	267	302	266	-0.4%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	205	116	159	-22.4%
Information	12	6	10	-16.7%
Financial Activities	89	83	94	5.6%
Professional & Business Services	26	57	55	111.5%
Education & Health Services	150	169	156	4.0%
Leisure & Hospitality	28	38	48	71.4%
Other Services	40	19	45	12.5%
Public Administration	29	14	5	-82.8%
Total	979	962	973	-0.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, 2010, American Community Survey 2011-2015

Labor Force Analysis

Labor Force

Labor force is defined as the number of persons, sixteen and over, employed or looking to be employed. Overall, The Town of Texas labor force has grown from 1,015 in 2000 to 1,031 in 2015. That represents a growth of 1.6 percent, an increase significantly lower than those of Marathon County (7.0%) and Wisconsin (7.2%). In 2000, 979 members of the labor force were employed and that number decreased 0.6 percent to 973 employed members, as shown in **Table 6.2**. While employment in the Town of Texas dropped, Marathon County (5.2%) and Wisconsin (4.9%) both saw employment increase. Employment trends in the Town of Texas were significantly below the Nation (11.6%).

Unemployment

Unemployment is defined as the difference between the total civilian labor force and total persons employed. Stay-at-home parents, retirees, or persons not searching for employment are not considered unemployed because they are not considered to be part of the “labor force”. In 2000, The Town of Texas had 2.7 percent unemployment, and in 2015 unemployment was estimated to be 3.9 percent which is equal to the County, and lower than the State (4.2%) and Nation (5.2%).

Workforce Participation

Workforce participation is a measure expressed in terms of a percentage of persons actively seeking employment divided by the total working age population. People not participating in the labor force may not seek employment due to a variety of reasons including retirement, disability, choice to be a homemaker, or simply are

not looking for work. In 2000, 75.5 percent of the population over 16 in Texas was in the labor force. By 2015, that rate decreased to 69.0 percent. The national participation rate in 2015 was 63.7 percent,

the state rate was 67.2 percent, and the Marathon County rate was 69.2 percent.

Table 6.2: Labor Force

Town of Texas	2000	2010	2015	Percent Change
Population 16 years and over	1,345	1,414	1,495	11.2%
Labor Force	1,015	1,022	1,031	1.6%
Employed	979	962	973	-0.6%
Unemployed	36	60	58	61.1%
Unemployment Rate	2.7%	4.2%	3.9%	44.4%
Participation Rate	75.5%	72.3%	69.0%	-8.6%

Source: U.S Census 2000, 2010, American Community Survey 2011-2015

Education & Training

Worker education and training lead to higher productivity. The level of educational attainment is an important indicator of the skills of the labor force. Formal education and job training reflect a community’s ability to provide a labor force for certain types of industry.

Table 6.3 compares educational attainment levels between Town of Texas, Marathon County, Wisconsin, and the United States. Educational attainment in the Town of

Texas is notably higher than the national average in terms of those with a high school diploma or better, but is considerably lower than the national average in terms of those with a bachelor’s degree or better. Educational attainment in the Town of Texas is lower than the county and state in both areas. Chapter one provides a more detailed breakdown of educational levels in the Town. The Town of Texas does have a higher percentage of individuals with an Associate’s Degree than both Marathon County and the State.

Table 6.3: Educational Attainment, 2015

	Texas	Marathon County	Wisconsin
High School Graduate or Higher	89.6%	91.0%	91.0%
Associates Degree	14.3%	11.7%	10.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	16.2%	23.7%	32.8%

Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015

Partnerships between local businesses, governments, and educational institutions are very useful in developing the Regional economy. Institutions such as UW-Stevens Point and Northcentral Technical College, often direct their programs to the training needs of local workers and businesses.

Occupations

Table 6.4 identifies the five main occupational categories and provides comparison with The Town of Texas, Marathon County and Wisconsin. Management and Business workers are the largest component of the labor force in The

Town of Texas, on par, percentage wise, with Marathon County and Wisconsin. Production and Transportation workers are the next largest group in Texas, while Sales/Office is the second-largest group in Marathon County and Wisconsin. The Service sector is the smallest component of

the labor force in the Town of Texas, while the Natural Resources/Construction sector is the smallest component of the labor force in Marathon County and Wisconsin.

Table 6.4: Resident Occupation, 2015

Occupation	Texas	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Management/Business/Science	301	23,464	996,016
Service	98	9,802	490,498
Sales/Office	202	16,916	665,207
Natural Resources/Construction	163	6,099	245,698
Production/Transportation	209	13,553	485,971
Total	973	69,834	2,883,390

Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015

Agricultural Economy

Located in the agricultural area of north central Marathon County, the economic health and vitality of Texas is affected by the economic health of the agricultural economy. However, the agricultural economy is subject to national and international pressures, creating challenges for rural areas seeking to adapt to the changing economic environment and preserve their rural agricultural heritage. Marathon County ranks first in Wisconsin in value for milk and other dairy products, 2nd in value for crops and hay, and 3rd in the state in total value of agricultural products sold. In addition, as referenced in Chapter 2, Marathon County accounts for 95% of the State’s ginseng production, which means that Marathon County is also responsible for most of the nation’s ginseng production as well.

According to the 2013 *Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan*:

Marathon County’s farmers own and manage over 490,628 total acres of land, nearly 50% of the land base. Nearly 331,948 acres of this land is cropland and pasture. Dairy is the primary agricultural product in Marathon County, but it also includes more specialty products such as Christmas trees, ginseng, maple syrup, small scale truck farms (vegetables, fruit, and horticulture), and commercial commodity farms. The County’s agriculture industry provides \$2.54 billion in revenues and nearly 13,650 jobs to the Marathon County economy.

**Source: Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2013.*

Economic Development Programs

A listing of economic development programs are listed below:

Regional:

North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation

The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) manages a revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed rate, low down payment, low-interest financing. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism, and other manufacturing and service industries.

State:

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

WEDC is the state's primary department for the delivery of integrated services to businesses. Their purpose is to 1) foster retention of and creation of new jobs and investment opportunities in Wisconsin; 2) foster and promote economic business, export, and community development.

Wisconsin Small Cities Program – CDBG

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

The Wisconsin Innovation Service Center (WISC)

This non-profit organization is located at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater and specializes in new product and invention assessments and market expansion opportunities for innovative manufacturers, technology businesses, and independent inventors.

Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The University of Wisconsin 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 improvement necessary for major economic development projects.

Federal:

Economic Development Administration (EDA)

EDA offers a public works grant program. These grants 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.

Economic Development Issues

During the planning process a variety of issues were identified. Issues from the previous planning effort were also reviewed as part of this update.

- General Funding – Given limited budgets, identifying, prioritizing and funding economic development needs and improvements that ensure development that is fiscally sustainable in the long-term is a continual challenge.
- Loss of Farm Employment – Given the predominance of farming in the Town, there are concerns about loss of employment for local residents as farms sell out to developers.
- Commercial signs – There are concerns about the impact of off-premise, commercial signs on the appearance of the Town and on traffic safety. The Town currently has a sign ordinance that allows up to 4' x 8' in size. The existing ordinance (17.80-17.84) was updated in 2007 and is enforced. Permits are required to erect signs.
- Labor Force Shortage – As the population ages and there are fewer young people the available workforce is shrinking. Finding replacement workers for those retiring is already a challenge for area businesses.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

The following goals, objectives and policies are intended to provide a guide for the future development of The Town.

Goal 1: Ensure that existing farms are able to remain in agriculture for as long as they choose.

- **Objective 1:** To discourage non-farm development in areas with large blocks of prime farm soils or active farming to prevent encroachment on farm operations and fragmentation of farmland.
- **Objective 2:** To support the creation of niche markets or other opportunities that will help farmers to stay in business.
- **Objective 3:** To encourage the use of agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) to increase productivity of farmland.
- **Objective 4:** To support development that preserves rural character (i.e., horse riding stables).

❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will strive to protect prime farmland and active farm areas from encroachment by non-farm development.

❖ **Policy 2:** Support agricultural value-added industries where appropriate and feasible; however do not make a high priority or provide significant investment which could detract from other priority investments.

Goal 2: Encourage economic development that is sustainable and promotes a high quality of life.

- **Objective 1:** To diversify the local economy to create more employment.
- **Objective 2:** To integrate growth in Texas with the economic development strategy for Central Wisconsin.

❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will strive to maintain and encourage new commercial and industrial development that enhances The Town tax base.

❖ **Policy 2:** To encourage redevelopment of older commercial areas.

❖ **Policy 3:** Access State and Federal funding to assist with local Economic Development programs and projects

- Seek infrastructure grant and loan funds to assist with improving existing sites, and establishing new business parks.

➤ **Strategy:** Prepare an economic development adjustment strategy beginning in 2018.

Chapter 7

Land Use

The Town of Texas is located along the northern border of Marathon County. The Town’s landscape consists of broad rolling hills, characteristic of a glacial moraine. The Wisconsin River defines the western border of the Town, creating a rather steep, rocky valley. The southwest corner of the Town forms a “panhandle” that extends south to the shared border with the Village of Maine.



Agriculture and woodlands are the dominant land use types within Texas.

Current Pattern of Land Use

A variety of land uses occur throughout the Town, from agricultural to residential. Woodlands and croplands dominate the Town’s landscape. Development within the Town occurs along County Highways W and WW. While a few granite quarries exist in the southern and southeastern part of the Town.

Existing Land Use

Existing land use provides information on how land is currently being used. **Table 7.1** presents a breakdown of land-use types within the Town.

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Agriculture	9,484	33.15%
Commercial	72	0.25%
Governmental/Institutional	33	0.12%
Industrial	136	0.48%
Open Lands	1,084	3.79%
Outdoor Recreation	130	0.46%
Quarry	23	0.08%
Residential	1,223	4.27%
Transportation	696	2.43%
Water	373	1.30%
Woodlands	15,353	53.67%
Totals	28,608	100.00%

Source: NCWRPC GIS

Over half (54%) of the Town is classified as woodlands with about 15,353 acres, while about one-third of the Town is classified as agricultural land with about 9,484 acres.

Residential land uses cover only an about 4 percent of the Town’s land area.

The Existing Land Use Map provides a “birds eye view” of existing development patterns in the Town. See the [Existing Land Use Map](#).

Current Land Use Regulations

Zoning

The Town has its own general zoning ordinance. There are 15 zoning districts, including five residential districts. Permitted, conditional, and prohibited uses within these districts can be found in the Town of Texas Zoning Code of Ordinances. [Table 7.2](#)

compares the minimum lot sizes across all of the zoning districts within the Town. It is worth noting that a vast majority of the Town is zoned as A-1 General Agricultural.

Shoreland Zoning

Shoreland, shoreland wetlands, and floodplain regulations are applicable in all geographic areas of the County. Wisconsin law mandates Counties 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. The Shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the

Zoning District	Minimum Lot Size
RS-1/20	20,000 sq. feet
RS-1/40	40,000 sq. feet
RS-2	20,000 sq. feet
RM	40,000 sq. feet
RP	20 acres for site plan
RR	2 acres
RE	5 acres
A-1	3 acres
A-3	35 acres
CV	-
RC	1 acre
C-1	10,000 sq. feet
M-1	20,000 sq. feet
M-2	20,000 sq. feet
WP	2 acres

Source: Town of Texas Zoning Ordinance

landward side of a floodplain, whichever distance is greater.

Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance

The Town of Texas has their own subdivision ordinance, which was adopted in February 2006. Subdivision regulations are an important tool ensuring the orderly development of unplatted and/or undeveloped land. These regulations may regulate lot sizes, road access, street design, public utilities, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be a public asset.

Farmland Preservation Program

The State of Wisconsin has a Farmland Preservation Tax Credit Program. The goals of the program are twofold: to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land uses planning and soil conservation practices and to provide property tax relief to farmland owners. Landowners keeping land in agricultural use can claim a credit on their State income taxes. Marathon County adopted a Farmland Preservation Plan in 2013. As part of that effort each town identified farmland preservation area map. That map shows areas eligible for the various tax credits. See the Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan for more information.

Forest Crop Law (FCL) and Managed Forest Law (MFL)

In Wisconsin, over 2.5 million acres are enrolled under the FCL and the MFL programs. Land set aside under the FCL

required at least 40 acres in one quarter-quarter section and the MFL requires at least 20 acres (as of October 2016) of contiguous forest land. Landowners may close to the public up to 320 acres of their forest lands set aside under the MFL. The remaining program acres must be open to public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing, and cross-country skiing. Landowners choose a 25 or 50 year contract and pay an Acreage Share Amount as part of their tax bill in lieu of taxes. Voluntary participation in these programs requires that landowners follow “sound forestry practices” as prescribed in a formal management plan, or a management commitment.

Table 7.3 shows land currently enrolled in the FCL and/or MFL programs. Land enrolled under the FCL and MFL with open access programs have declined since 2011, while land enrolled under the MFL with closed public access program has increased.

Table 7.3: Land in Forest Preservation Programs (in acres), 2011-2016

Year	Forest Crop Law	Managed Forest Law Open	Managed Forest Law Closed
2011	791.8	1,440.5	4,211.1
2016	545.3	1,429.3	4,761.8
Change	-246.5	-11.2	+550.7

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Development Trends

Land Supply

Considering open lands and forestland as “available,” and subtracting the land enrolled in forest preservation programs and

publicly owned land, the Town of Texas has 9,700 acres of land available. Another 9,484 acres of land are in agriculture and may be available for development. This was calculated using North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) aerial photo interpretations. Much of this land may have development limitations or constraints such as wetlands, floodplains, or difficulty with wells or private onsite waste disposal systems, reducing or eliminating

the development potential of this land. There is also 174.5 acres of public-owned forest land within the Town, all owned by Marathon County.

Land Values

Table 7.4 displays the assessed land values in the Town of Texas. In 2016, the total assessed value of land and improvements within the Town was \$116,112,700.

Table 7.4: Assessed Land Value (per Acre), 2016			
Land Classification	# of Acres	Per Acre Land Value	Total Value of Land and Improvements
Residential	1,653	\$6,989	\$82,430,100
Commercial	343	\$3,793	\$5,261,400
Manufacturing	135	\$3,270	\$2,031,700
Agriculture	9,758	\$181	\$1,766,800
Forest	3,996	\$2,772	\$11,076,400
Agricultural Forest	3,187	\$1,311	\$4,178,200
Undeveloped	1,353	\$895	\$1,211,100
Other	254	\$5,374	\$8,157,000
Total	20,679	\$1,591	\$116,112,700

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Future Land Use

The **Future Land Use Plan Map** represents the long-term land use recommendations for all lands in the Town.

Although the map is advisory and does not have the authority of zoning, it is intended to reflect community desires and serve as a guide for local officials to coordinate and manage future development of the Town.

The Future Land Use Plan Map uses 10 general land use categories to separate conflicting uses. These categories generally correspond to the districts within the Town of Texas Zoning Ordinance, to ease future implementations of the plan. However, the classifications are not zoning districts and do not have the authority of zoning. The Future Land Use Plan Map is intended to be used as a guide when reviewing lot splits,

re-zoning requests, and future revisions to Town zoning.

A general description of each classification follows:

Residential

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

Commercial

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

Governmental/Institutional

Identifies existing or planned governmental/public/institutional facilities

within the Town, including recreational facilities.

Industrial

Identifies areas recommended for industrial development.

Agricultural Areas

Identifies areas to be preserved for the purpose of general crop farming or the raising of livestock.

Woodlands

Identifies areas of woodlands within the Town, as well as areas for reforestation.

Outdoor Recreation

Identifies areas for active recreation such as parks and golf courses.

Open Space/Preservation

Contains sensitive environmental areas, such as 100-year floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency 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.

Future Land Use Needs

Projections of future population are provided in the Demographics section. Existing land use estimates were taken from assessment data for these calculations. Household projections were used to estimate future residential land demand, with an assumption of an average density of three acres per unit. Past trends were used to estimate the amount of land needed to accommodate future non-residential development over the next 20 years.

It is estimated over the next 20 years, 32 acres will be needed to accommodate future residential development. There is sufficient land available for future non-residential development within the Town. Potential locations for these land uses are identified on the Future Land Use Map.

Consistency between Land Use and Zoning

Land use and zoning designations are related, but not necessarily identical. Land use categories tend to be fairly general whereas zoning districts regulate specific land uses and development requirements. Because the land use categories are general it is common for more than one zoning district to correspond to each land use category. It is also possible that some zoning districts might be consistent with more than one land use designation. Additionally, although the Future Land Use Map shows parcel lines, the future land use categories are not expected to precisely follow parcel lines, but instead show general areas where certain land uses are appropriate. For example, the development of a single family residence within an area shown as agricultural may be appropriate based on the characteristics of the parcel. Zoning categories, on the other hand, are specific to each parcel.

Consistency between land use and zoning is required by State Statutes. This generally occurs when a community is considering a proposed zoning change. The decision to approve a zoning change must be based on the adopted comprehensive plan, and specifically, the future land use map. Generally, if the requested zoning is consistent with the land use designation on the property it should be approved, unless unique circumstances indicated the

rezoning would negatively impact the surrounding properties or the community. If a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation, the community should consider denying the rezoning request.

In situations where a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation – but the community believes the requested zoning is appropriate in the specific location and would benefit the community – the zoning change can be approved, however, the land use map should be amended accordingly to establish land use and zoning consistency. The process for amending the land use map is discussed in greater detail in the Implementation Element.

Major Opportunities and Constraints

- **High Bedrock** – Portions of the Town have high bedrock, which restricts installation of conventional septic systems and makes it difficult to access water for domestic wells. These factors can make development more costly and therefore, decrease demand for new development.

Issues

- **Limit Farm Size** – The Town does not have any mega-farms but recognizes that the trend is toward larger farms. While not specifically opposed to large farms, the Town would like to have some tools to limit the number of animals in order to address concerns related to potential water contamination. It should be noted that farm size

issues are generally regulated by the DNR.

- **Junk Yard** – The Town has an ordinance limiting the number of junk cars on a property, however this has not been followed. While the Town has recently ramped up its enforcement of regulating junk yards, compliance in a timely manner is still a challenge. Junkyards pose concerns about negative impacts on the Town’s aesthetics and character as well as potential water contamination from inadvertent leakage.
- **Commercial residential/agricultural neighborhoods** – Businesses located in residential and/or agricultural areas can create problems related to traffic, safety, signage, and other conflicts.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

The following goals, objectives and policies are intended to provide a guide for the future development of The Town.

Goal 1: Proactively plan for transition from agricultural to rural residential land development.

- **Objective 1:** To determine an appropriate lot size that will support the Town’s concept of rural character and ensure development will not negatively impact groundwater supplies.
- **Objective 2:** To identify areas where different types of residential

development, such as large lots or subdivisions, should occur.

- **Objective 3:** To develop tools such as conservation subdivision ordinances that will permit development while preserving open space and/or rural character.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will strive to ensure that new development occurs in an orderly and environmentally sensitive manner.

Goal 2: Provide tools for managing growth.

- **Objective 1:** To base land use decisions on Texas' adopted comprehensive plan.
- **Objective 2:** To update the zoning ordinance on a regular basis to ensure regulations support the community vision expressed by the future land use map.
- **Objective 3:** To develop subdivision regulations to better guide development review and specify subdivision requirements.
- **Objective 4:** To manage the location and density of residential development in order to minimize development-related costs for the Town (public safety services, paved roads, etc.).
- **Objective 5:** Direct more intensive future growth to areas that are contiguous to existing developed areas (i.e., south of CTH WW).
- **Objective 6:** To establish regulations to limit the size of farms.
- **Objective 7:** To balance individual property rights with the desires of the community as a whole.

- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will strive to ensure orderly and efficient growth.
- ❖ **Policy 2:** The Town of Texas will adopt, consistently enforce, and update its various codes and ordinances needed to achieve the plan goals.
- ❖ **Policy 3:** The Town of Texas encourages new development to locate in close proximity to existing developed areas to minimize impacts on natural resources and minimize costs of providing new services.

❖ **Priority 4:** Work with local property owners to rezone residential property to commercial property or vice-versa, depending upon realtor and broker feedback.

Goal 3: Protect residential and prime agricultural areas from commercial development.

- **Objective 1:** To restrict the placement of non-farm commercial or industrial uses in identified residential or prime farming areas.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will strive to minimize negative impacts related to commercial and industrial development.

Goal 4: Coordinate with adjacent communities on development and/or annexation projects.

- **Objective 1:** To continue to work cooperatively with the Village of Maine to coordinate future growth and development along common borders.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas strongly supports coordination of development along common borders.
- ❖ **Policy 2:** Identify areas where sewer and water infrastructure can be established.

Chapter 8

Intergovernmental Cooperation

This section describes existing mechanisms that the Town of Texas uses to coordinate with other units of government, including: Marathon County, adjacent towns, the school district, the State of Wisconsin and the Federal government. The purpose of this analysis is to identify the existing cooperative mechanisms and summarize the major challenges and issues regarding intergovernmental cooperation and regional planning, including:

- Opportunities to reduce or eliminate duplication of services;
- Incompatible goals, policies, and development;
- Mechanisms for conflict resolution;
- Opportunities for joint planning and decision making.

Mechanisms for cooperation and coordination primarily take the form of intergovernmental agreements, leases and contracts, and regulatory authority. These can occur between the Town of Texas and other local, regional, State or federal entities. Following is a brief description of the various functional areas and services that require intergovernmental coordination at various levels.

Economic Adjustment Strategy

As part of the Economic Adjustment Strategy between the Town of Texas, Village of Maine and former Village of

Brokaw, the Town of Texas and Village of Maine worked together with numerous agencies such as NCWRPC, Marathon County, the U.S. Economic Development Administration, McDEVCO, Centergy, the Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and many others in an effort to implement the goals and strategies outlined in the Economic Adjustment Strategy Plan.

Implementation of this strategy plan will require coordination between Texas, Maine, and various agencies. Coordination efforts could include working together to: attract new businesses; create new or enhance existing marketing efforts for the area; develop new, expand existing, or improve existing business parks; identify & secure funding opportunities, to update land use controls and measures to ensure compatibility within the area, and other initiatives that will require coordination between the two municipalities and an outside agency.

Local and Regional Level Cooperation

Shared Services:

Fire and Emergency Response – The Town has a volunteer fire department with 12 firefighters and 3 first responders. The Town has mutual aid agreements with the towns of Hewitt, Easton, and Wausau, as well as the Village of Maine in Marathon County, and the Town of Pine River and

City of Merrill in Lincoln County. The Town contracts with the City of Wausau for ambulance service.

Utilities – Waste from private holding tanks and septic tanks is taken to the Wausau Treatment Facility, the Brokaw Treatment Facility, and other licensed facilities. Landspreading, is also a method used in the Town for dealing with wastewater. Private septic tanks must be inspected and/or pumped at least once every three years or every time they reach full capacity in Marathon County.

Cooperative Practices

Village of Maine – The Town of Texas and Village of Maine are sharing the financial burden that comes with aiding the Village of Brokaw to continue essential operations until the eventual dissolution of Brokaw into the Village of Maine. The Cooperative Plan establishes long-term, permanent boundaries through an attachment in the southwestern quadrant of Texas along the Wisconsin River. As eventual dissolution occurs, the Village of Maine may provide additional services to these areas besides fire, EMS and snowplowing, all of which are currently performed by Texas. The Village of Maine has already attached a small strip of the Town of Texas that borders the City of Wausau.

Maine will also provide water and sewer service extensions to Texas upon request from the Texas Town Board, though Texas will be responsible for all direct and indirect (i.e. easements) installation costs. A map depicting lands that can be annexed into the Village of Maine as part of the Cooperative Plan can be found in **Attachment D**. Note that there are two different stages of

annexations within the plan that involve the Town of Texas, a short-term attachment period which has already happened, and a long-term attachment which is set to occur in the next 75 years. The Village of Brokaw will be dissolved into the Village of Maine in the intermediate attachment phase as part of this cooperative plan as well.

School District – Texas is served by the Wausau school district. One school – Hewitt-Texas Elementary – is located in the Town.

Marathon County – The County provides several services to the Town including: law enforcement through the Sheriff's Department, 911 dispatch service, access permits, maintenance and improvement of County Highways, planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation, private sewage system regulation, and animal waste and manure management. The County also provides oversight on compliance with County soil and water conservation policy for the Farmland Preservation Program.

Regional Agencies – The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) serves a ten-county area, including Marathon County and all of its local government units.

NCWRPC provides both regional and local planning assistance. Typical functions of the Regional Planning Commission include land use, transportation, economic development, intergovernmental and geographic information systems (GIS) planning and services.

State and Federal Agencies – The Town has little direct contact with State or Federal agencies. However, State agencies regulate

certain activities such as access onto State roads, shoreland, floodplain and wetland zoning oversight, navigable waters protection, compliance with water quality standards, farmland preservation tax credits and managed forest tax credit programs.

Existing or Potential Conflicts

Annexation – Given its adjacency to the Village of Maine, annexation is a continual possibility to the Town of Texas. In Wisconsin, the annexation process is driven by individual property owners who petition for annexation into an incorporated municipality to receive urban services. While towns often view annexation as a means to take their territory, cities and villages view annexations as a means to provide a more logical pattern of development and efficient provision of services.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

The following goals, objectives and policies are intended to provide a guide for the future development of The Town.

Goal 1: Coordinate development and planning activities with surrounding communities.

- **Objective 1:** To maintain lines of communication with the Village of Maine to discuss potential annexations and/or boundary agreements.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will strive to cooperate and coordinate with its neighbors and the region to manage growth and development.

Goal 2: Provide cost-efficient and effective services to residents.

- **Objective 1:** To explore opportunities to work with adjacent communities where there are potential cost savings in service delivery.
- **Objective 2:** To continue existing mutual aid agreements with adjacent communities.
- **Objective 3:** To maintain the current contract with the City of Wausau for ambulance service, but review if community needs or response times change.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas supports the continued provision of cost-effective public services.

Goal 3: Encourage participation by Town officials and residents in all levels of government.

- **Objective 1:** To encourage local officials to participate in county and state government activities and organizations.
- **Objective 2:** To encourage regular participation and feedback from residents and businesses through surveys, informational public meetings, newsletters or other activities.
- **Objective 3:** To continue to participate with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to coordinate timing of road maintenance and improvements with surrounding communities.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas encourages local officials and residents to actively participate in government, planning, and policy related activities and organizations.

Goal 4: Continue to communicate with Marathon County officials on issues for which they are responsible.

- **Objective 1:** To continue to work with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department to provide law enforcement services.
- **Objective 2:** To work with Marathon County on bridge and road maintenance and improvements.
- **Objective 3:** To continue to work with Marathon County on permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulations, private sewage system regulation, and animal waste and manure management.
- ❖ **Policy 1:** The Town of Texas will continue to cooperate with Marathon County on issues for which the County is responsible.

Chapter 9

Implementation

The primary reason a community prepares a comprehensive plan is to establish a framework to influence decisions regarding management of growth and regulation of development to protect and maintain the health, safety and welfare of the community, and to set priorities for public expenditures. To be effective, this plan should be actively used as a tool to guide decisions concerning:

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

Implementation Tools

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. The most common implementation tools are the Town official controls or regulatory codes. The zoning

ordinance and subdivision (or land division) regulations are used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development as identified in this comprehensive plan. Other regulatory tools include purchase of development rights (i.e., conservation easements), transfer of development rights, and purchasing of ecosystem services. There are also non-regulatory approaches to implementing the comprehensive plan; these generally involve decisions about how the community will spend its limited funding resources on capital improvements, staffing and maintenance. These decisions will affect the development demand and the location of development in the Town.

The State planning law requires certain programs and/or actions that affect land use must be consistent with the locally adopted comprehensive plan. To meet this requirement, Texas should evaluate and update related ordinances after the adoption of the comprehensive plan update. The Town Board officially adopts these regulatory and land use control measures as ordinances (or as revisions to the existing ordinances).

Some of these tools were also discussed in the Land Use Chapter.

Zoning Ordinance and Map

The Town of Texas maintains its own general zoning ordinance. Zoning is used to manage and control how land is used and developed. Zoning ordinances typically

establish detailed regulations concerning how land may be developed, including setbacks, the density or intensity of development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose of zoning is to minimize undesirable externalities from development by segregating and/or buffering incompatible uses and by maintaining standards that ensure development will not negatively impact the community's character or environment. The zoning ordinance also controls the scale and form of development, which heavily influences how people will interact with their environment and their neighbors.

The establishment of zoning districts and the zoning map indicates where specific types of development can and should be located. Zoning districts shown on the zoning map should be coordinated with the land use plan and map. While the zoning map and land use map do not need to directly match at the time the land use map is adopted, the intent is that the land use map will serve as a guide indicating how the property should eventually be zoned. Therefore, indiscriminate zoning changes may result in weakening of the comprehensive plan. In fact, changes to zoning district boundaries should only be made if they are consistent with the adopted land use map and the goals of the comprehensive plan.

However, there may be situations where changing the zoning district boundary makes sense and is in the best interest of the community. If changing the zoning would result in a conflict with the future land use map, the land use map should also be changed. However, the future land use map should only be changed if it does not accurately reflect the community's desired

land use pattern. Achieving consistency between zoning and land use designation is also discussed in the Land Use Chapter.

As discussed below, the comprehensive plan (and future land use map) should be periodically reviewed and updated to adjust for unforeseen changes or events that were not considered at the time the initial plan and land use map were developed.

Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance

The Town of Texas has adopted their own subdivision ordinance. Subdivision regulations are an important tool ensuring the orderly development of unplatted and/or undeveloped land. These regulations may regulate lot sizes, road access, street design, public utilities, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be a public asset.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

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

- Public buildings (i.e., fire and police stations)

- Park and trail acquisition and development
- Roads and highways (maintenance and new construction/paving)
- Fire and police protection equipment

A CIP is simply a method of planning for and scheduling expenditures for public improvements over a period of several years in order to maximize the use of limited public funds. Each year the CIP should be reviewed and extended one year to compensate for the previous year that was completed. This keeps the improvement program current and allows for modifications to meet the community's changing needs.

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

Annual Operating Budget

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

The budget and the services provided by that budget are instrumental in achieving the goals and objectives of the plan.

Other Tools:

These are tools that could be used related to agriculture.

Purchase of Development Rights

Purchase of Development Rights programs provide a way to financially compensate willing landowners for not developing their land. When buying development rights, the community obtains a legal easement, sometimes referred to as a conservation easement that (usually) permanently restricts development on the land. The landowner, however, still owns the land and can use or sell it for purposes specified in the easement, such as farming, timber production, or hunting.

Since PDR programs are flexible, program administrators can customize purchases of development rights to meet the objectives of both landowners and communities. For example, an easement designed to preserve agricultural resources might allow the landowner to build an additional home or two as long as their placement does not limit the property's long-term agricultural potential.

Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of Development Rights programs enable landowners within valuable agricultural, natural, and cultural resource areas to be financially compensated for choosing not to develop some or all of their lands. These landowners are given an option under municipal zoning to legally sever the "development rights" from their land and sell these rights to another

landowner or a real estate developer for use at another location. The land from which the development rights have been purchased is permanently protected through a conservation easement or other appropriate form of restrictive covenant, and the development value of the land where the transferred development rights are applied is enhanced by allowing for new or special uses, greater density or intensity, or other regulatory flexibility that zoning without the TDR option would not have permitted.

Consistency Among Plan Chapters

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

Plan Adoption, Amendments, Updates and Monitoring

While this comprehensive plan provides a long-term framework to guide development and public spending decisions, it must also respond to changes that occur in the community and region that were not foreseen when the plan was initially adopted. Some elements of the plan are rarely amended while others need updating

on a more regular basis. Plan maps should also be updated periodically. In general, key maps, such as the future land use map, should be reviewed annually to make sure they are still current.

Plan Adoption

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

Plan Amendments

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

The following criteria shall be considered when reviewing plan amendments:

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

plan for the proposed land use or service.

- The change does not adversely impact any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties unless mitigated through relocation, commemoration, or dedication.

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

Plan Updates

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

Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

The adopted plan should be used as a tool by Texas when making land use and development decisions. Decisions

concerning private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions should be consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations outlined in this plan.

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

This plan should be evaluated at least every 5 years, and updated at least every 10 years. Members of the Town Board, Plan Commission, and any other local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated. The evaluation should involve first reviewing the goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires. Then the strategies and actions should be reviewed and refined to eliminate completed tasks and identify new approaches if appropriate. The evaluation should also include an updated timetable of actions to clarify priorities. See the Action Plan.

Action Plan

Table 9.1 provides a detailed list of major actions to complete in order to implement this comprehensive plan. It compiles the major short, mid, and long-term priorities described in each of the nine plan elements. It also identifies the parties that will play key roles in implementing the actions.

Table 9.1 is intended to be used by local officials in setting priorities for capital budgeting and project assignment. It is expected that this table will be reviewed annually and revised, as necessary, to respond to changing priorities, financial limitations, and other unforeseen events. It should be noted that many of the actions require considerable cooperation with others, including the citizens of Texas, committees, and other local/county/state agencies.

Priority ranking is defined as follows:

- Immediate = As soon as possible
- Short-term = 1-4 years
- Mid-term = 5-9 years
- Long-term = 10+ years
- On-going = Activities to continue indefinitely

Table 9.1: Implementation Actions	
Action	Priority
Natural, Cultural, and Agricultural Resources	
Consider requiring larger lot sizes in areas with significant amounts of prime farmland and/or existing active farms.	Immediate
Identify a point person in the Town to be responsible for gathering and distributing information regarding wetland protection, preservation, and	Short-term

management from the WDNR, UW-Extension, Marathon County, and others.	
Identify and map areas in the Town where preservation of natural resources, open space, and wildlife habitat should be given priority. Provide information to property owners about techniques to protect and enhance these resources.	Short-term
Amend the land division and zoning ordinance to incorporate best management practices (BMPs) to ensure adequate surface water management and erosion control.	Mid-term
Continue to work cooperatively with Marathon County and the WDNR to enforce regulations to protect and mitigate development impacts on wetlands.	On-going
Continue to serve as the liaison between private property owners in the Town and the County, WDNR, and others regarding the Managed Forest Law (MFL) and other programs aimed at protection and preservation of woodlands.	On-going
Routinely educate residents on well testing through brochures or speakers on the subject, utilizing resources from UW-Extension, Marathon County, the WDNR, and others.	On-going
Work with UW-Extension to provide information to Town farmers and residents regarding alternatives to chemical fertilizers and weed controls.	On-going
Report instances of possible groundwater contamination to the WDNR.	On-going
Continue to work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the NRCS to implement and monitor farmland conservation practices, including Farmland Preservation Contracts.	On-going
Work with UW-Extension and Marathon County to provide information to Town farmers regarding tools, programs, and resources available to help farmers stay in business, develop niche markets, etc.	On-going
Work cooperatively with Marathon County on efforts to minimize degradation of the ERWs located in Texas.	On-going
Consider establishing a zoning overlay district and associated development restrictions specific to areas impacting the ERWs.	On-going
Identify and map potential historic buildings, cemeteries/burials, and archaeological sites in the Town.	On-going
Work with the County Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Office to determine if structures are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.	On-going
Housing	
Consider adopting cluster/conservation subdivision requirements and associated development standards regarding density, preservation and management of open space, and design (roads, landscaping, common elements, etc.).	Immediate
Identify and map areas where high bedrock or other constraints may restrict installation of on-site waste disposal systems and/or wells. Consider zoning these areas for very low-density land uses.	Immediate
Consider increasing lot sizes in areas where the potential for groundwater contamination is high (i.e., high bedrock). This might involve creating a new zoning district and rezoning certain property.	Immediate
Consider increasing minimum lot sizes or establishing sliding-scale zoning in areas where agricultural uses and/or rural character should be preserved.	Immediate

Utilities & Community Facilities	
Identify and map areas where high bedrock or other constraints may restrict installation of private wells. Consider zoning these areas for very low-intensity land uses.	Immediate
Identify and map areas where high bedrock or other constraints may restrict installation of on-site waste disposal systems. Consider zoning these areas for very low-density land uses.	Immediate
Review zoning and related minimum lot size standards to determine if they provide sufficient protection against potential groundwater contamination.	Immediate
Develop and adopt regulations controlling the number of animals allowed on property.	Short-term
Coordinate with the Village of Maine to review proposed development within the Village's extraterritorial jurisdiction area to evaluate impacts on groundwater and wellhead protection.	On-going
Encourage Town residents to routinely test their private wells, particularly to determine levels of nitrates and radon.	On-going
Report instances of potential groundwater contamination to the WDNR and/or Marathon County.	On-going
Meet with the Village of Maine and City of Wausau to discuss establishment of cooperative boundary agreements to plan for orderly extension of water and sewer services.	On-going
Identify necessary repairs and allocate funds to maintain and/or improve the Town Hall on a regular basis	On-going
Conduct an annual evaluation of the Town's volunteer fire department and equipment. Use the annual reviews to identify, prioritize, and budget for needed improvements.	On-going
Work with Marathon County Sheriff's Department as needed to improve communications or other efforts to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of police protection services.	On-going
Work with the City of Wausau as needed to improve and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of ambulance services.	On-going
Conduct annual reviews of mutual aid agreements with the Towns of Hewitt, Easton, and Wausau, as well as the Village of Maine, to explore opportunities to enhance services, while keeping costs to a reasonable level.	On-going
Continue to conduct annual reviews and allocations of funding for public services.	On-going
Consider adopting park dedication requirements for new subdivisions.	Immediate
Compile and display information on Marathon County parks, recreation, and forestry at the Town Hall.	On-going
Establish an annual clean up event and/or Adopt-a-Park program for Jesse Park to enlist community volunteers to participate in maintenance and surveillance efforts.	On-going
Transportation	
Consider conducting a study to determine where speeding on Town roads poses safety concerns.	On-going
Work with Marathon County to identify road corridors where speeding is a problem and determine if traffic calming measures can be installed. Traffic calming measures might include special signage, stop signs, and rumble strips.	On-going

Work with Marathon County Sheriff's Department to enforce speed limits within the Town.	On-going
Identify and map "problem" road segments and/or intersections in the Town and explore approaches to improve safety and manage traffic flow.	On-going
Routinely review, and revise as necessary, road design and access standards in the Town's subdivision ordinance.	On-going
Continue to utilize PASER/WISLR evaluation ratings to prioritize road improvement projects.	On-going
Work cooperatively with Marathon County and WisDOT to seek and obtain funding for improvements to County and State roads in the Town.	On-going
Develop and adopt specific criteria/thresholds to evaluate when an existing gravel road should be paved. Criteria might include overall traffic volume, amount of truck or heavy equipment use, proximity or connection to other paved roads.	On-going
Work with Marathon County Sheriff's Department to enforce weight limits within the Town.	On-going
Encourage through-street connections when possible to enhance accessibility and traffic flow.	On-going
Consider adopting requirements for developers to finance some of the road improvements necessary for new development.	On-going
Coordinate review of major developments/subdivisions with Marathon County and adjacent municipalities to ensure local and county traffic concerns are adequately addressed.	On-going
Economic Development	
Identify and map areas with prime farmland and active farms. Zone these areas accordingly to restrict non-farm uses.	Immediate
Consider requiring larger lot sizes or establishing a sliding-scale density provision to minimize non-farm uses in areas with significant amounts of prime farmland and/or existing active farms.	Immediate
Identify areas along major roads where commercial and industrial development would be appropriate and revise zoning map to direct such development to those locations. These areas should have good road access and parcel sizes large enough for commercial and industrial uses. Consideration should also be given to locating new areas for new commercial/industrial development adjacent to existing similar uses.	Immediate
Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County and NRCS to implement and monitor farmland conservation and best management practices.	On-going
Review and amend sign ordinance as necessary to improve sign design and location requirements.	On-going
Land Use	
Identify and zone accordingly areas where new residential subdivisions and/or smaller lot sizes should be encouraged to locate.	Immediate
Consider adopting cluster/conservation subdivision requirements and associated development standards regarding density, preservation and management of open space, and design (roads, landscaping, common elements, etc.).	Immediate

Consider increasing minimum lot sizes or establishing a sliding-scale zoning district to provide for limited residential development in areas where agricultural uses and/or rural character should be preserved.	Immediate
Identify areas where public utilities are likely to be extended in the future and ensure lot sizes are appropriate to accommodate future urban density development.	Immediate
Work with the Town Constable to enhance code enforcement procedures and capabilities.	Immediate
Identify and zone areas along major roads appropriate for commercial and industrial development to encourage such development in those locations. These areas should have good road access and parcel sizes large enough for commercial/industrial uses.	Immediate
Consider adopting buffer requirements for commercial and industrial development located adjacent to residential or agricultural uses. This will involve developing buffer standards, including buffer yards/setbacks, screening, and landscaping requirements.	Short-term
Seek assistance from UW-Extension and Marathon County to develop local regulations to limit the number of animals and size of farms.	On-going
Work with the City of Wausau and Village of Maine to explore opportunities to establish cooperative boundary agreements to manage growth along common boundaries.	On-going
Work cooperatively with the City of Wausau and/or the Village of Maine to prepare a coordinated zoning plan if Extraterritorial Zoning authority is initiated.	On-going
Intergovernmental Cooperation	
Work cooperatively with adjacent municipalities to review and coordinate development along common boundaries.	On-going
Continue to engage in regular communication with the Village of Maine and City of Wausau on annexation issues.	On-going
Establish necessary meeting dates with surrounding municipalities to review service agreements and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.	On-going
Conduct reviews of service agreements with neighboring municipalities.	On-going
Maintain and post at the Town Hall, a calendar of monthly meetings of the various governmental agencies.	On-going
Maintain Town membership in the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.	On-going
Conduct periodic community surveys to solicit public input on various issues and concerns affecting the Town.	On-going
Maintain regular contact and timely feedback to Marathon County staff regarding concerns with road maintenance and code enforcement.	On-going
Work with Marathon County Sheriff's Department as needed to improve communications or other efforts to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of police protection services.	On-going

Maps

Appendix A

Public Participation Plan

Appendix B

Plan Resolution

Appendix C

Plan Ordinance

Appendix D

Cooperative Boundary Agreement Map

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**Town of Texas
Comprehensive Plan
2019**