

Town of Hamilton, Wisconsin



Comprehensive Plan - 2022

Prepared by:

Mississippi River Regional Planning
Commission under direction of the
Hamilton Town Planning
Committee and Town Board –
February 2022

Adopted by Resolution
February 2022

TOWN OF HAMILTON

COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN 2021-2040

TOWN OF HAMILTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2021-2040

The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2021 - 2040 responds to and is consistent with the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law as defined in Sections 66.1001(1) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes. The comprehensive plan is made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the Town that will in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity or the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development. The plan was prepared by the Town Plan Commission under the direction of the Town Board.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

The Town of Hamilton (hereafter referred to as “Hamilton”) last adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2009. An update to this plan allows for the continued growth and vision of the area to be thoroughly implemented. The plan will provide a service to the community as a reference tool for growth. The plan is general in nature, allowing for flexibility, considering many elements and their relation to one another across time. The plan is balanced between the needs of the town and emphasis on goals to enhance the quality of the community.



Plan Purpose and Use

Hamilton's Comprehensive Plan establishes an overall strategy for the growth and conservation of the Town. It updates and replaces Hamilton Comprehensive Plan, La Crosse County, Wisconsin 2009. This Comprehensive Plan guides short- and long-range growth, development, and preservation decisions. The purposes of this Plan are to:

- Identify areas appropriate for development and preservation over the next 20 years and serve as a reference for development application reviews.
- Recommend types of land uses for specific areas of the Town.
- Preserve natural and cultural features and prime farmland for future generations.
- Provide a basis for intergovernmental cooperation.
- Identify needed transportation and community facilities to serve existing and future land uses.
- Guide the preparation of annual Town budgets.
- Communicate the Town's desired future to the Town Board, commissions and committees, staff, residents, landowners, developers, neighboring communities, and others.
- Protect the public health, safety, and welfare.
- Maintain and improve the current quality of life for Town residents.

This Plan has been prepared under the State of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, adopted in 1999 and contained in §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. It meets all the Law's elements and requirements. It is important to note that the law requires all Town land use decisions be consistent with this Plan.

Additionally, the Plan is a working document and is intended to be reviewed and updated at least once every ten (10) years. The review will serve as a checkpoint to ensure that the document is providing clear direction and that it remains consistent with community goals, values, and needs.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FORMAT

Chapter 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes, lists nine elements that comprise a comprehensive plan. Town of Hamilton (hereafter referred to as Hamilton) organized these elements into nine chapters to promote readability and easy reference. It contains the following eight elements:

- **Housing Element (Chapter 2)**

- A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs of Campbell to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand.

- **Transportation Element (Chapter 3)**

- A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs to guide the future development of multimodal transportation including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric scooters, pedestrians, railroad, air transportation, trucking, and water.

- **Utilities and Community Facilities Element (Chapter 4)**

- A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local governmental unit such as sanitary sewer service, stormwater management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other governmental facilities. The element shall describe the location, use and capacity of existing public utilities and community facilities that serve the local governmental unit, shall include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need in the local governmental unit to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities and facilities or to create new utilities and facilities and shall assess future needs for government services in the local governmental unit that are related to such utilities and facilities.

- ***Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element (Chapter 5)***
 - A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources consistent with zoning limitations under s. 295.20 (2), parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.
- ***Economic Development Element (Chapter 6)***
 - A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion, of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in Campbell, including an analysis of the labor force and economic base of Campbell.
- ***Intergovernmental Cooperation Element (Chapter 7)***
 - A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services. The element shall analyze the relationship of the local governmental unit to school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, and to the region, the state and other governmental units.
- ***Land Use Plan (Chapter 8)***
 - A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property. The element shall contain a listing of the amount, type, intensity and net density of existing uses of land in the local governmental unit, such as agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and other public and private uses. The element shall analyze trends in the supply, demand and price of land, opportunities for redevelopment and existing and potential land-use conflicts. The element shall contain projections for 20 years, in 5-year increments of future residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial land uses including the assumptions of net densities or other spatial assumptions upon which the projections are based.

● **Action and Implementation Element (Chapter 9)**

- A compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence, including proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, or subdivision ordinances. The element shall describe how each of the elements of the comprehensive plan will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive plan and shall include a mechanism to measure the local governmental unit's progress toward achieving all aspects of the comprehensive plan. The element shall include a process for updating the comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan under this subsection shall be updated no less than once every 10 years.

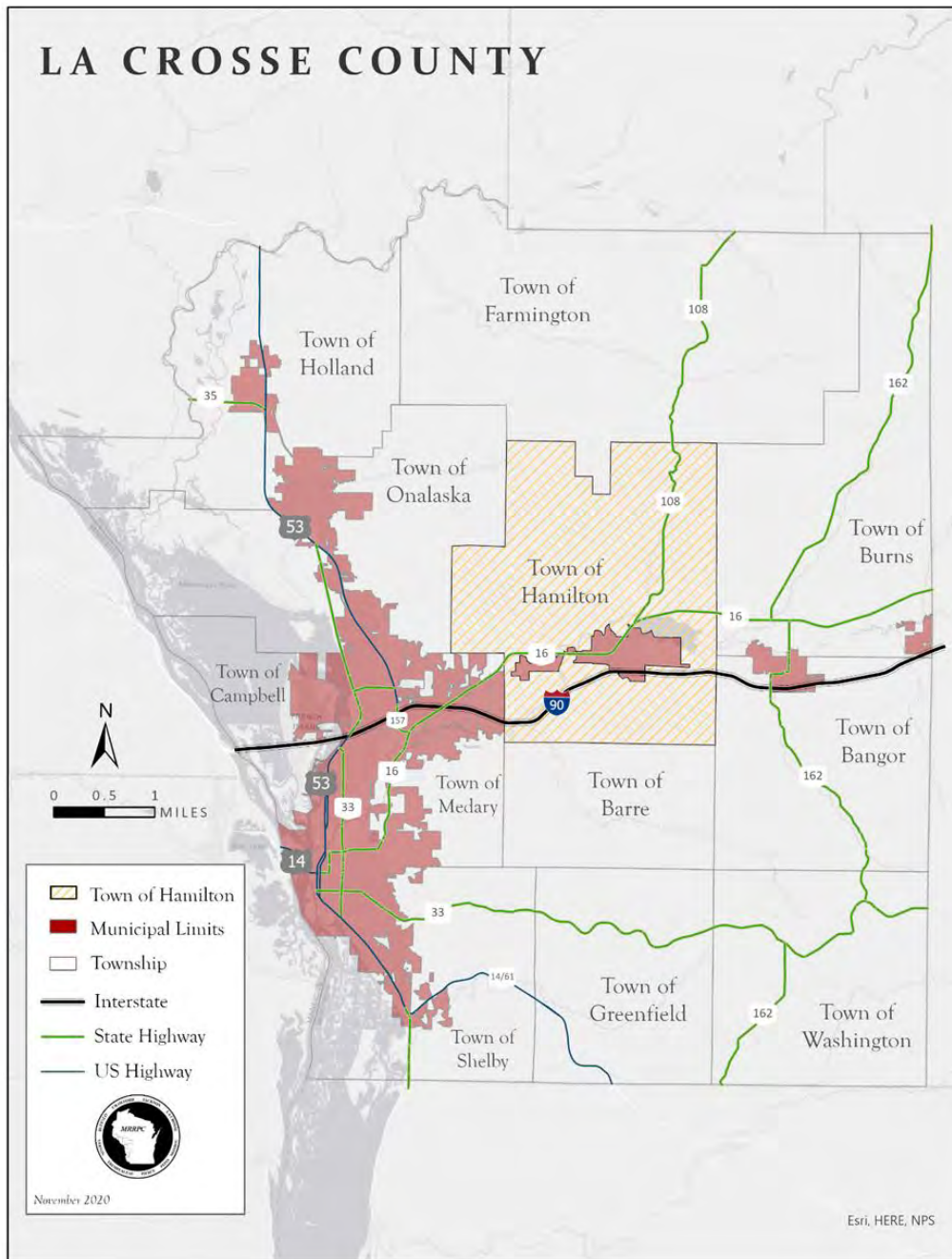
This plan describes current and past conditions, planning efforts, opportunities, and issues to be addressed in each of the required plan elements. There is an additional appendix containing relevant maps.



Setting

Hamilton is in La Crosse County in western Wisconsin. The Town is centrally located in La Crosse County and consists of approximately 33,000 acres (FIGURE 1). The incorporated Village of West Salem lies within the boundaries of Hamilton. Hamilton is bordered on the north by the Town of Farmington, on the south by the Town of Barre, on the east by the Towns of Burns and Bangor, and on the west by the Towns of Medary and Onalaska.

FIGURE 1. TOWN OF HAMILTON OVERVIEW



The 54.25 square miles of land that the Town now covers has had an interesting geopolitical history. La Crosse County which came into existence in 1851 was originally comprised of five towns. The Town of Pierce, the largest of the towns, covered the present-day towns of Hamilton, Barre, Bangor, and Washington. In 1853 the Town of Neshonoc was created which covered much of the present land area of Hamilton. The Town of Neshonoc was cut to 36 sections when the Town of Burns was organized in 1854. The Town maintained this 36-section size until 1866 when the Town of Neshonoc and Barre were combined. This merger created the political Town of Hamilton. In 1874 Hamilton was reduced in size when twenty-one sections of land were realigned to form the Town of Barre for a second time. This realignment resulted in the 54.25 sections that make up Hamilton as we know it today. Historic facts and events in the Town include:

- Emfin Emfinson, a Norwegian immigrant, was the first non native American to settle in this area. He erected a small cabin in 1850 on 160 acres in sections 28 and 29.
- In 1850 Thomas Leonard and Julius Segar settled in the Town and erected a small cabin for their families by 1851. Other settlers soon followed. It was reported that "thirty persons in all, and with six wagons and eleven yoke of oxen were eleven days making the distance from Marquette County, Wisconsin."
- Between 1851 and 1853 choice land within ten miles of La Crosse could be purchased for \$1.25 an acre. * Between 1850 and 1860 one hundred-ninety men filed claims in the area (*The Towns of Pierce, Neshonoc or Hamilton*).
- The first marriage occurred in December 1851 between Jerome Bostwick and Jane Bingham. * The first recorded childbirth occurred in August 1851. Nancy Segar, the daughter of Julius Segar was born on this date.
- Some of the first recorded religious services occurred in August 1851 held by a Methodist circuit rider named Reverend Chester. These services were held in the cabins of scattered settlers. Services were also held the following year at the Tavern of Byron Viets at Neshonoc by Reverend Benjamin Reynolds of La Crosse.
- * The year 1852 saw the first public school session which lasted for 3 months. The teacher was William Van Zandt, and twenty pupils made up the enrollment. By 1880 there were eight schoolhouses throughout the Town that accommodated an enrollment of 567. There were 301 males and 268 females. A total of 12 teachers were employed. The male teacher wage was \$32.13 and the female teacher wage was \$23.72. Ending August 31, 1880 the Town received for school purposes \$3,927.04 and expended \$3,440.57.
- The first post office was established at the residence of the first postmaster, E.F. Edwards in the fall of 1852. In the summer of 1852 mail was carried by different settlers, each in turn by alphabetical order. Later a messenger was hired and paid \$1.00 a trip. In 1853 a mail route was established between Baraboo and La Crosse and mails were received tri-weekly at the new post office called Neshonoc. In 1879 the post office was established at McMillans Mill.
- The first sawmill was up and running in 1853. By 1855 the mill operated as both a saw and grist mill. This mill was owned and managed by Monroe Palmer who was able to produce 300 barrels of flour per week. By around 1880 this mill's expanded capacity could produce 600 barrels of flour a day from the grain transported from as far away as Trempealeau and Sparta.

- In 1855, Monroe Palmer, with services provided by Issac Thompson the Deputy County Surveyor, planned and platted the Village of Neshonoc comprising of 15 acres with blocks of 12 lots each, with each lot measuring approximately 50 x 100 feet. The streets were named Oak, Main Center, and Cypress and were intersected with Mill, Second, Third and Fourth Streets and Mentoria Avenue. The first building was a hotel and was erected in 1855. Later a general store was started. A blacksmith shop was started in 1855 as well and a carriage shop was also started around this time. The population of Neshonoc in 1858 was 100 residents.
- In 1858 the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad was built through the Town entering Section 1, and passing through sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 18. Thomas Leonard was influential in having the railroad company choose this route which benefited him since he had ownership of land along this route. The selection of this route resulted in the demise of the Village of Neshonoc. The railroad's economic attraction and Thomas Leonard's desire to build a village on his land and induce businessmen in Neshonoc to move there was successful and from this the community of Salem, later renamed to West Salem, grew. The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad was built in 1873 through the Town adjacent to the same course as the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad line.
- In 1875 a business directory for the unincorporated community of West Salem in Hamilton listed a livery stable, wagon dealer, boot maker, harness and luggage shop, four dry goods stores, two carriage makers, a milliner, music hall, insurance agent, medical doctor, drug store, real estate office, two hardware stores, wholesale drug dealer, and at least two hotels. During this decade a woman doctor also established her medical practice here which indeed was a rarity at this time. In 1886 the first newspaper was established, as was a cooperative creamery. The first bank opened in 1886 and was the first brick building.
- In the 1880's the La Crosse County Board decided to locate the La Crosse County hospital or asylum near the community of West Salem. This hospital, now called Lakeview Health Center continues to this day. * In 1895 McMillan Mill constructed a water powered electrical generating plant on the site of the old Neshonoc Feed Mill.
- By 1940 a new 14-foot high dam was built on the La Crosse River and the new Lake Neshonoc was created. * In 1943 a former civilian conservation corps campground, one mile west of the Village, was deeded by the federal government to La Crosse County and the county highway department established its main shop at that location.
- In the 1950's the La Crosse interstate fair relocated its fairgrounds from the vicinity of Wisconsin State University campus in La Crosse to a 143 acre site in the Town on the west side of the village.
- In the 1960's Interstate 90 was constructed through the Town with an interchange constructed at CTH C.

Planning Process

The planning process has involved extensive public input throughout. The following formal public participation activities have been conducted. All public meetings and events have been properly noticed.

- 1) Town Web Survey
- 2) Open House #1
- 3) Public Meetings with Plan Commission and Town Board
- 4) Public Hearing

1) TOWN SURVEY

Hamilton assembled questions about a variety of topics that exist within the community including housing, transportation, and land use. These questions were then incorporated into a Town Survey for two reasons: 1) to facilitate a community discussion about long-term issues related to these topics; and 2) to collect community sentiment concerning these topics. The survey was performed as part of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan. Results of the survey were incorporated into this Plan and used to help generate goals and objectives to determine actions for implementation.

2) OPEN HOUSE #1

Hamilton offered an open house to facilitate public engagement. The Town presented Town goals, visions, and policies to gauge public input. Comments from Open House #1 were used to determine action plans, revise goals, and incorporate public opinion into the Plan.

3) PUBLIC MEETINGS WITH PLAN COMMISSION AND TOWN BOARD

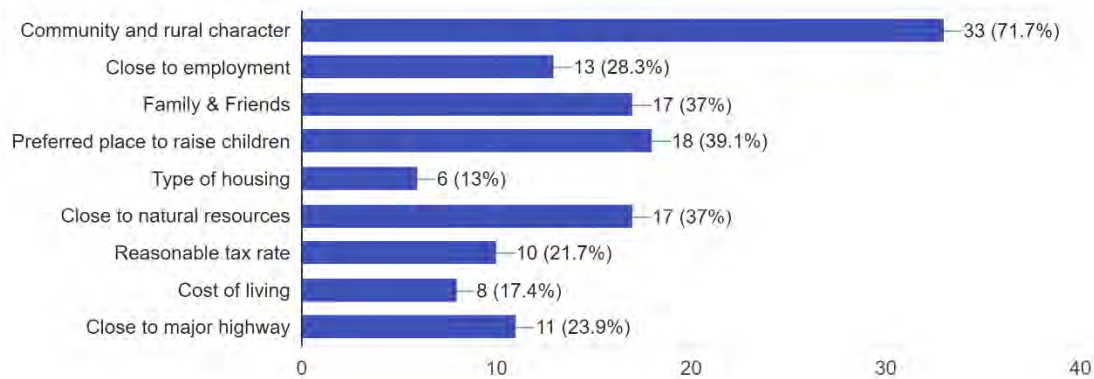
The Plan Commission met multiple times throughout the Fall of 2020 and Spring of 2021. Despite COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings, meetings were posted and open to the public. Town residents were also given the opportunity to review materials and leave feedback at the Town Hall, offering the opportunity for public engagement at each meeting. MRRPC staff presented at these meetings on progress of the Plan. The Town Board received recommendations from the Plan Commission to pass resolutions and ordinances regarding the plan.

4) PUBLIC HEARING

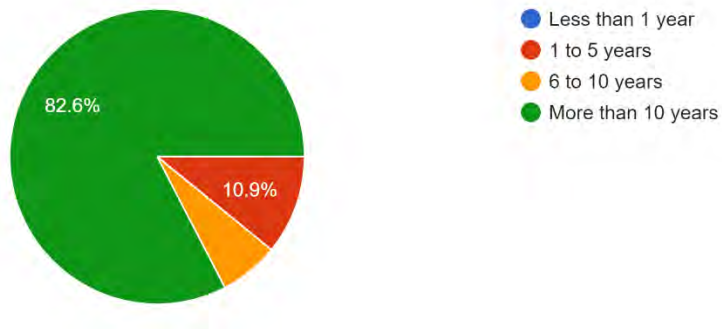
Hamilton held a public hearing at the Town Hall to gather input from residents on the final draft of the Plan. Comments from the Public hearing were used to revise the final draft of the plan. The affidavit for the meeting posting can be found in Appendix A.

Town Survey Results

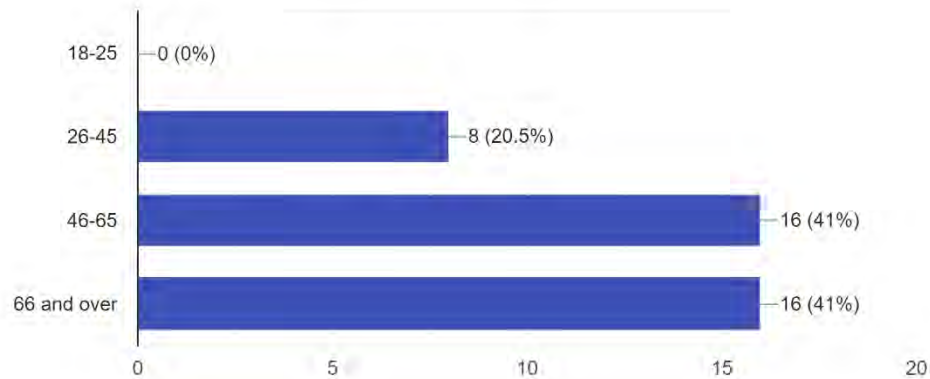
Why do you choose to live in the Town of Hamilton?



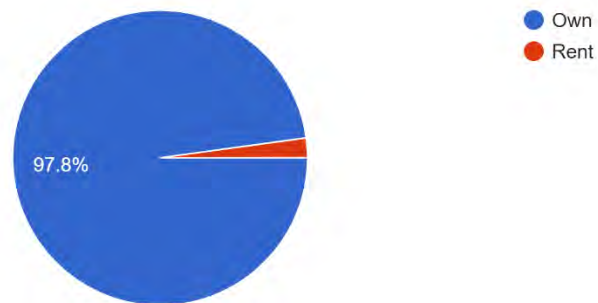
How long have you resided in the Town?



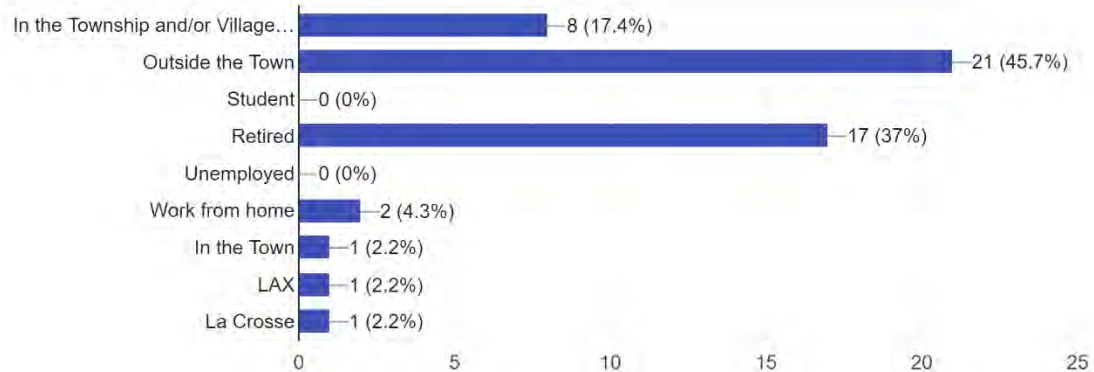
Please indicate your age bracket.



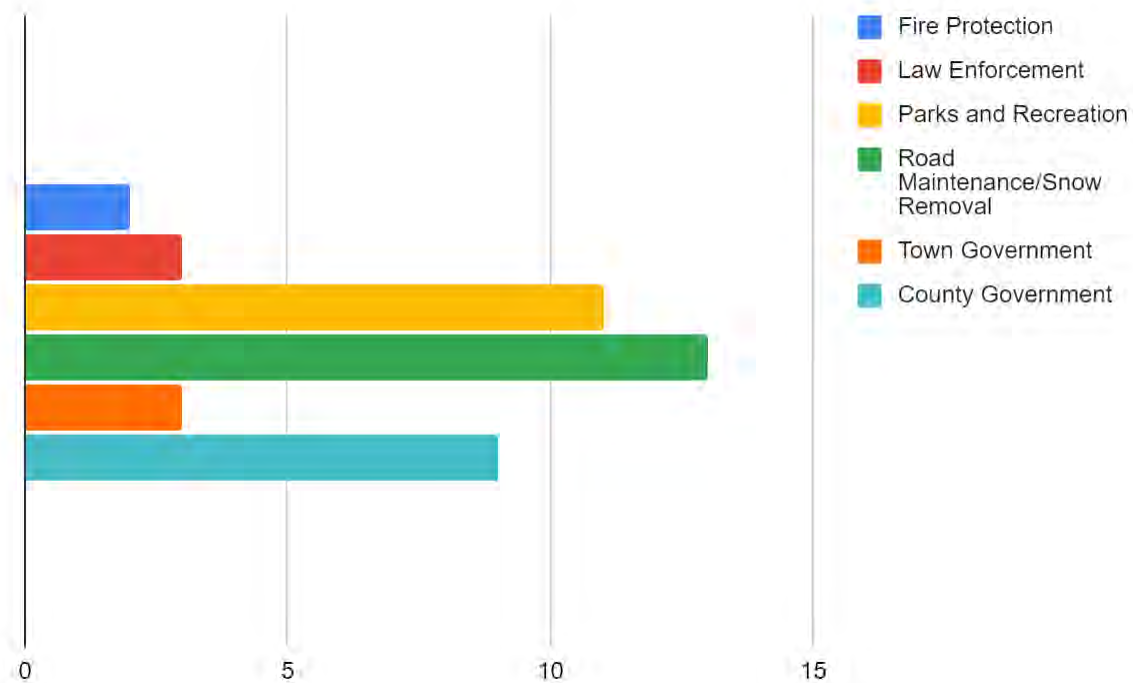
Do you own or rent the property where you reside?



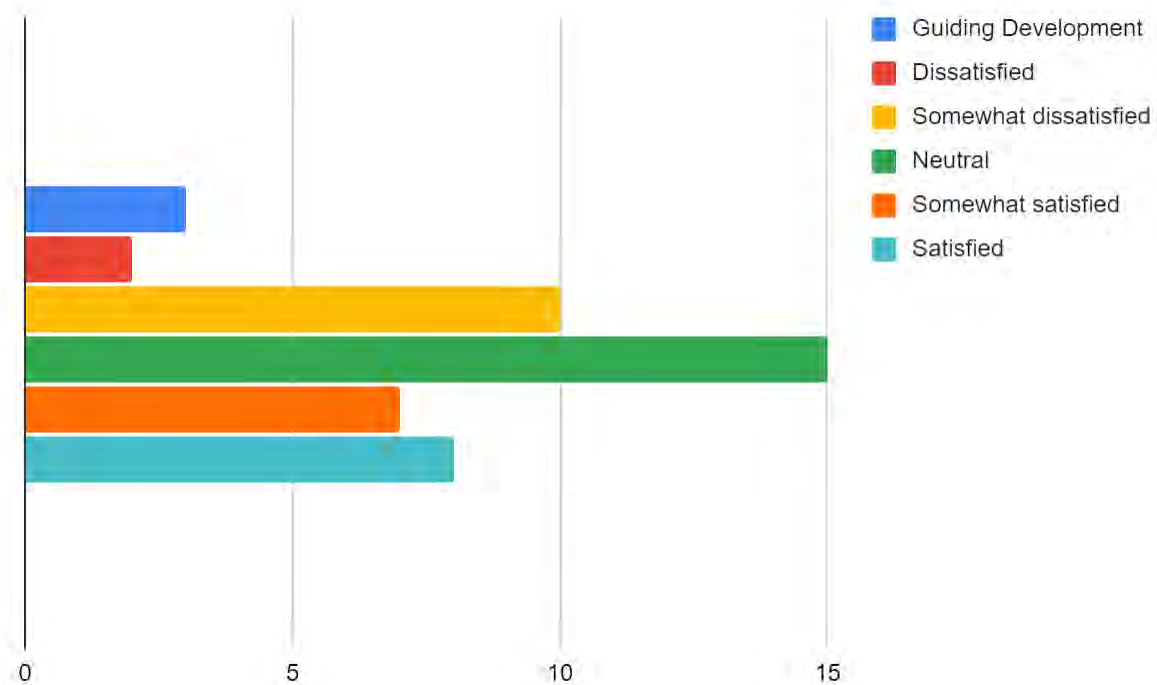
What community do you work in (if applicable)?



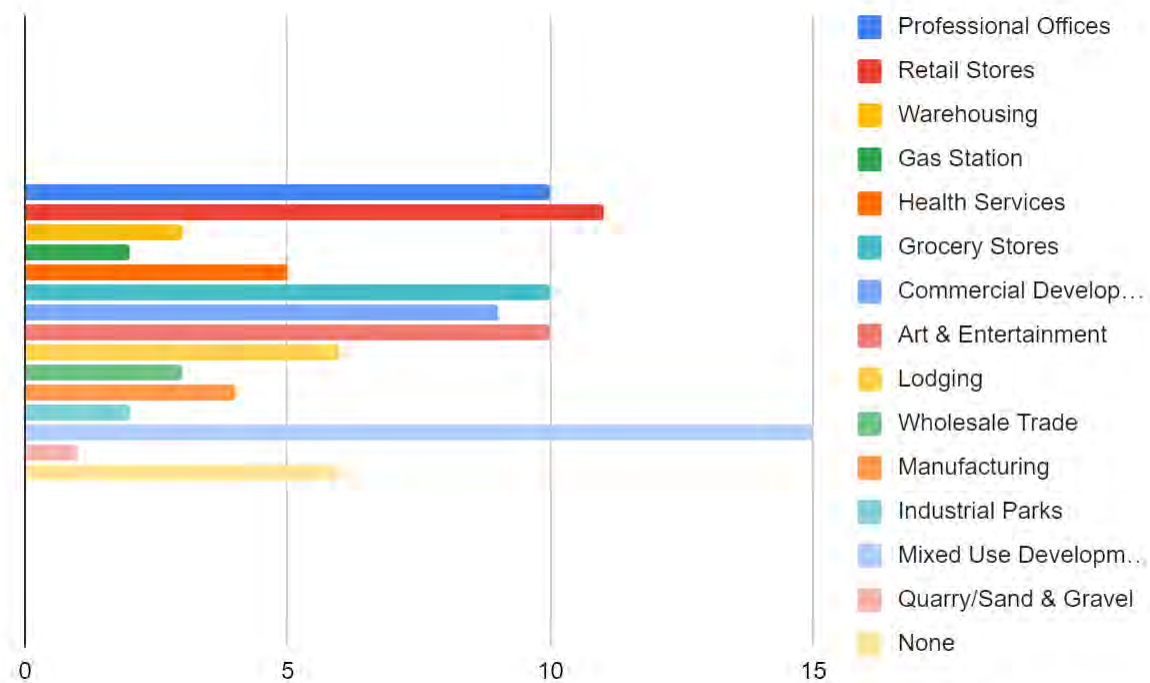
In your opinion, which of the following public services and facilities needs improvements?



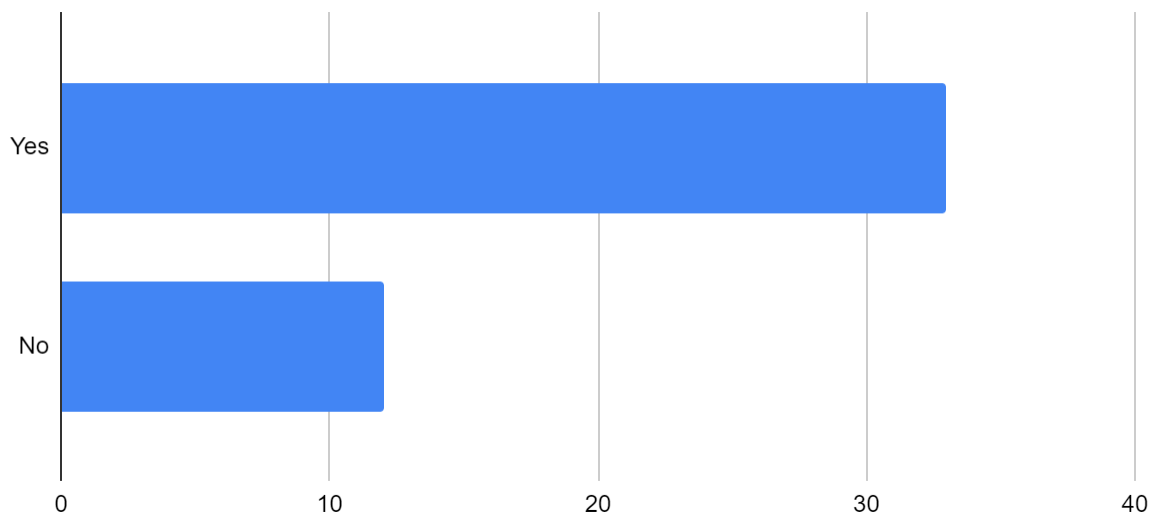
How would you rate the current efforts of the Town to regulate and guide development?



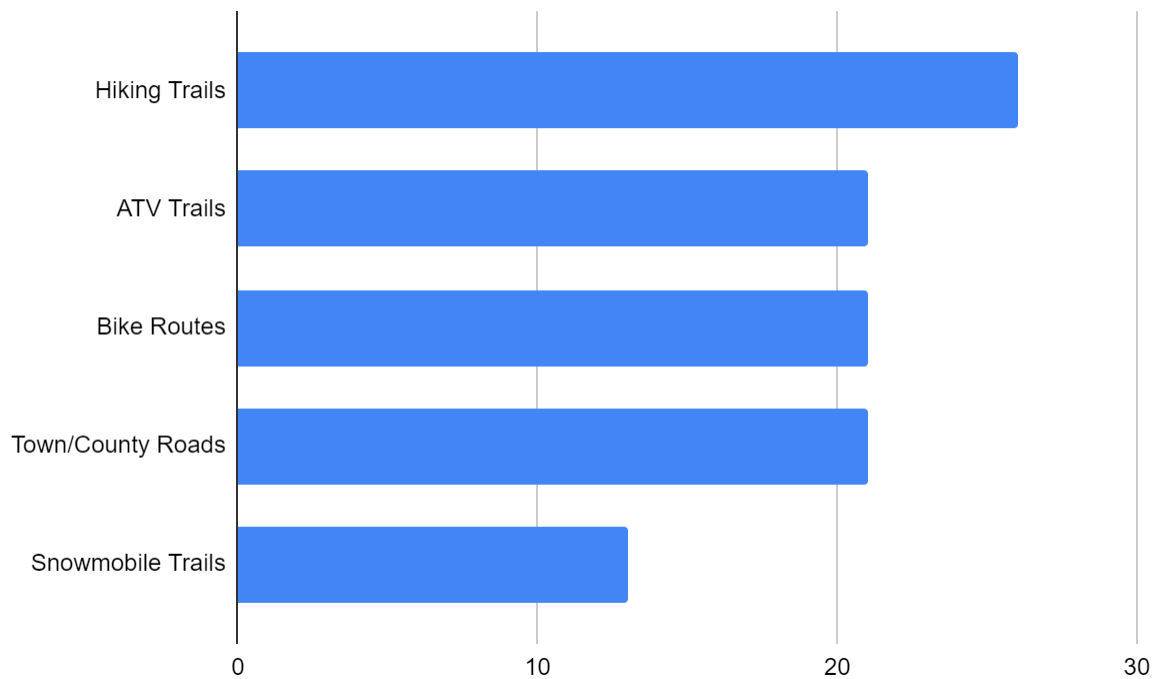
Which of the following types of new businesses would you like to see developed in the Town in the future?



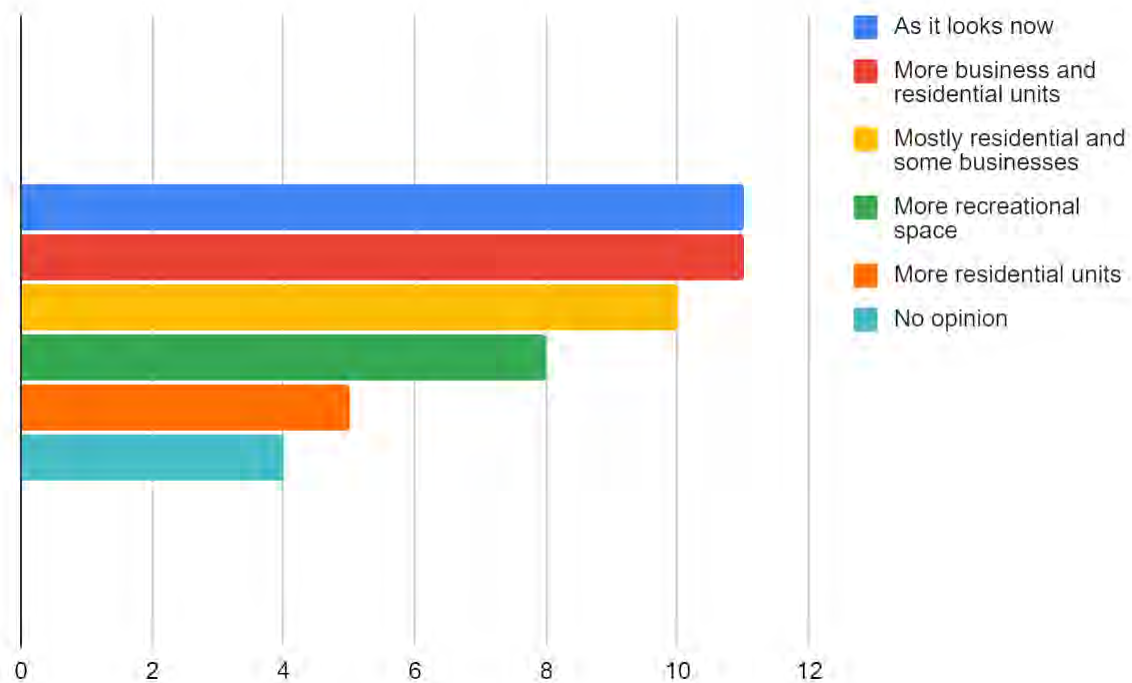
Would you support development along designated commercial corridors such as County M and Buol Road?



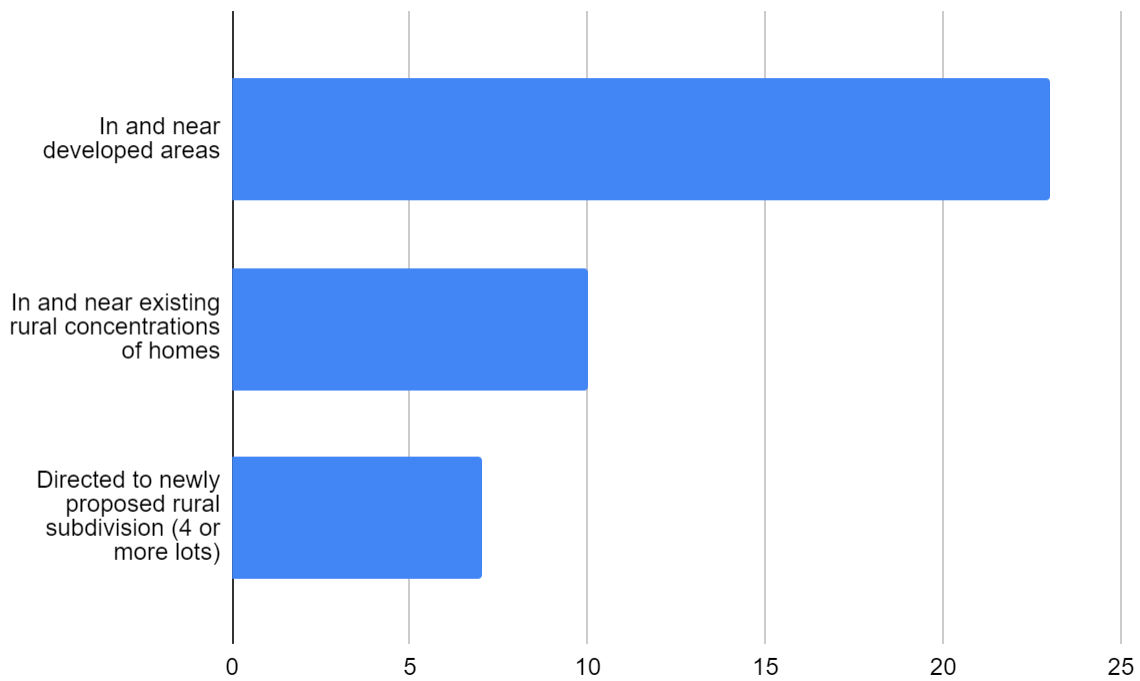
Would you support the creation or expansion of the following transportation opportunities?



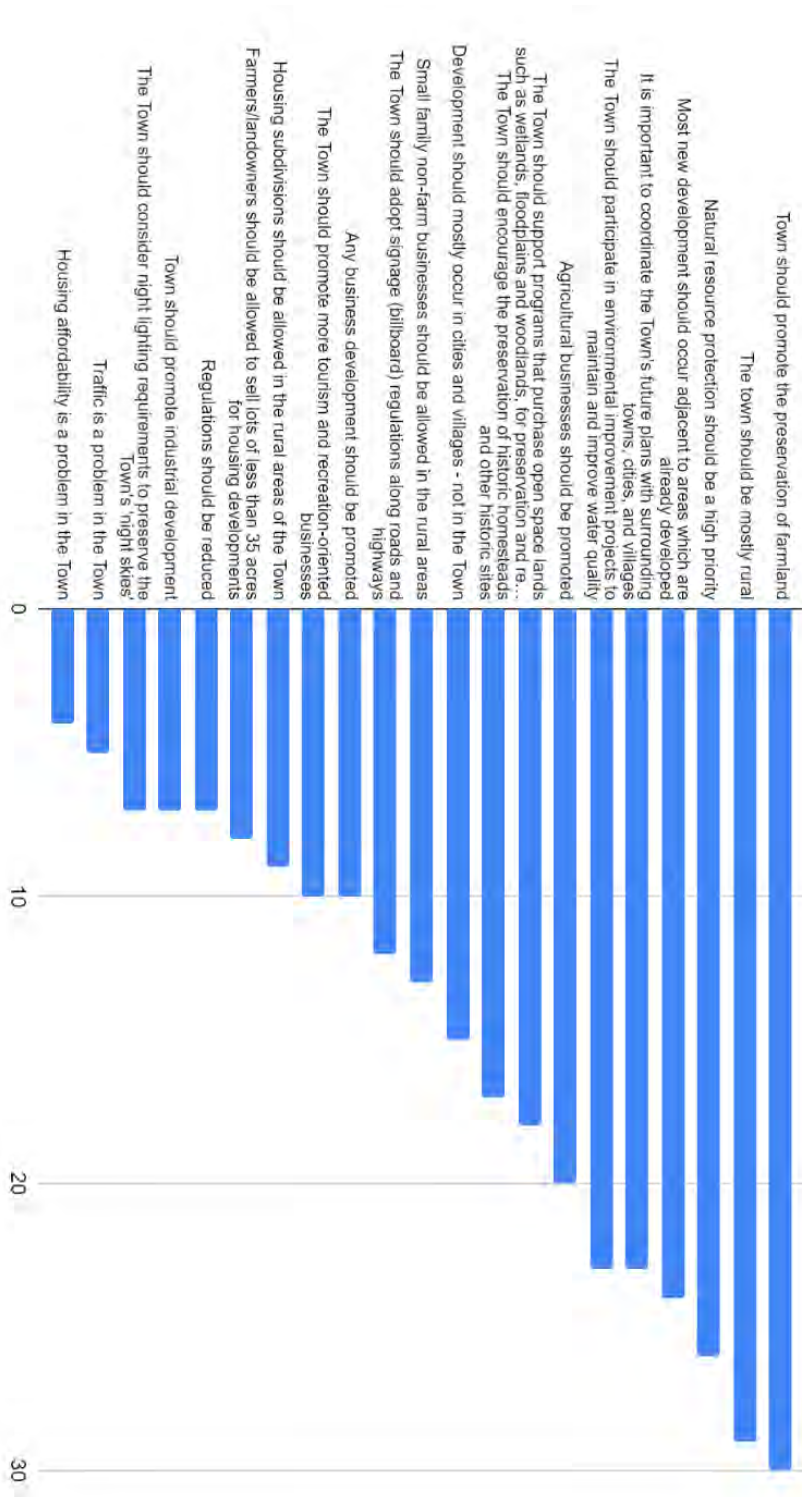
Which statement describes how you would want the Town to look 20 years from now?



Which of the following best describes your idea of where new housing should be located in the Town?



The following are several statements that suggest choices about future directions for growth and development in the Town. Please check the boxes that you AGREE with the statement provided.



In a word or two, what do you believe are the two biggest issues, in order of priority, facing the Town?

- "Television & Internet infrastructure & General Conservative Principals"
- "Fix the roads"
- minimize spending
- "Taxes and water quality"
- road repair-county roads
- brush trimming along town roads
- less government and regulation
- maintaining services with current budget constraints
- want to see area thrive and grow without homes packed together so closely.
- don't become Holmen WI. need to preserve greenspace for future generations
- reasonable development while maintain current farmland
- New housing/Private well table water availability
- keep it small
- infrastructure
- Taxes and annexation.
- Urban growth
- Preserve Agribusiness/Family farms and be involved in approving the location of cell towers
- New town hall, deteriorating town roads

What is number one on your wishlist of improvements Hamilton can make?

- Access to decent internet in the town needs to be addressed. Currently there are several homes where 1.5 Mbps is all that is available. The value of homes in these areas is depreciating because of it
- Levy limits and business/industrial development
- Potential for loss of rural character, housing developments should be restricted to areas where there are already developments
- road resurfacing
- Annexes for adjoining cities and loss of agriculture jobs
- Managing development, lowering taxes
- Tax inconsistencies and road maintenance and snow removal
- High Speed Rural Internet
- Protect farm land natural resources
- Farm land preservation
- New recycling center
- New town hall
- Less government and regulation
- Natural resource protection
- Town should be mostly rural
- Fix city M from W Salem to Barre.
- More recreation (bike trails, ski trails, etc)
- road maintenance
- coordinate future plans with surrounding towns, cities, and villages
- Coordinated plans
- Preserving the rural heritage of the township.
- Keep current maintenance on roads and bridges
- Promotion of commercial/Business developments in approved areas.
- Reduced regulations for development
- Developable land, no 35 acre minimum
- The Town should consider taking over easement roads that affect more than one homeowner (Geezer Gulch) off Hidden River Road

1) BACKGROUND

Population Trends and Forecasts

Population information was gathered from U.S. Census Bureau records (TABLE 1). Hamilton's estimated population during the 2020 census was 2,498 residents. Population estimates for the various units of government were acquired from the Wisconsin Department of Administrations Demographic Services Center. The Demographic Services Center provides population projections for all Wisconsin units of government. The information estimates Hamilton's population to increase to 3,065 residents by the year 2040.

TABLE 1. POPULATION AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population					
	1990	2000	2010	2020	% Chg 10-20
Hamilton	1,633	2,103	2,436	2,498	2.55%
Village of West Salem	3,611	4,738	4,799	5,045	5.13%
La Crosse County	97,892	107,120	114,638	120,447	2.46%
Wisconsin	4,891,599	5,363,715	5,686,986	5,854,594	2.95%
Projections					
	2025	2030	2035	2040	2020-2040 Predicted Annual Change
Hamilton	2,780	2,895	2,975	3,065	1.14%
Village of West Salem	5,400	5,565	5,675	5,790	0.74%
La Crosse County	122,375	125,080	126,760	128,405	0.39%
Wisconsin	6,203,850	6,375,910	6,476,270	6,491,635	.004%
Source: US Census Bureau 2020, Projection estimates from WI Department of Administration – Demographic Services Center					

AGE AND RACE

The median age for the Town is 42.6 years old while the median female age is 43.4 years old, an increase of about 5 years each since the last census. Hamilton's population over 18 is 2010 residents. Hamilton's population by age is distributed evenly across categories and has nearly 500 residents over age 65 (FIGURE 2).

FIGURE 2. HAMILTON AND WEST SALEM POPULATION, BY AGE

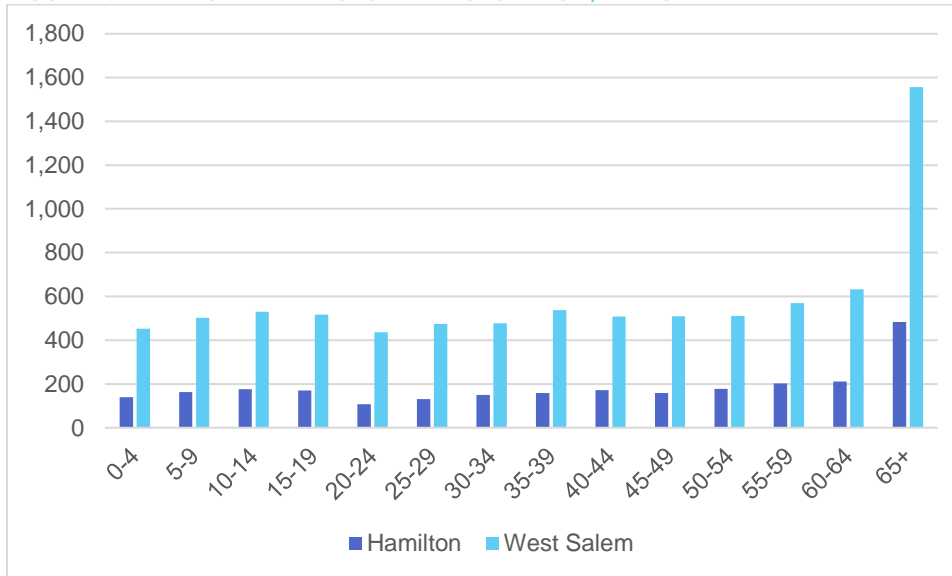
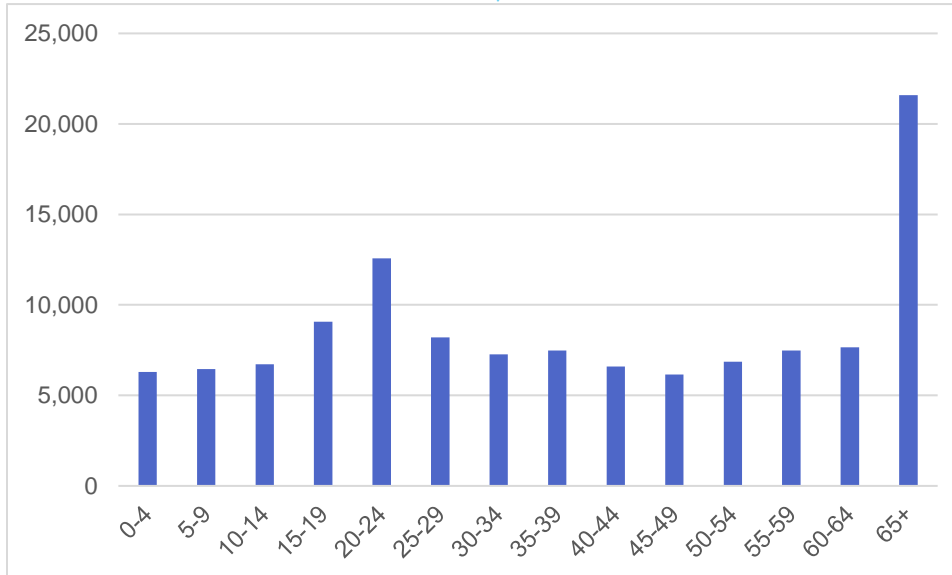


FIGURE 3. LA CROSSE COUNTY POPULATION, BY AGE



RACE

Hamilton's population by age and race are detailed in TABLE 2 below. Like neighboring West Salem, Hamilton is predominantly white at 97%, but has a slightly higher Asian population. La Crosse County is slightly more diverse, at 90% White, 5% Asian, and 2% for both Black and Hispanic.

TABLE 2. POPULATION BY RACE, 2020

	White (%)	Black (%)	American Indian and Alaska Native (%)	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (%)	Asian (%)	Hispanic (%)	Two or More Races (%)
Town of Hamilton	97%	<1%	<1%	<1%	2%	1%	1%
Village of West Salem	96%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	2%	1%
La Crosse County	90%	2%	<1%	<1%	5%	2%	2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – ACS 2020, ESRI

INCOME LEVELS

TABLE 3 depicts three measures of income for Hamilton and surrounding communities:

- Per Capita Income is the total income of the area divided by the total population.
- Median Household Income considers income for all people who occupy a housing unit- related or not.
- Scaled income levels based on per household income

Hamilton exceeds West Salem and La Crosse County across all three measures. Per capita income in Hamilton is \$36,893, Median Household Income is \$84,592, and Average Household Income is \$101,886.

TABLE 3. INCOME ANALYSIS

	Per Capita Income	Median Household Income	Average Household Income
Town of Hamilton	\$36,893	\$84,592	\$101,886
Village of West Salem	\$32,158	\$69,382	\$85,055
La Crosse County	\$30,620	\$57,554	\$75,184

Source: US Census Bureau – ACS 2020

DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



2) HOUSING ELEMENT

This element includes a compilation of goals, objectives, and actions to guide the future development and character of housing in Hamilton.

GOAL 1

Provide opportunities for elderly (senior housing) and assisted living facilities

GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Research the establishment of rural assisted living facilities, elderly housing condominiums, and group living options to meet the housing needs of the Town of Hamilton.
- b) Work with La Crosse County in establishing ordinances that promote various levels of housing (size, value, income, etc.) within housing developments.
- c) Support activities of the La Crosse County Housing Commission in achieving its long- and short-term goals related to the creation of affordable housing

GOAL 2

Continue to plan for adequate public utilities, sidewalks, and access for school buses and emergency vehicles when planning developments

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Encourage housing development patterns that grow out from areas of existing residential development.
- b) Promote cluster/conservation housing subdivisions in areas with existing transportation infrastructure and capacity.
- c) In conjunction with the County promote the use of Best Management Practices and erosion control and stormwater management plans for residential development proposals to minimize potential impacts to waterways and groundwater resources.
- d) In evaluating residential development proposals direct new non-farm development to sites that do not adversely affect the operation of agricultural working lands.
- e) Assist La Crosse County in rewriting the La Crosse County Zoning Ordinance as it pertains to residential and agricultural districts as detailed in the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan.

GOAL 3

Maintain enforcement and continually update one and two-family dwelling code in order to maintain and improve the housing stock in Hamilton

GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Continue enforcement of the One and Two-family Dwelling Code. A key to a stable and growing tax base is the construction and maintenance of new and existing housing. The quality of construction and proper maintenance of housing units will prolong the life of the structures, keep them safe and a vital part of the tax base. The implementation of the state building code also ensures that structures will meet minimum requirements to provide access to all age groups and residents with special needs.
- b) Monitor County transient population trends

Housing Units

The number of housing units in Hamilton has grown by about 60 in the last 10 years.

TABLE 4 displays the number of housing units within Hamilton. In 2010, there were 949 housing units in the area - 84% owner occupied, 11% renter occupied, and 4% vacant.

West Salem and La Crosse County have similar percentages of residences.

TABLE 4. HOUSING OCCUPANCY, 2020

	Total Housing Units	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Vacant Units
Town of Hamilton	949	803	107	39
Village of West Salem	3,203	2,408	694	101
La Crosse County	51,741	31,422	17,415	2,904

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020

Housing Characteristics

A "household" is an occupied housing unit. TABLE 5, below, outlines the average size of both households and families within Hamilton. It also identifies the percentage of households that consist of family versus non-family households. The average household in Hamilton consists of 2.82 people, while number of family households is 701 (out of 910 total households). The majority, 98%, of households in the Town consist of related families. The table also compares household characteristics among Hamilton, Village of West Salem, and La Crosse County.

TABLE 5. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS, 2020

	Average Household Size	Total Households - 2021	Total Households - 2026	Family Households (2+ people)	Non-family Households
Town of Hamilton	2.82	910	941	701	141
Village of West Salem	2.56	3,102	3,203	2,085	789
La Crosse County	2.36	48,837	50,226	27,373	18,764

Source: US Census Bureau - ACS, 2020

TYPE OF HOUSING UNIT

TABLE 6 outlines the composition of housing unit type, by number of units. In Hamilton, single family detached homes are the most common type of housing. West Salem and La Crosse County are comprised of more diversified housing types, including substantial multi-unit facilities.

TABLE 6. TYPE OF UNIT IN STRUCTURE BY PERCENTAGE 2019

	1-Unit Detached	1-Unit Attached	2 Units	3 or 4 Units	5 to 9 Units	10 or More Units	Mobile Home
Town of Hamilton	855	44	25	0	0	0	0
Village of West Salem	2164	305	118	48	91	218	284
La Crosse County	30788	3,336	2847	2162	2152	6844	2170

US Census Bureau – ACS, ESRI

AGE OF HOUSING STRUCTURES

TABLE 7 represents the percentage of homes that were constructed within each decade over the past eighty years.

TABLE 7. AGE OF HOUSING STRUCTURES, 2020

	1939 or earlier	1940- 1949	1950- 1959	1960- 1969	1970- 1979	1980- 1989	1990- 1999	2000- 2009	2010- 2013	2014 or later
Town of Hamilton	384	128	115	112	240	250	452	207	130	45
Village of West Salem	166	0	32	74	129	127	147	213	21	20
La Crosse County	8,631	2,657	4,488	4,311	8,195	5,368	7,640	6,244	1,533	1,237

US Census Bureau – ACS, ESRI

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Housing affordability can be determined by looking at the housing affordability index. A value of 100 means that a family with the median income has exactly enough income to qualify for a mortgage on a median-priced home. An index above 100 signifies that family earning the median income has more than enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan on a median-priced home, assuming a 20 percent down payment. For example, a composite housing affordability index (COMPHAI) of 120.0 means a family earning the median family income has 120% of the income necessary to qualify for a conventional loan covering 80 percent of a median-priced existing single-family home. An increase in the COMPHAI then shows that a family is more able to afford the median priced home.

Shown in TABLE 8, the average housing affordability index for the Town is 172, with the percent of income spent on mortgage is like both West Salem and La Crosse County at 13.6%. TABLE 9 highlights the housing profile for Hamilton. As shown, about 85% of units are owner-occupied, and the vacancy rate for housing units is only 4%. About 80% of homes are valued between \$150,000 and \$399,999.

TABLE 8. HOUSING AFFORDABILITY 2021

	Per Household	
	Housing Affordability Index	Percent of Income on Mortgage
Town of Hamilton	172	13.6%
Village of West Salem	195	13.7%
La Crosse County	131	14.6%

Source: US Census, Esri 2020 forecasts

TABLE 9. HAMILTON HOUSING PROFILE

Housing Units by Occupancy Status and Tenure	Census 2010		2021		2026	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	882	100.0%	949	100.0%	980	100.0%
Occupied	842	95.5%	910	95.9%	941	96.0%
Owner	774	87.8%	803	84.6%	837	85.4%
Renter	68	7.7%	107	11.3%	104	10.6%
Vacant	40	4.5%	39	4.1%	39	4.0%
			2021		2026	
Owner Occupied Housing Units by Value			Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total			802	100.0%	837	100.0%
<\$50,000			10	1.2%	3	0.4%
\$50,000-\$99,999			17	2.1%	4	0.5%
\$100,000-\$149,999			41	5.1%	12	1.4%
\$150,000-\$199,999			108	13.5%	52	6.2%
\$200,000-\$249,999			145	18.1%	109	13.0%
\$250,000-\$299,999			157	19.6%	161	19.2%
\$300,000-\$399,999			173	21.6%	241	28.8%
\$400,000-\$499,999			74	9.2%	133	15.9%
\$500,000-\$749,999			46	5.7%	83	9.9%
\$750,000-\$999,999			24	3.0%	32	3.8%
\$1,000,000-\$1,499,999			6	0.7%	6	0.7%
\$1,500,000-\$1,999,999			1	0.1%	1	0.1%
\$2,000,000+			0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Median Value			\$275,478		\$332,158	
Average Value			\$316,958		\$374,074	

Source: US Census, Esri 2020 forecasts

HOUSING PROJECTIONS

Hamilton is projected to need approximately 1,116 households by 2040. TABLE 10 outlines the household population currently in the County as well as the projected growth in households that is expected from 2015 to 2040. The projections provided for the next twenty years have been provided by the State of Wisconsin Department of

Administration (DOA). The projections have been reached by closely monitoring past growth trends within the Town, County, and surrounding areas. Number of households needed is a result of dividing projected population by projected persons per household (2020: 2.81, 2040: 2.74).

TABLE 10. PROJECTED HOUSEHOLD POPULATION 2015-2040

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Town of Hamilton	2,652	2,776	2,895	2,975	3,065
Village of West Salem	4,952	5,102	5,241	5,326	5,416
La Crosse County	50,388	51,968	53,262	54,159	54,929

Wisconsin DOA – 2013, Census Bureau

HOUSING UNITS BY HEATING FUEL

Most households in the area use utility gas, followed by electricity, which follows County trends (TABLE 11).

TABLE 11. HOUSING UNITS BY HEATING FUEL 2019

	Utility Gas	Bottled, Tank, or LP Gas	Electricity	Fuel Oil, Kerosene, Etc.	Wood	Solar Energy	Other Fuel	No Fuel Used
Town of Hamilton	1,418	29	522	24	0	0	5	0
Village of West Salem	411	276	46	24	149	0	10	4
La Crosse County	29,593	2856	12484	972	1028	4	352	229

Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018, ESRI

SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

- Hamilton does not currently have formal special needs housing in its jurisdiction.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below is the Comprehensive Planning Goal described in State Statute that is related to the Housing Element. Following the goal is a discussion how it was addressed during the planning process.

- *Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.*

This goal is addressed in the plan by supporting activities of the La Crosse County Housing Commission and its efforts to create affordable housing opportunities throughout La Crosse County.

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3) TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

This element includes a compilation of goals, objectives, and actions to guide the future development and maintenance of various modes of transportation in Hamilton.

GOAL 1

Maintain the existing road network and level of service (road condition and road maintenance).

GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Survey results indicated that residents were satisfied with the condition and maintenance (snow plowing, etc.) of town roads. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton Town Board continue annual road inspections and current budgeting practices to maintain the existing quality and level of service of existing roads.
- b) Hazardous intersections and road segments were identified by residents. It is recommended that the Town Board prioritize the hazardous locations and work with County Highway Department and Wisconsin DOT to develop solutions and a timeline to address the locations.
- c) Private driveway placement (visibility, location, etc.) was identified by residents as a transportation issue during the planning process. It is recommended that the town and the county continue to enforce driveway requirements addressing visibility, location, etc.
- d) The speed of motorists on town, county and state public roads was mentioned as a concern of residents on the town survey. It is recommended that the Town Board relay these findings to the County Sheriffs Department and State Patrol and request action be taken to monitor/reduce the speed of travel on roads within the Town of Hamilton.

GOAL 2

Continue cooperation with La Crosse County Highway Department and Wisconsin Department of Transportation on public road projects.

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Continue to maintain a good working relationship with the County Highway Department and meet annually to discuss transportation issues effecting the town and county.
- b) Continue to biannually update the Town of Hamilton Road System on State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) program.
- c) Maintain communications with neighboring municipalities and continually monitor road impacts from potential business or residential expansion in the area.
- d) At the discretion of the Town Board, support state and county plans and programs to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian facilities on public roads and/or designated trails.

GOAL 3

Support State and County programs that provide transportation options for the elderly, disabled, and mobility challenged

GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Transportation options/services for elderly and disabled residents are important. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton work with the county departments

(aging unit, etc.) and neighboring local units of government and support the development of enhanced transportation services to residents in need.

- b) Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to evaluate the need to expand the Park and Ride Facility at the Interstate-90 West Salem exit.
- c) Evaluate the feasibility of expanding the Village of West Salem shared-ride taxi service to residents in the Town of Hamilton.

GOAL 4

Ensure public and private roads are planned, designed, and constructed to adequately serve future growth in Hamilton.

GOAL 4 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) The potential traffic impacts of proposed residential, commercial, or industrial developments on the existing road system were identified in the planning process as important to town residents. It is recommended that the Town Board develop and adopt an ordinance that addresses the impacts of a proposed road resulting from a new development on the capacity and safety of an existing road that it intersects or extends. It would be intended that if a development adds additional burden to the Town Road over the current ADT classification that the developer would be responsible for all the upgrade costs associated with the impacted road segments.
- b) There are numerous private roads in the Town of Hamilton each of which serve residences. It is recommended that the enforcement of private road standards be continued that address the width (minimum 66 foot easement), length, slope and clearance of private roads to ensure adequate emergency and school bus access.
- c) Continue to monitor and work with the Wisconsin DOT on the proposed State Highway 16 four lane expansion project west of West Salem. Evaluate the need for a multiuse path in conjunction with the proposed project.
- d) It is recommended that when the Town reviews proposed developments that the developments be encouraged/required to be designed sensitive to the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit dependent residents.
- e) Review development proposals to ensure public roads provide sufficient access/turn arounds for emergency vehicles, school buses, etc.
- f) When feasible discourage the use of cul de sacs in new developments. Encourage transportation systems that provide multiple ingress/egress points or through streets.
- g) It is recommended that Town of Hamilton develop a policy (at the Town Boards discretion) requiring new developments to extend new or existing public roads or public road right-of-way/public road easement of 66 feet in width to the property line of adjacent landowners when deemed necessary to serve future land uses.

This section is divided between the movement of people and goods, with the movement of people organized by trip type. Within the movement of people, first reviewed is regional travel – the interstate system and state routes, airport, intercity transit, and passenger rail service. This section then examines local transportation opportunities, County and local streets, local transit services, bicycling facilities, and pedestrian facilities.

Movement of Goods

According to the 2018 State Freight Plan, there are six freight-dependent sectors and their composite industries comprised almost 40 percent of Wisconsin's employment and 44 percent of the state's GDP. The six sectors are 1) wholesale and retail, 2) manufacturing, 3) agriculture and forestry, 4) construction, 5) transportation, information, and utilities/energy, and 6) mining. The convergence of highway, rail, and water cargo facilities in La Crosse County provides the opportunity for a fully intermodal terminal for freight distribution. The County's closest intermodal terminals are in Minneapolis/St. Paul and Chicago.

HIGHWAYS

Primary highway freight corridors in Hamilton include: I-90, State Road 16, and State Road 108. SR 16 and I-90 run East-West through Hamilton and provide access to La Crosse and eventually major Midwest population centers. SR 108 connects the Village of West Salem and Hamilton to SR54 and SR 71 to the North.

RAIL FREIGHT

La Crosse County has rail cargo service through three Class I railroad companies, all of which provide direct access to Chicago and connections to eastern points. The Canadian Pacific Railway connects La Crosse to Milwaukee and Minneapolis/St. Paul. This company provides service, or potentially could provide service, to Rockland, Bangor, West Salem, and the north side of La Crosse. The Union Pacific Railroad operates with trackage rights on the Canadian Pacific between Tomah and Winona. The Burlington Northern & Santa Fe operates in the far western part of the County in a north-south orientation and provides service to industries on the south side of La Crosse and Onalaska. The Wisconsin State Rail



Plan 2030 indicates shipments by rail and trucking freight are anticipated to grow through year 2030. Forecasts from the Wisconsin State Rail Plan 2030 are listed below:

- Increase in weight of freight rail commodities by over 16 percent
- Increase in value of freight rail traveling *in* Wisconsin by 18 percent
- Decrease in value of freight rail traveling *from* Wisconsin

The State Rail Plan is being updated and numbers will be updated accordingly.

WATER

Direct water access for waterborne freight is available through both public and private terminals in the City of La Crosse and the Town of Campbell. The Port of La Crosse serves incoming and outgoing barge traffic on the Mississippi River. The port handles nearly 1.3 million metric tons of commodities annually and offers connections to the Upper Midwest and the world, including China, Russia, Spain, South America, Mexico, and other countries. For information regarding the future of Wisconsin Commercial Ports Association (WCPA), refer to the WCPA strategic plan.

AIR CARGO

The La Crosse Municipal Airport serves as an air cargo facility. The airport is not one of the state's six primary air cargo airports, but it does function as a feeder air service. Rather than maintain and operate a fleet of small aircraft, the integrated express carriers' contract for on-demand service with a variety of aircraft operators. The Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030 forecasts for all-cargo aircraft operations at La Crosse Municipal Airport to continue to grow. In 2020, state forecasts predicted that the La Crosse Municipal Airport will have the second highest aircraft operations by commercial air cargo carriers, second to General Mitchell International in Milwaukee, but that the La Crosse Municipal Airport's share of the state's air cargo operations will be less than 12 percent. This prediction held true and is anticipated to grow in the following years.

Movement of People - Regional

HIGHWAYS

Hamilton has easy access to many of the highways that run throughout La Crosse County. Interstate 90 serves long distance, intercity trips to Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota, and areas west, and areas to the east including Madison and Chicago, Illinois. SR16 parallels I-90 through the region. SR 108 provides North-South access to Melrose and eventually Black River Falls and I-94 (via a SR 54 connection) . See the Road Network by Type and Road Network by Jurisdiction Maps for a depiction of the highway and roadway system in Hamilton. The roadways designated as state routes and the interstate are used for intercity travel.

AIR TRANSPORTATION

There are no public airports located in Hamilton. The La Crosse Regional Airport (LSE) is located approximately 6 miles to the west on French Island. The airport is one of nine Wisconsin airports that have commercial air passenger service on a year-round basis. The airport is located on French Island and it serves passenger air travel through connections to regional hubs. The La Crosse Regional Airport is served by American Airlines and Delta Air Lines with three daily non-stop hubs. These include Minneapolis-St. Paul, Chicago, and Detroit. The airlines process nearly 90,000 enplanements and 180,000 total passengers annually. At the airport, the multimodal connection opportunities are to rent a vehicle from four national car rental companies (Avis/Budget, Enterprise, Hertz and National/Alamo), or to use local city bus Route 4 (French Island/Industrial Parks). The Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030 forecasts an increasing number of enplanements. The plan forecasts 109,960 thousand enplanements in 2010 and 122,570 enplanements in 2030. This is a 0.5% increase from 2010 to 2030, the same as the state average over this period.

WATER TRANSPORTATION

Hamilton is not located on a commercial waterway. The nearest water transportation is located at the Port of La Crosse, in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Port of La Crosse serves ingoing and outgoing barge traffic on the Mississippi River. It provides water access for freight through public and private terminals. Cargo primarily shipped by barge in the region include liquid bulk cargo (chemicals, petroleum, etc.) and dry bulk cargo (grain, scrap metal, etc.).

PASSENGER RAIL

Intercity passenger rail is available through Amtrak service in the City of La Crosse. The Amtrak Empire Builder serves La Crosse, with regional connection to Chicago, Milwaukee, Columbus, Portage, Wisconsin Dells, Tomah, Winona, Red Wing, and St. Paul. The Empire Builder also connects to the West Coast (Seattle, WA and Portland, OR). Through a connection in Chicago, the national Amtrak network is available. The passenger rail station is located at St. Andrew and Caledonia Streets (601 St. Andrew Street in the City of La Crosse).

WisDOT, along with Amtrak and eight other Midwestern state DOTs, evaluated the Midwest Regional Rail System, a proposed 3,000-mile, Chicago-based passenger rail network in the Midwest. The regional rail system would provide 6 round trips at peak times between Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison, La Crosse, and St. Paul. Modern trains operating at peak speeds of up to 110-mph could produce travel times competitive with driving or flying. More recently, WisDOT and MNDOT are evaluating the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Project.

The project will add a second daily round-trip passenger train on the corridor with 12 stops along the route. It is estimated that 59% of Wisconsin's population and 61% of Minnesota's population are within 30 miles of a TCMC station or 15 miles from a TCMC connecting shuttle.

BUS

Intercity passenger bus service in the La Crosse area was provided by Greyhound Lines; however, in August 2004, Greyhound discontinued service to the La Crosse area as part of its route restructuring. Intercity bus transportation is now provided by Jefferson Lines, a connecting carrier to Greyhound Bus Lines. Jefferson Lines runs daily scheduled bus service that connects to Greyhound's national service in Madison and Minneapolis/St. Paul. The intercity bus terminal is located at 601 St. Andrew Street in the City of La Crosse.

Movement of People – Local

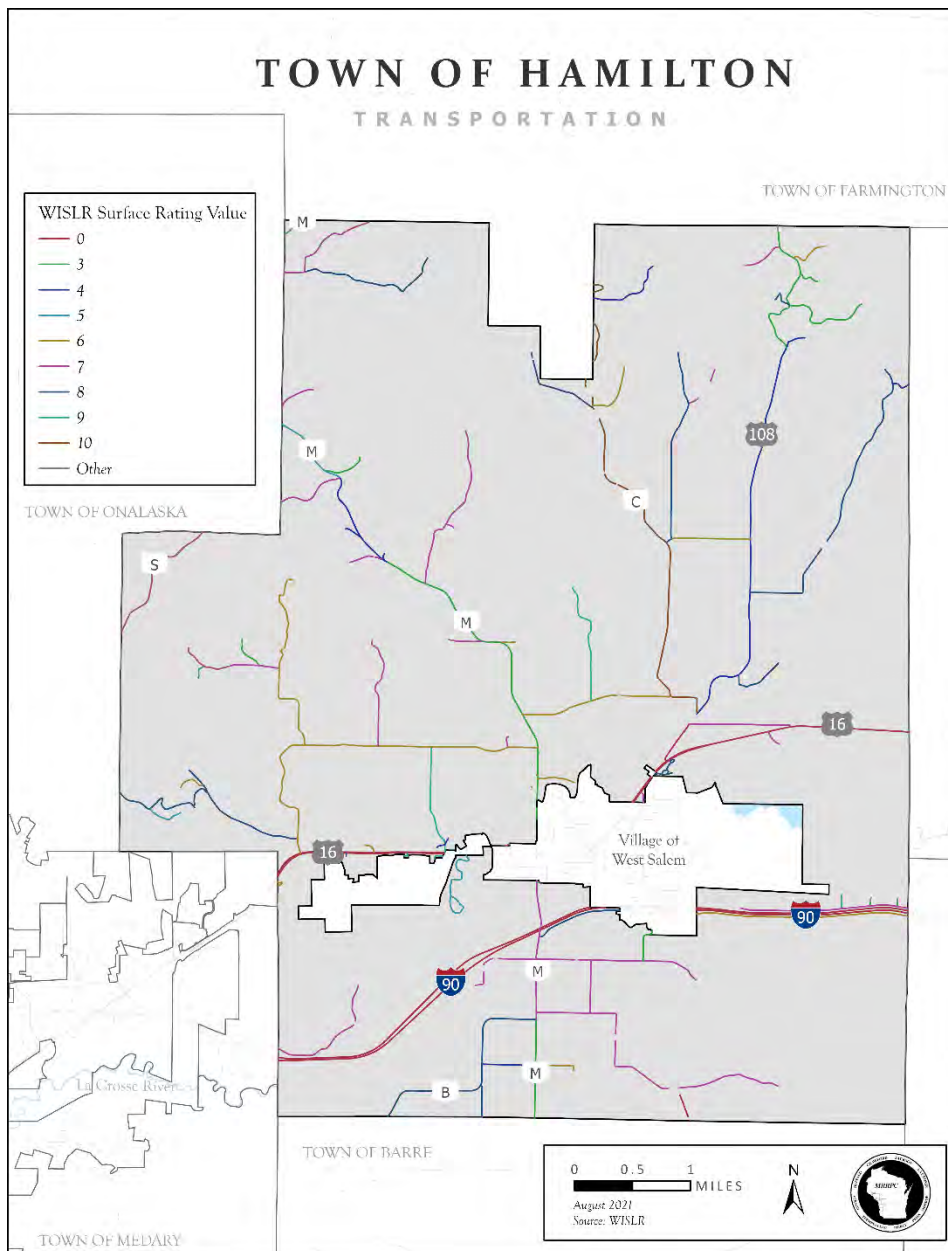
Hamilton participates in the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) program. The WISLR program maintains a complete listing of public roads in Hamilton by jurisdiction, classification, and number of miles.

Public roads are classified as arterial, collector and local based on functionality. Arterials provide intra-community links and interconnect urban arterial systems and connections to rural collectors. Collector roads provide traffic circulation in residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas. Collectors also focus traffic from local roads onto the arterial system. Local roads provide the lowest level of mobility and provide direct access to collectors and arterials. FIGURE 4 illustrates the roadway system in Hamilton, along with pavement ratings.



Within Hamilton there are 70.65 miles of public road that are under the jurisdiction of either La Crosse County or Hamilton. Hamilton maintains 48.61 miles of public road, which are all classified as local roads. La Crosse County has 22.04 miles of public road in Hamilton of which 1.77 miles are classified as arterial roads, 16.73 miles are classified as collector roads and 3.54 miles is classified as local roads.

FIGURE 4. HAMILTON ROADWAYS AND SURFACE RATING





LOCAL ROADWAY NETWORK

The street network shapes access and circulation through the Town. Public streets in the area are classified by their primary function, as described below:

- Principal Arterials – Serve longer intra-urban trips and traffic traveling through urban areas. They carry high traffic volumes and provide links to major activity centers.
- Minor Arterials – Provide intra-community continuity and service to trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials. The minor arterial system interconnects with the urban arterial system and provides system connections to the rural collectors.
- Collectors – Provide both land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. These facilities collect traffic from local streets in residential neighborhoods and channel it onto the arterial system. In the central business district, and in other areas of like development and traffic density, the collector system may include the street grid which forms the basic unit of traffic circulation.
- Local Streets – Local streets primarily provide direct access to adjacent land and access to higher order systems. Local streets offer the lowest level of mobility and through traffic movement on this system is usually discouraged.

TRAFFIC COUNTS

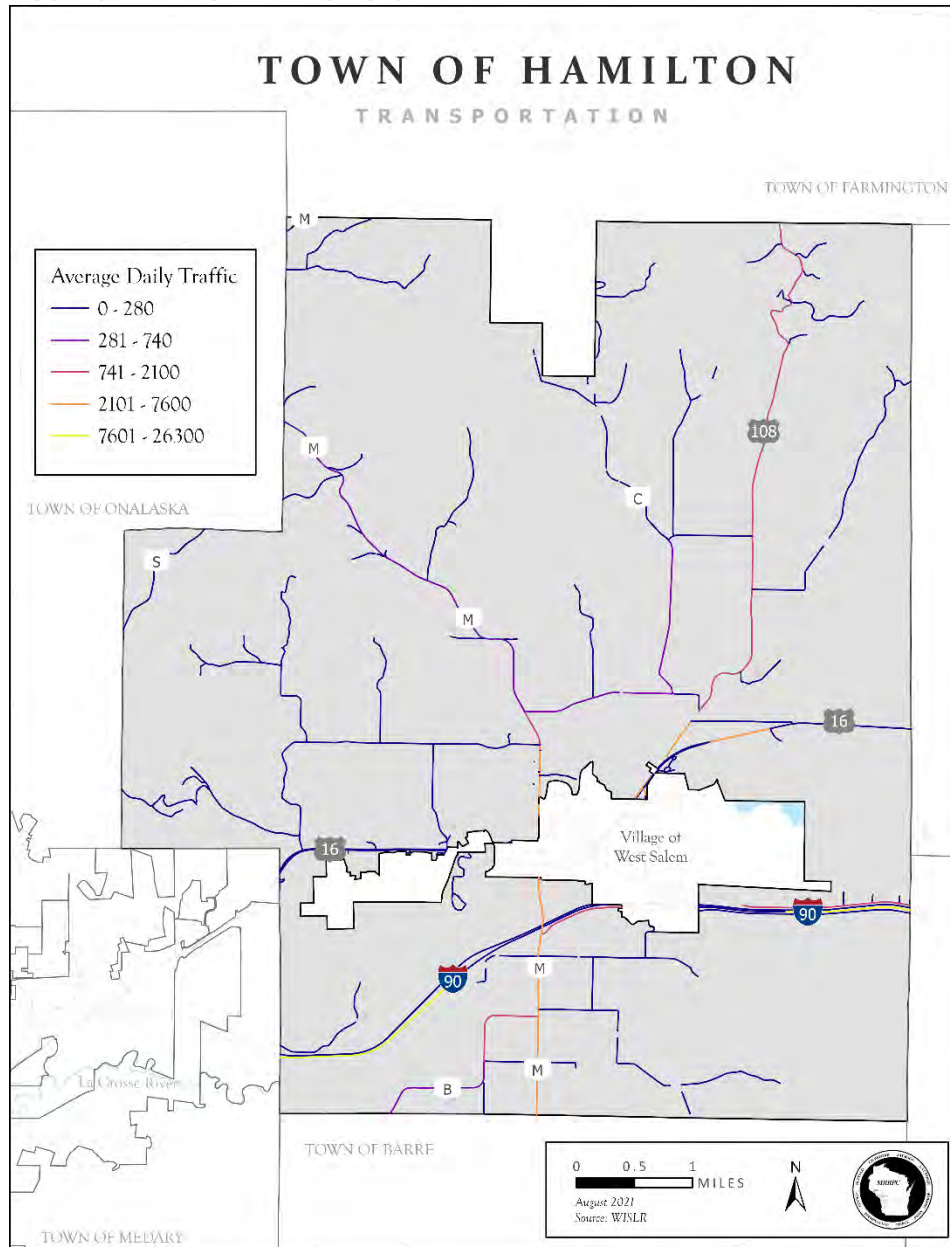
Limited traffic counts are available for Hamilton. TABLE 12 illustrates the traffic counts for the years of 1990, 1996 and 2002 on Interstate 90, State Highways 16 and 108, and County Road C and M. As the traffic counts indicate, traffic on the roads serving Hamilton have increased over the years. In particular traffic on County Road M (north and south of Highway 16) in the 12-year span increased by more than 147%. FIGURE 5 shows additional traffic volumes throughout the township.

TABLE 12. TRAFFIC COUNT PROFILE

Location	2005	2011	2014	% Chng.
County M South of Interstate 90	2,310	3,700	5,700	147%
County M North of State Hwy. 16	1,630	3,100	4,200	158%
Interstate 90 East of West Salem	13,310	19,400	20,900	57%
Interstate 90 West of West Salem	14,040	20,000	22,900	63%
State Hwy. 108 North of County C	1900	2200	1900	44%
STH 16 BTWN STH 108 & OLD 16	1,390	1,460	1,800	29%
State Hwy. 16 at West Town Line	8,120	8,600	12,300	51%



FIGURE 5. HAMILTON TRAFFIC VOLUME



Interstate Highway

Interstate 90 is a Freeway Arterial regionally linking Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison, La Crosse, and southern Minnesota. The only access point to the Interstate between the ramp at State Highway 16 on the east edge of Onalaska, and at Bangor, is interchange with County C, which lies on the south corporate limits of West Salem. Total interstate mileage in Hamilton, excluding the 0.65 mile in the Village of West Salem is 2.25 miles on the east side of West Salem, and 6.45 miles on the west. The design of Interstate 90 is a typical Midwest Interstate highway design; two, two lane, 24 foot wide concrete pavement strips, one way in each direction separated by a 60 foot vegetative median

with 6 foot (4 foot paved) on the left, or inside lane, and 10 to 13 foot shoulders on the right, with 7 to 12 feet paved.

State Highway 16

State Highway 16, an arterial highway that runs east-west through the Town and is the most significant roadway that directly serves properties in the Town. Within Hamilton, State Highway 16 has 2.72 miles west of the Village limits and 2.88 miles east of the limits. There is one mile of the Highway within the Village.

This road was formerly designated with a U.S. route number, but as the Interstate Highway System became the principal carrier of interstate motor vehicle traffic in this corridor the Federal Highway Administration and the various states agreed to number the highway as a state road. The road still receives federal project funding and links with similar roads in Minnesota and across the upper Midwest. Highway 16, numbered as a state highway, presently stretches from just west of Milwaukee, to near Austin, Minnesota. Many segments of the previous federally numbered route in Minnesota and South Dakota have now been converted to county jurisdiction.



State Highway 108

State Highway 108 is classified as a collector highway. This highway's total length as a marked state road is to provide a north-south connection between the Village of Melrose in Jackson County and a connection with State Highway 16 just north of the Village of West Salem. The rugged topography of the northern part of the Town causes State Highway 108 to pass in and out of the Town three times, leaving a total of about 5 miles in the Town, with another 10 miles in the La Crosse County Town of Farmington, and 2.8 miles in Jackson County. State Highway 108 throughout its length in the Town has a 22 foot wide, two lane pavement, with 1 or 2 foot gravel shoulders. In 2015, La Crosse County and WisDOT reached an agreement to "swap" State Highway 108 and County Road C (described below).

COUNTY HIGHWAYS

County B

County B is classified as a collector road that essentially parallels State Highway 16 and Interstate 90. It links Sparta with Rockland, Bangor, West Salem, and La Crosse. This road enters the Town at the east boundary and there is a 2.02-mile segment between that entry point and the Village of West Salem eastern corporate limit. The marked county highway follows Village streets and reenters the Town at the south Village limits where it is a common boundary for 0.37 miles. It then follows in a north-south orientation concurrent with County M for about 1/2 mile where it is joined by County C which terminates at that point. After another 0.79 miles of concurrency with County M, B turns to a series of N-S and E W orientations for another 2.15 miles, to leave the Town at its south boundary.

County C

County C is a collector road that travels north-south more or less parallel to State Highway 108, intersecting with it at the south end just north of STH 16 and again intersecting it, and ending, at Burr Oak one mile south of the north County line in the Town of Farmington. Near its south end it mostly runs concurrent with State Highways 108 and 16 and passes on Village streets through West Salem. This road primarily serves the northeast part of the Town, having 5.32 miles between the north Town boundary and the point of concurrency with State Highways 108 and 16, a short 0.15 mile segment between State Highway 16 and the Village limit, and a 0.9 mile of length within the Town south of, and parallel with, Interstate 90 before it terminates at County Roads B & M.

County M

County M is a collector road which winds its way through much of La Crosse County in a northerly-southerly orientation, from County Y near the north border in Town of Holland to U.S. Highways 14/ 61 in Town of Shelby. There is a segment of 0.18 miles that crosses the extreme northwest corner of Hamilton as it passes between the Towns of Onalaska

and Farmington. It again enters Hamilton from the Town of Onalaska on the west with 5.18 miles distributed on six end to end segments from Town's west border to State Highway 16. South of State Highway 16, County M runs concurrent with County B for 1.31 miles then has an independent right-of-way for 1.14 miles.

Within the Town, County M travels in a northwesterly-south direction, connecting the Village of West Salem and Barre Mills in the adjoining township.

County S

County S is classified functionally as a local road. It passes across the northwest corner of the Town entering/exiting into the Town of Onalaska at both ends. It reenters Hamilton on the east for 0.63 mile where it terminates at an intersection with County M. County S originates/terminates on the west in the northern part of the City of Onalaska.

Other County Roads

Two other County Roads in the Town are BM and NP which serve as access and internal park roads for Veterans Memorial and Swarthout Neshonoc Lake County Parks, respectively.

Rustic Road 31

Located in the Village of West Salem and Hamilton is Rustic Road 31. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has designated certain roads throughout the state as Rustic Roads. Rustic Roads are primarily scenic, lightly traveled rural roads. Rustic Road 31 is 2.6 miles in length and travels on several village streets to County Road C, north to State Highway 16, then loops around Swarthout Lakeside Park, back to State Highway 16. The rustic road takes travelers past historic and recreational sites such as Gullickson Octagon House, the Hamlin Garland Homestead, and Swarthout Lakeside Park



Public Transportation and Transit

While Hamilton has no formal public transportation services, there are two services located in La Crosse County, one is the La Crosse Municipal Transit and the other is the Onalaska/Holmen Public Transit Taxi.

The La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility (MTU), operated by the City of La Crosse, provides the only standard mass transit service in the County. Ten bus routes serve City of La Crosse, some surrounding townships, with a connection to the City of La Crescent.

Paratransit

Paratransit, in its broadest sense, includes all modes of “public” or “mass” passenger transportation systems other than privately driven automobiles or regularly scheduled bus/train service. La Crosse County Department of Aging contracts with a private operator to provide “mini-bus” service to all residents of La Crosse County age 60 or over, or 18 and over who are self-defined disabled, or otherwise unable to use conventional mass transit if it is available.

On demand service for Hamilton?

To meet the special needs of persons with disabilities and to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, MTU operates lift-equipped buses on its regular fixed route system. MTU also provides complementary Paratransit Service. Disabled persons who, by reason of their disability cannot get to a bus stop from their home, from the bus stop to their destination, or who require more assistance in using transit service than that provided by a driver operating a lift-equipped MTU bus, may qualify for ADA Paratransit Service.

Pedestrian/Bike Trails

There are three County parks located in Hamilton in which there are no designated trails but there is plenty of open space for walking and hiking. A small portion of the 3,109-acre Coulee Experimental Forest is located in the southeast area of Hamilton and provides walking and hiking trails. The La Crosse River State Bicycle Trail traverses Hamilton for approximately 6.5 miles. The trail is 21.5 miles in total length connecting to the Great River State Trail and the Sparta-Elroy State Trail. In addition, over 45 miles of low volume hard surface local roads are in Hamilton. These local roads provide residents and tourists with biking and walking opportunities.

Walking

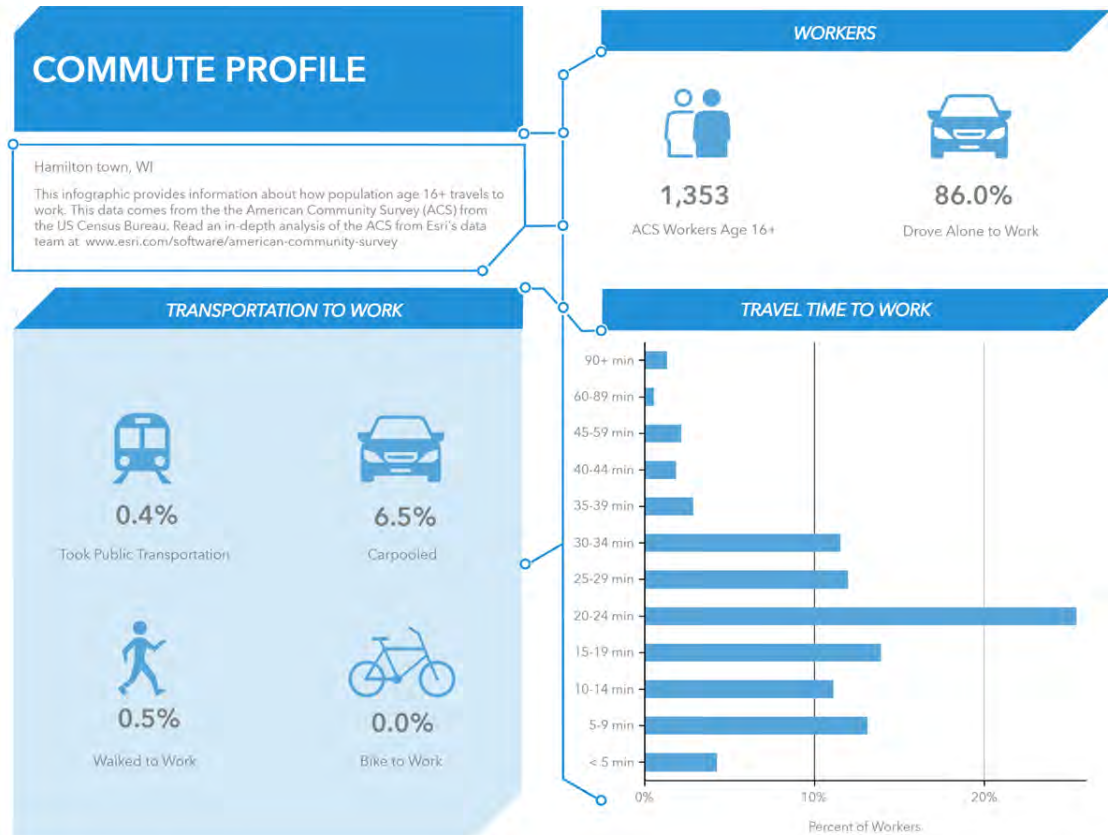
Pedestrian facilities are not mapped by most local governments in La Crosse County, including the Hamilton. However, the 2040 Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan makes the following generalizations about the pedestrian network:

- For the most part, the roadways in suburban and urban-fringe areas of the planning area are constructed with curb and gutter; yet, these roads generally lack sidewalks, and have a narrow, 3-ft gutter pan and/or a wide curb lane within which a pedestrian might travel (not recommended). The lack of sidewalks forces pedestrians to walk in the roadway, increasing the likelihood of pedestrian/motor vehicle crashes.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

86% of workers in Hamilton drive alone to work as shown in FIGURE 6, the majority of residents have a commute time between 20 and 24 minutes, which is higher than the surrounding Towns, Village and the County as a whole. The second most common way to travel to work was by carpool, 6.5% of workers traveled in this fashion.

FIGURE 6. TOWN OF HAMILTON COMMUTE PROFILE



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2014-2018.

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STATE AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

The following transportation plans were reviewed as part of Hamilton planning process. The plans were reviewed to insure consistency with other governing jurisdictions regarding the future transportation improvements.

Connect 2050: WisDOT Statewide Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Wisconsin is currently updating its statewide, long-range transportation policy plan, which is scheduled to be completed in Fall 2021. WisDOT periodically updates its statewide, long-range, multimodal plan. Connect 2050 sets a fresh vision and updates goals based on issues, trends, and public comments. The plan will guide WisDOT's decision-making about changes to and investments in our statewide system for the next roughly 30 years. The plan addresses all types of transportation and modal plans – from roads to ports to sidewalks – across the entire state.

Link: <https://connect2050.wisconsin.gov/>

Wisconsin State Freight Plan – March 2018

Enhancing freight mobility is a top priority for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). The State Freight Plan (SFP) provides a vision for multimodal freight transportation and positions the state to remain competitive in the global marketplace. The SFP was approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation on March 19, 2018.

Key elements of the State Freight Plan:

- Links transportation investments to economic development activities
- Places Wisconsin within a national and global context
- Engages and reflects the interests of a wide array of freight stakeholders
- Guides implementation – from planning to project development to programming
- Provides performance measures and management

Link: <https://wisconsin.gov/Pages/projects/sfp/default.aspx>

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050 – In Progress (Scheduled January 2022)

The Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050 will include policies for railroad crossings, freight rail, Wisconsin's state-owned rail system, long distance passenger rail, intercity rail, and commuter rail. The plan will specifically discuss rail data trends, existing and possible future service levels, rail system conditions, and commodity freight movements. Future rail-related improvements or plans will be outlined in a user-friendly format.

WisDOT will consider environmental issues throughout the planning process. A System-plan Environmental Evaluation will be conducted if major or substantial changes to WisDOT's policies or resources would result from the plan's implementation.

The plan will include an environmental justice (EJ) analysis. The EJ analysis will present the plan's potential impacts on racial minority populations, low-income populations, persons age 65 and older and households with no vehicles. The analysis in the plan is general and offers a starting point for more specific analysis that will be done when any project is implemented.

Link: <https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/multimodal/railplan/default.aspx>

Wisconsin DOT Four Year Highway Improvement Program

The plan details all road construction programs to be constructed in the state between 2021 and 2024. A review of the plan indicates that several projects are scheduled on State and Federal Highways in Hamilton. The following TABLE 13 illustrates the projects scheduled for construction.

TABLE 13. HAMILTON STATE AND FEDERAL HIGHWAY PROJECTS

Highway	Project ID	Let Year	Description
16	Highway 16 Pavement Rehabilitation # 75700564	2021	Overlay pavement between West Salem and Sparta
16	Highway 16 at County M intersection improvements 75700570	2024	Safety and turn lane improvements at intersection
16	Vet's park bike-ped bridge 59910874	2022	Construct bike-ped bridge – Vet's Park
I-90	I-90 Pavement Rehabilitation 10710706	n/a	Rehabilitate 6.62 miles of pavement between West Salem and Onalaska
County C	Bridge Rehabilitation 70480080	2021	Rehabilitate County C bridge above CPRR trackage
County M	Bridge Replacement 73230071	2023	Replace County M (over La Crosse River) bridge North of Hwy 16

Link:

https://wisdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f9096bc93a1a4ff38b3c9fad0c77f058&showLayers=STIP_4YR

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 – December 1998

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's "Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020" recommends strategies and actions for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and local governments to take to enhance biking in the State of Wisconsin. The plan explores ways to increase ridership and create more biking trail opportunities. The plan does not specify any specific facility improvements within Hamilton.

The Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 – March 2002

“The Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020”, developed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation attempts to improve pedestrian travel opportunities in conjunction with public roads. The plan details ways how local governments can encourage pedestrian travel in road planning. There are not specific recommendations in the plan for Hamilton.

REGIONAL OR COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Beyond Coulee Vision 2040

The southern half of Hamilton is in the La Crosse and La Crescent Metropolitan Planning Area (MPO). The MPO is required to prepare a 20-year Transportation Plan. In 2021 the MPO updated its 20-year Transportation Plan which includes long range and short range strategies and actions that lead to an integrated inter modal transportation system for the planning area. The plan also identifies anticipated projects for the planning area. The plan did not identify any anticipated projects in Hamilton.

WDOT I-90 Corridor Facilities Study

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation over the last two years has conducted a study to evaluate the roadside facilities along Interstate-90 between Tomah and La Crosse. Located within Hamilton is the West Salem safety and weight enforcement facility (truck weigh station). The study calls for the upgrade of the facility to include weigh-in-motion capability, modern building/inspection facilities and additional truck parking. The facility is tentatively scheduled for reconstruction in 2012.

Programs for Local Government

WisDOT administers a variety of state and federal programs, including:

- Airport Improvement Program (AIP)
- Connecting Highway Aids
- County Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance
- Federal Discretionary Capital Assistance
- Freight Rail Infrastructure Improvement Program (FRIIP)
- Freight Rail Preservation Program (FRPP)
- General Transportation Aids (GTA)
- Highways and Bridges Assistance
- Local Bridge Improvement Assistance
- Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP)
- Local Transportation Enhancements (TE)
- Railroad Crossing Improvements
- Rural and Small Urban Public Transportation Assistance
- Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP)
- Rustic Roads Program
- Surface Transportation Discretionary Program (STP-D)
- Surface Transportation Program – Rural (STP-R) & Urban (STP-U)
- Traffic Signing and Marking Enhancement Grants Program
- Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)

LA CROSSE AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE (MPO)

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the La Crosse, WI-MN urbanized area, the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) is required to develop a transportation plan with a 20-year-or-more planning horizon that includes "both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods." Planned goals and projects can be found in the LAPC 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program and Beyond Coulee Vision 2040.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below are the Comprehensive Planning Goals described in State Statute that are related to the Transportation Element. Following the goals is a discussion how they were addressed during the planning process.

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

Both goals were addressed in the recommendations of the Transportation Element. The plan recommends that proposed developments be encouraged/required to be designed sensitive to the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit dependent residents. The plan also recommends that the Hamilton work with the county departments (aging unit, etc.) and neighboring local units of government and support the development of enhanced transportation services to residents in need.

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4) UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

This element includes goals, objectives, and actions to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in Hamilton. Major themes/issues that emerged from the Town Survey relating to utilities and public facilities include:

GOAL 1

Strive to maintain Hamilton's existing public services (road maintenance, recycling center, etc).

GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) During the planning process residents indicated that they were satisfied with the existing level of public services provided by Hamilton. The plan recommends that the Town Board strive to maintain the existing level of services over the planning period within the constraints of the budget.
- b) Develop or refine ordinances/policies to make sure future development projects pay for additional burdens placed on public facilities because of a new development. Methods to consider ensuring expenses are covered include; development review fees, special assessments, transportation impact fees, etc.
- c) Encourage residents to properly maintain private on-site sewer systems and private wells to protect the environment and future ground water supplies.

GOAL 2

Monitor the changing needs of Hamilton and provide community facilities as needed

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Explore cooperative public utility agreements with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska. This may include the expansion of public sewer and water systems into Hamilton.
- b) Periodically evaluate the space needs of the Town Shop and recycle/garbage center as the town and demand grows.
- c) Evaluate alternative energy sources and determine their suitability in Hamilton.
- d) It is recommended that when the Comprehensive Plan is updated that communication with residents is facilitated to determine if the utility and community facility needs of residents are continuing to be met. This communication can be in the form of a survey or public meeting(s).
- e) Monitor and manage the growth of Hamilton to ensure the new development does not affect the ability of the Town to provide community services.
- f) Promote Internet with high-speed access to all areas of the Town to benefit home businesses, home occupations, and support remote worker needs.
- g) Do not extend public facilities into wetlands, steep slopes, etc. that would require significant future maintenance costs.

GOAL 3

Continue to explore the necessity and feasibility of community wells and sanitary districts for new development.

GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Work with the Maple Grove Sanitary District to evaluate the possibility of the expanding or increasing the utilization of the sanitary district to serve additional development in Hamilton.
- b) Evaluate the construction and use of community wells in reviewing proposals for new developments.

Hamilton has a variety of community facilities to serve the needs of its residents. The following description of utilities and community facilities was gathered from interviewing Town officials and researching past studies.

Sanitary Waste and Water Supply

Hamilton is unincorporated and all businesses and almost all residences are served by private on-site wastewater treatment systems. Private on-site wastewater treatment systems State standards (Wisconsin Administrative Code: COMM 83) are enforced by the La Crosse County Zoning Office in Hamilton. Development in Hamilton is dependent upon private onsite wastewater treatment systems. Most land and building sites in the town can utilize a conventional onsite wastewater treatment system.

One sanitary district was established in Hamilton in the early 1970's to serve the Maple Grove Estates Sanitary District and residences adjacent to the golf course complex. The sanitary district serves approximately 10 condominiums, 39 residential lots and one commercial business, Maple Grove Venue (MGV). This is a private system paid for by fees paid by condominium owners and is currently supervised by Hamilton. The district has an annual budget of between \$42,000 and \$52,000 per year.

The Village of West Salem, which lies within Hamilton, has updated its wastewater treatment facility in the last several years. The facility is currently operating at approximately 50% of its capacity and has a system population capacity of 9,476.

Water supply to residents and businesses in Hamilton is provided by private wells. Some shared wells or community wells are in the Town and serve residential subdivisions (Innsbruck, Raymer, etc.). Hamilton provides no public water service.

Solid Waste/Recycling

Hamilton provides a collection site for residents to bring their solid waste for pickup by a contractor. Solid waste can be dropped off at the town buildings on Tuesdays or Saturdays. Yard waste and large items can also be brought to the collection center for disposal. There is no active sanitary landfill in Hamilton.

Hamilton maintains a recycling center. Recyclable materials can be dropped off at Hamilton recycling center on Tuesdays and Saturdays. The general trash and recycling drop-off is available to all residents of the Town with the cost of operation being incorporated into the general property tax structure.

Storm Water Management

Hamilton is in two major watersheds. The northern quarter of the town is in the Black River Basin while the remaining area of the town to the south is located in the La Crosse River

Basin. The major responsibility of Hamilton for the management of storm water involves controlling runoff from the public roadways. This accomplished by keeping culverts, bridges, and road ditches free of debris.

The Town Hall/shop property is subject to storm water runoff management requirements of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (specifically road salt storage). Hamilton is required to keep road salt in storage structure.

Town Government Structure

Hamilton Town Board consists of three elected members: a chairman and two supervisors. Hamilton has an appointed Town Clerk and an appointed Town Treasurer by the elected board. The Town has a Plan Commission that consists of 5 appointed members.

Town Facilities

Hamilton facilities are all located at N5105 N Leonard St., West Salem, Wisconsin, and is evaluating future town hall and shop facilities at a different location. The Town maintains a Town Hall and a Town Shop that is one structure. In 2021 residents voted for a levy adjustment to provide financing for a new town facility, including administration, town shop, recycling, salt shed, and storage facilities. The new location will be near the intersection of State Highway 108 and State Highway 16, on township land.

The town facilities are utilized for town meetings, elections, and community events. The town maintains seven voting booths at the Town Hall as well as a recycling center. The following is a list of the major equipment owned by the town:

- Two Tractor (mower)
- One Backhoe
- One Grader
- One Loader
- Three Trucks
- One Pick Up Truck



The town employs two full time town employees (road crew) and three part time employees. One part time employee assists the road crew, and two part time employees operate the recycling center. Hamilton contracts with private companies for seal coating and crack repair of Town Roads.

Fire Protection, Police Protection and Emergency Management

Hamilton does not have a fire department, but fire protection is provided by a joint fire department consisting of the local governments of the Village of West Salem, Town of Barre, and Hamilton. The joint department has mutual aid agreements with surrounding fire departments. This is an excellent example of intergovernmental cooperation to provide needed services.

Hamilton does not have a police department. The La Crosse County Sheriffs Department provides law enforcement to the town. La Crosse County Emergency Government Office is responsible for HAZMAT planning for La Crosse County.

Emergency Medical Services

Tri-State Ambulance Service based out of La Crosse, WI provides emergency medical services for Town residents. First responders are provided through the cooperation of the Village of West Salem, Town of Barre, and Hamilton.

The La Crosse County 911 Emergency Dispatch Center provides 24-hour emergency telephone service to everyone in La Crosse County. The system uses the enhanced 911 system which provides emergency communications to all providers allowing quick and accurate emergency assistance.

Health Care and Day Care Facilities

There are no health care facilities located in Hamilton. Two major medical hospitals and numerous clinics in the City of La Crosse and Onalaska provide healthcare for Town of Hamilton residents. Numerous county licensed private daycare facilities are available for residents in Hamilton and neighboring jurisdictions.

Educational Facilities

Hamilton is serviced by five school districts. The school districts of West Salem, Onalaska, Holmen, Melrose-Mindoro and Bangor serve the residents of the Town. Most Hamilton

residences are in the West Salem School District with just a small portion of students attending school in the other four districts.

The West Salem district has recently constructed updated facilities enable to meet the districts future needs.

Hamilton is also served by two private schools. Coulee Region Christian and Christ St. Johns are in the Village of West Salem.

Post-secondary education opportunities are available in La

Crosse County for Hamilton residents, which include the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, Western Technical College, and Viterbo University.



Libraries

There are no public libraries located in Hamilton, but The Hazel Brown Leicht Memorial Library is in the Village of West Salem and serves Town of Hamilton residents. The 7,500 square foot facility was opened in 2000 and in addition to library materials provides space for community meetings and events.



Parks and Recreation Facilities

Numerous public recreational resources are available in Hamilton. There are three county operated public parks in the Town, which offer recreational opportunities. A description of the recreational opportunities is discussed in the Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources section of this report.

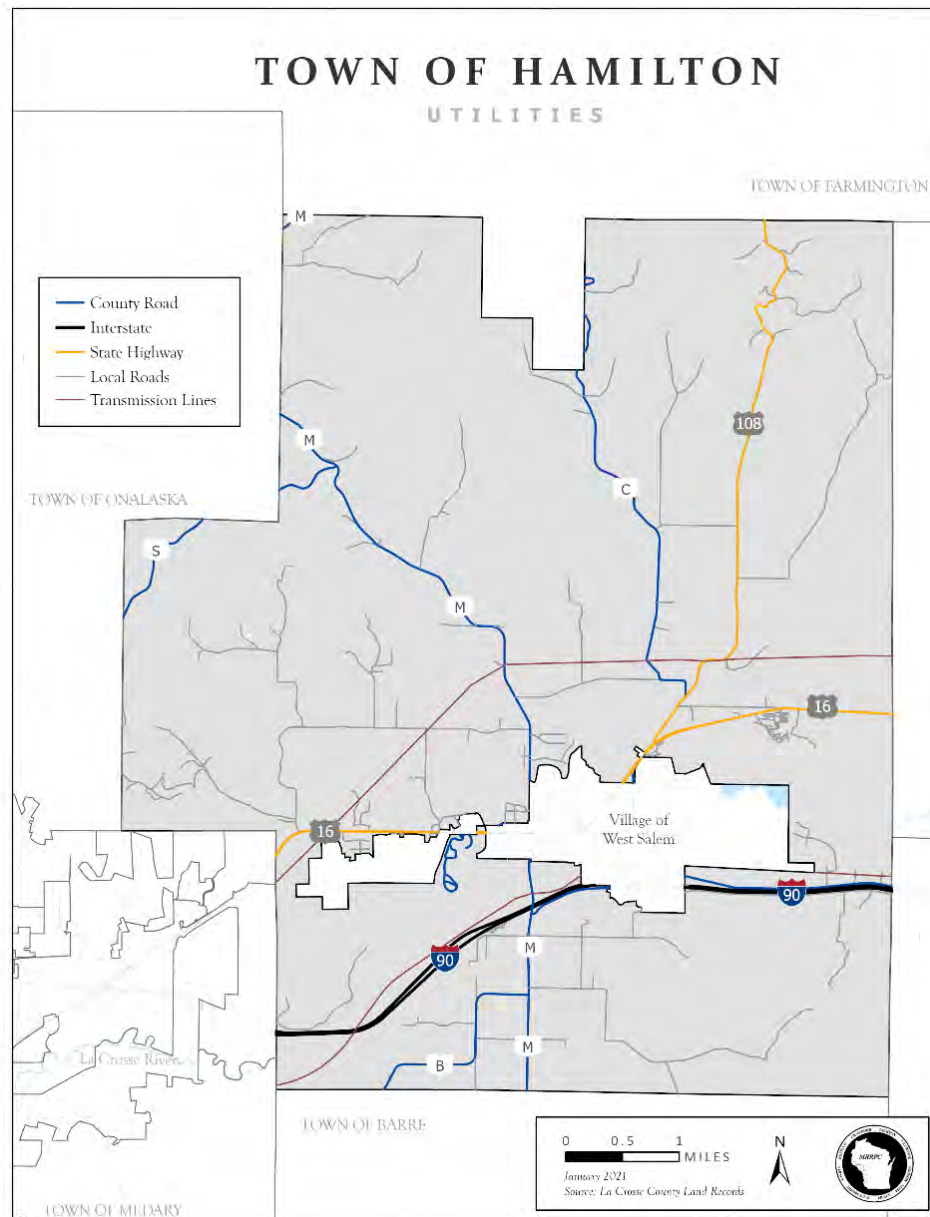
Churches and Cemeteries

There is one cemetery located in Hamilton. The Neshonoc Cemetery is located north of the Village of West Salem on Hwy. 108. There are no churches located within Hamilton.

Electricity/Telephone and Cable/Internet Services

North American Hydro operates the power plant that is constructed on the La Crosse River. The facility generates a minimal amount of electricity from the dam on the La Crosse River. Most of the electricity for town residences is provided by Xcel Energy. Telephone and internet/cable service to residents is provided by Charter or CenturyTel. FIGURE 7 displays transmission lines in Hamilton.

FIGURE 7. HAMILTON UTILITIES



Natural Gas

Natural gas is provided to the town by WE Eenergies. Northern Natural Gas has an 8" natural gas distribution line that goes through Hamilton. The line primarily travels at an east-west direction throughout the Town and is a major natural gas supplier for the region.

Communication Towers

There are nine communication towers located in Hamilton. La Crosse County has an ordinance that regulates height and location of communication towers. The ordinance details a public process that must be followed by parties interested in constructing a communication tower. The ordinance is in effect in Hamilton.

Population and development projections developed during the planning process indicate that Hamilton will experience growth throughout the planning period. Based on the projections the community facilities described will not have to be expanded. The plan will be reviewed at a minimum every 10 years, so if projections utilized in the planning process prove to be inaccurate modifications to the plan and community facilities will be addressed in future revisions.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below is the Comprehensive Planning Goal described in State Statute that is related to the Utilities and Community Facilities Element. Following the goal is a discussion how it was addressed during the planning process.

- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

This element discusses the methods in which adequate infrastructure and public services will be provided and maintained. Provision of the services will be monitored by Hamilton and input from residents will be requested as plan updates are completed. The Land Use Element addresses the locations designated for future residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

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5) AGRICULTURE, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCE ELEMENT

This element includes an analysis of existing agricultural, natural, and cultural resources in and around Hamilton. The chapter presents goals, objectives and policies for the conservation and promotion of effective management of agricultural, natural, and cultural resources in the Town.

GOAL 1

Preserve productive agricultural land to the extent possible.

GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Consistent with the Land Use Element it is recommended that development be minimized on land defined as agricultural. Agricultural land is a common term but depending on the user has a wide range of definitions. In an attempt to clarify the term in the context of the comprehensive plan agricultural land is defined as soils designated as Class I, II, III on Hamilton Soils Map (Map 5).
- b) Support efforts of the County to update the County's Farmland Preservation Plan as the plan keeps property owners eligible for property tax relief.
- c) As discussed in the Land Use Element monitor the county's efforts in creating a voluntary countywide purchase of development rights (PDR) program to preserve farmland.

GOAL 2

Attempt to preserve slopes, bluffslands, and forested lands in Hamilton.

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Promotion of Forest Best Management Practices (BMP'S)
 - Woodlots and forested slopes enhance the town's natural beauty and provide excellent habitat for wildlife. In addition, the hardwood forests support the local economy by providing valuable forest products. The Hamilton Comprehensive Plan recommends that landowners utilize Forest Best Management Practices in maintaining the town's forests and woodlots. Forest BMP's will enhance woodlots and forested lands and ensure they remain a valuable natural resource. BMP's will also reduce erosion on the town's forested hillsides.
- b) Support County Parks in the Town
 - Three county parks are operated and maintained by La Crosse County in Hamilton. Hamilton recognizes the parks as important sources for outdoor recreation and stimulate the local tourism industry. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that the town continue to work cooperatively with the county and support the County Parks located in the Hamilton.
- c) As stated in the Land Use Element it is recommended that development (building/driveway construction) be prohibited on slopes greater than 30% to preserve bluffslands and minimize soil erosion. Hamilton supports limiting development on slopes between 20%-30%. It is recommended that developments (building/driveway construction) requested on slopes between 20%-30% be required to receive a conditional use/special exception permit that will address erosion control, emergency access, and any additional site conditions deemed applicable by the reviewing bodies. Developments (building/driveway

construction) on slopes less than 20% would be considered permitted and would only require standard building/zoning permits.

- d) Work with local property owners on the preservation of the unique American Chestnut Forest located in Hamilton.

GOAL 3

Continue to support agricultural conservation practices and programs in Hamilton.

GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) At the discretion of Hamilton support Federal, State and County agricultural conservation programs.
- b) Promote the use of Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP'S) by landowners and agricultural producers in Hamilton.

GOAL 4

Attempt to preserve and enhance the environmental quality of Hamilton – water quality, air quality, soils, etc.

GOAL 4 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) It is recommended that development continue to be prohibited in wetland/flood plain areas by the continued enforcement of existing ordinances.
- b) It is recommended that development be avoided on lands that are of cultural, religious, or historical significance. This can be achieved by reviewing State Historical Society databases pertaining to historic structures and sites prior to approving development proposals.
- c) Work cooperatively with the Neshonoc Lake District in efforts to maintain the lake as a valuable recreational and natural resource for Hamilton.
- d) Support the County's implementation of the La Crosse County Land and Water Resource Plan.
- e) Support the County's efforts to monitor urban/rural wells and irrigation systems to ensure ground water levels and quality are not jeopardized.

Agricultural Lands

Agriculture is a predominant land use in the Hamilton and is of vital importance to the lifestyle enjoyed by the town's residents. Historically, agriculture has played a key role in the development of Hamilton and La Crosse County. The following excerpt from the La Crosse County, Farmland Preservation Plan, 1980 describes the agricultural history of La Crosse County.

"The county's economic base began with fur trading, but that moved west with the Indians. Lumbering was a significant industry until the 1900's. Agriculture in the valleys was always important. A farm report furnished by the County Clerk in 1881 shows a tabular statement of the acreage devoted to wheat, corn, oats, barley, rye, potatoes, apples, hops, tobacco, grass, and timber. Also included were the number of milk cows. It goes on to explain that ... a larger acreage has been sown to all types of grains except wheat, which has given place to corn, oats and barley. The fact that 10,000 acres less of wheat have been sowed, shows that a proper attention is being given to other crops mentioned and that stock raising is becoming a more profitable pursuit. The number of acres in grains, hops, cultivated grasses, potatoes, roots, apples, and

tobacco in 1880 was 90,591. At the present time there are about 112,683 acres in cropland including acreage for corn, soybeans, oats, alfalfa, hay fruits and vegetables, and tobacco."

TABLE 14 and TABLE 15 show property trends for Hamilton in the last several years, across property classes. Notable trends for Hamilton indicate that in the last ten years:

- Real property value has increased 36%
 - Statewide increase was approximately 17%
- Real property acreage has decreased 4.7%
- Agricultural acreage has decreased by about 2,000 acres.
- Residential acreage has increased by 250 acres and has gained nearly \$70 million in total value.
- Undeveloped acreage (500 acres) and value (\$364,000) have increased substantially.

TABLE 14. ACRES BY PROPERTY CLASS

Property Class	2010	2020
(All)	26,748	25,485
Agricultural	15,865	13,692
Agricultural Forest	3,973	5,002
Commercial	324	351
Forest	3,762	2,965
Manufacturing	114	76
Other	309	264
Residential	1,585	1,833
Undeveloped	816	1,302

TABLE 15. EQUALIZED VALUE, BY PROPERTY CLASS

Property Class	2000	2010	2020
(All)	105,519,900	208,313,900	284,055,400
Residential	67,141,800	155,837,200	224,114,200
Other	12,850,700	16,364,100	16,669,500
Commercial	7,126,200	11,827,400	17,879,800
Productive Forest Land	11,212,300	12,414,600	11,288,000
Agricultural Forest	n/a	6,555,500	9,206,000
Personal	1,539,100	1,847,800	1,341,500
Agricultural	5,468,000	2,370,300	2,159,200
Undeveloped	101,900	595,200	959,100
Manufacturing	79,900	501,800	438,100

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Department of Research and Statistics

[Equalized Values | Tableau Public](#)

FIGURE 8. AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

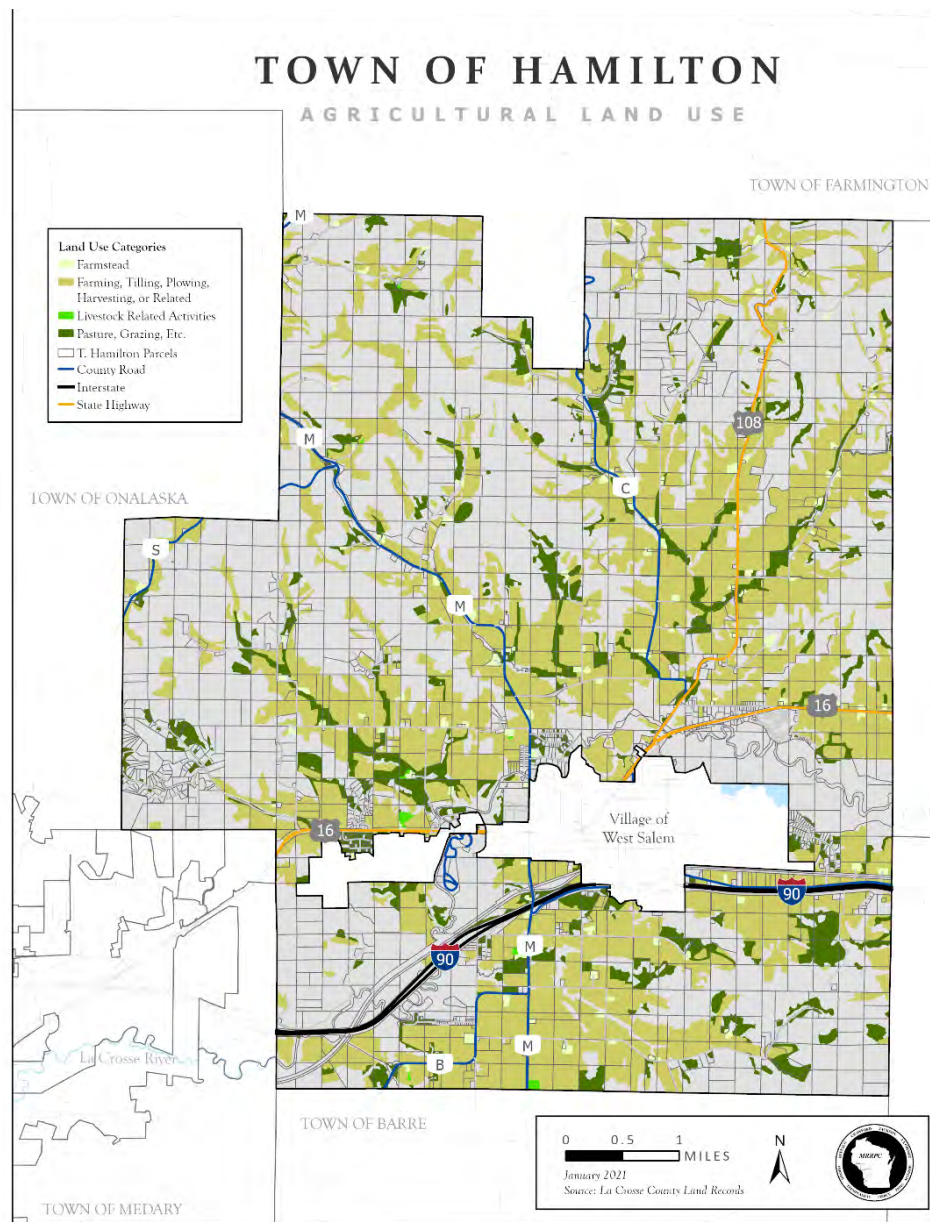
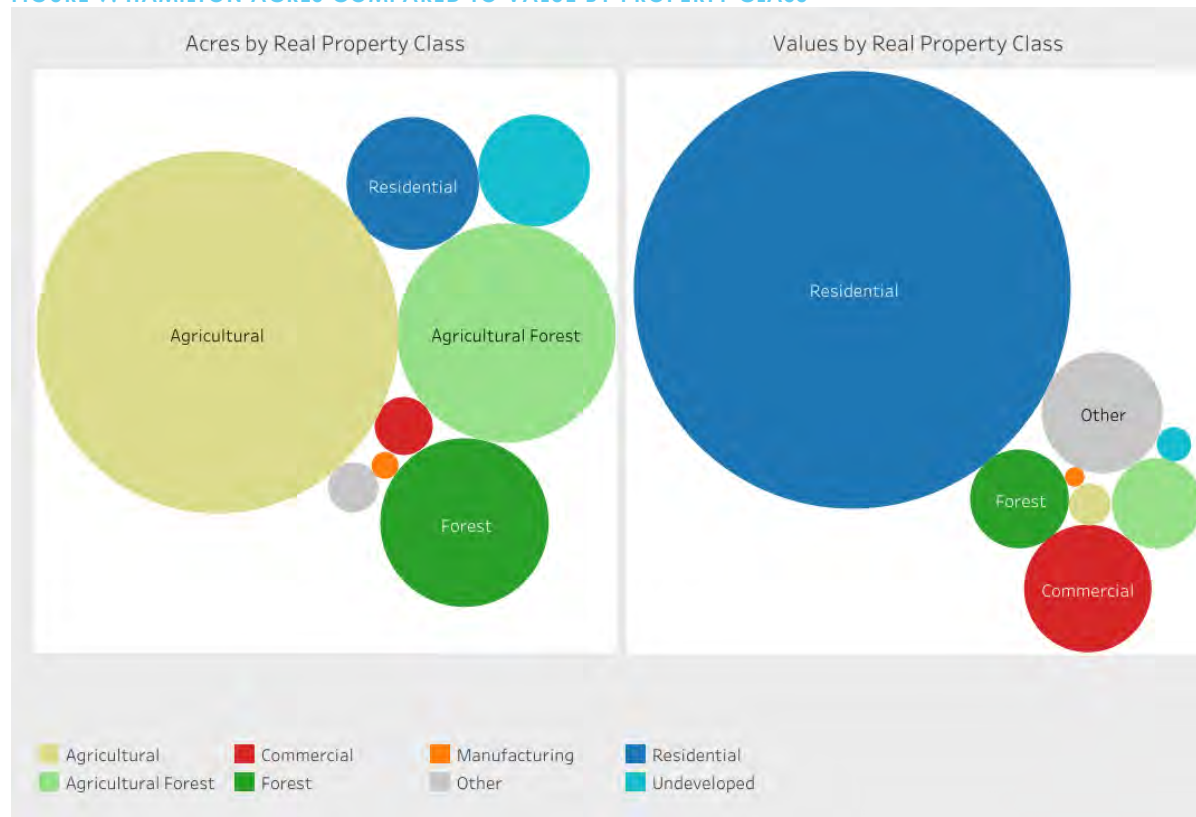


FIGURE 9 compares real property acres and real property values across property classes, which visualizes the relationship between substantial residential value compared to substantial land mass.

FIGURE 9. HAMILTON ACRES COMPARED TO VALUE BY PROPERTY CLASS



AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

With 13,692 acres of agricultural and another 5,002 acres of agricultural forest, Hamilton has maintained farmland steadily for several years. From a La Crosse County perspective, average prices for rent of non-irrigated cropland in the County in 2020 were \$139.00 per acre, \$1 above the State average of \$138.00 per acre. Average cash rent paid for pasture in La Crosse County in 2020 was \$28.50 per acre, below the State average of \$35.00 per acre. TABLE 16 **Error! Reference source not found.** displays that the number of farms in La Crosse County has decreased by 9.13%. This is more than the State average decline in farms of 7.11%. Though the number of farms has decreased, the overall market value of agricultural land has drastically increased in the County by 52.05%. This is far above the State average increase of 32.22%. The largest changes are in sizes of farms from larger farms (in acreage) to smaller farms.

TABLE 16. LA CROSSE COUNTY AGRICULTURE SUMMARY

	2012	2017	% Change 2012- 2017
Farms (#)	734	667	-9.13
Land in farms (acres)	158,718	144,334	-9.06
Estimated market value of land and buildings (\$)	709,760	1,079,187	52.05
Estimated market value of all machinery and equipment (\$)	88,617	83,104	-6.22
Farms by size			
1 to 9 acres	30	49	63.33
10 to 49 acres	147	150	2.04
50 to 179 acres	300	218	-27.33
180 to 499 acres	196	185	-5.61
500 to 999 acres	63	51	-19.05
1,000 acres or more	17	14	-17.65
Total cropland	671	575	-14.31
Irrigated land (# of farms)	20	26	30.00

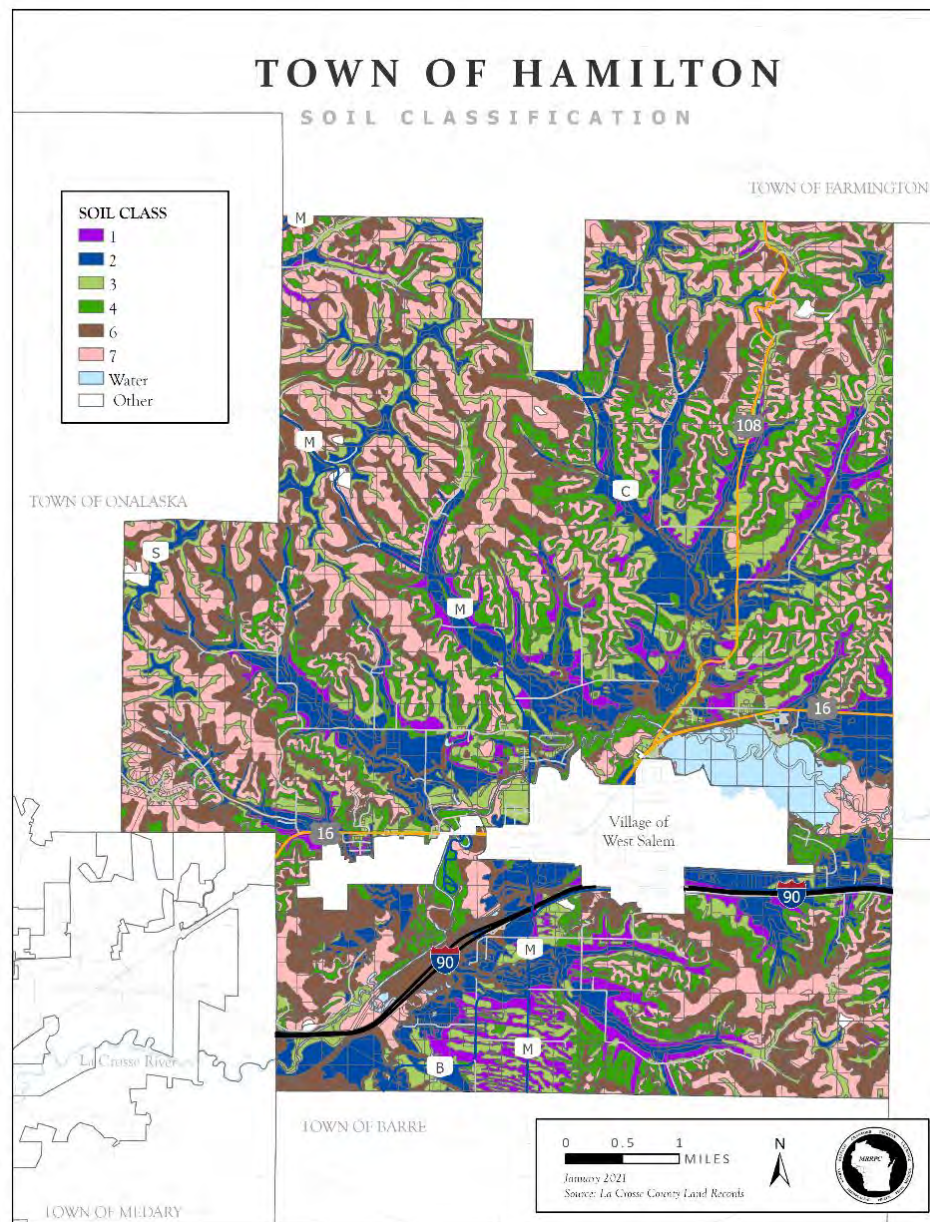
Source: USDA Ag Census 2012, 2017

Soils

There are three general soil types present in Hamilton. The northern portion of the town is comprised of silty soils on sandstone uplands. Gale and Fayette soils are on the narrow ridge tops and sandy Hixton soils are on the lower convex of slopes. The central portion of the town including the Village of West Salem and Lake Neshonoc area are comprised of soils associated with valleys and benches. This area is made up of Richwood, Toddville, and Port Byron soils. The southern portion of the town consists of silty soils on dolomite uplands. Fayette and Dubuque soils are on the rounded ridges that are separated by rock escarpments from the steep side hills. Map 1-8.1 illustrates the soils in Hamilton.

The La Crosse County Soil Survey designated approximately 20% of the soils in La Crosse County as “prime” soils. Prime soils were defined as being either Class I, Class II or Class III soils. Based on the information and distribution of soils it can be inferred that approximately 20% of the soils in Hamilton are “prime” soils (FIGURE 10).

FIGURE 10. HAMILTON SOIL CLASSIFICATION



Groundwater

Western Wisconsin is fortunate to have a large supply of quality groundwater. Within Hamilton most geological formations contain water. On ridge tops water can be obtained from dolomite while on the valley bottoms water can be obtained from the sandstone bedrock. Groundwater reservoirs are recharged by direct precipitation mainly in the form of heavy rainfall and melting snow. Generally, all ground water is free of bacteria and safe to drink. Water quality varies as "soft" water is available from the valley alluvium while the water is "hard" from the upland bedrock.

Surface Water

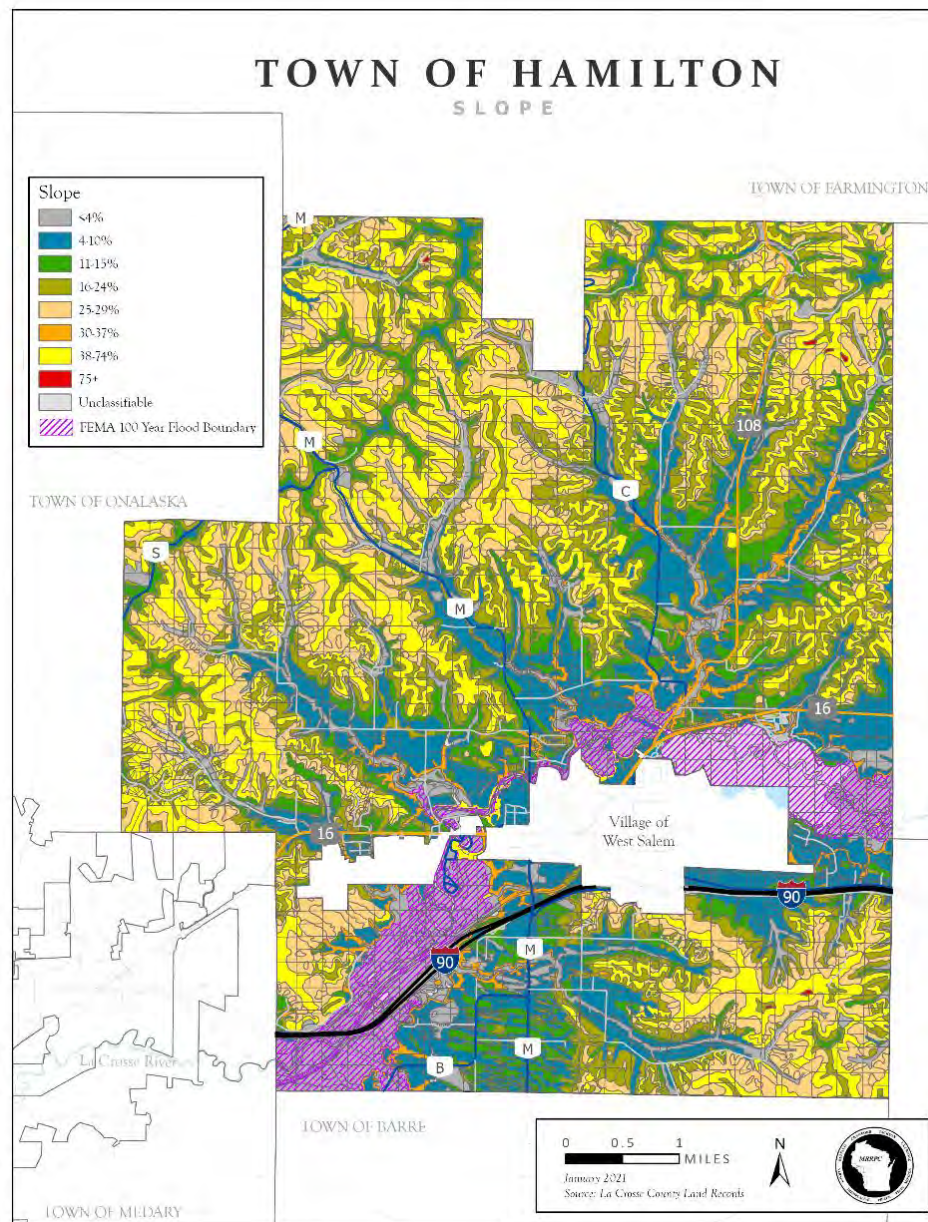
There are numerous small streams and springs within Hamilton that all flow into one of the two major watersheds. There are no natural lakes with the Town. However, Lake Neshonoc formed by a drainage impoundment is a valuable natural and recreational resource. The lake has approximately 600 acres in surface area formed by an impoundment on the La Crosse River. The maximum depth of the lake is 11 feet. Recreational facilities on the lake include one resort/private campground, a public park with a boat launch, picnic area and public beach.

A lake district has been established that monitors the lake for invasive species and for the general maintenance of the lake. The lake district partnered with La Crosse County in 2004 on a \$3,000,000 dredging project that removed over 1,000,000 million cubic yards of sediment. The partnership completed a second dredging project in 2021. The lake is an important asset to the Town as the recreational value of the lake has improved so has tourism and land prices adjacent to the resource.

Topography and Watersheds

The landscape of Hamilton can be characterized as narrow steep sided valleys with rolling ridges. FIGURE 11 displays the slopes and undulating landscape in Hamilton. Typical elevation ranges in the town range from approximately 1,300 feet above sea level on the ridge tops to 900 feet above sea level on the valley floors. This undulating landscape is drained by numerous streams in two major watersheds, which ultimately flow into the Mississippi River.

FIGURE 11. HAMILTON SLOPE



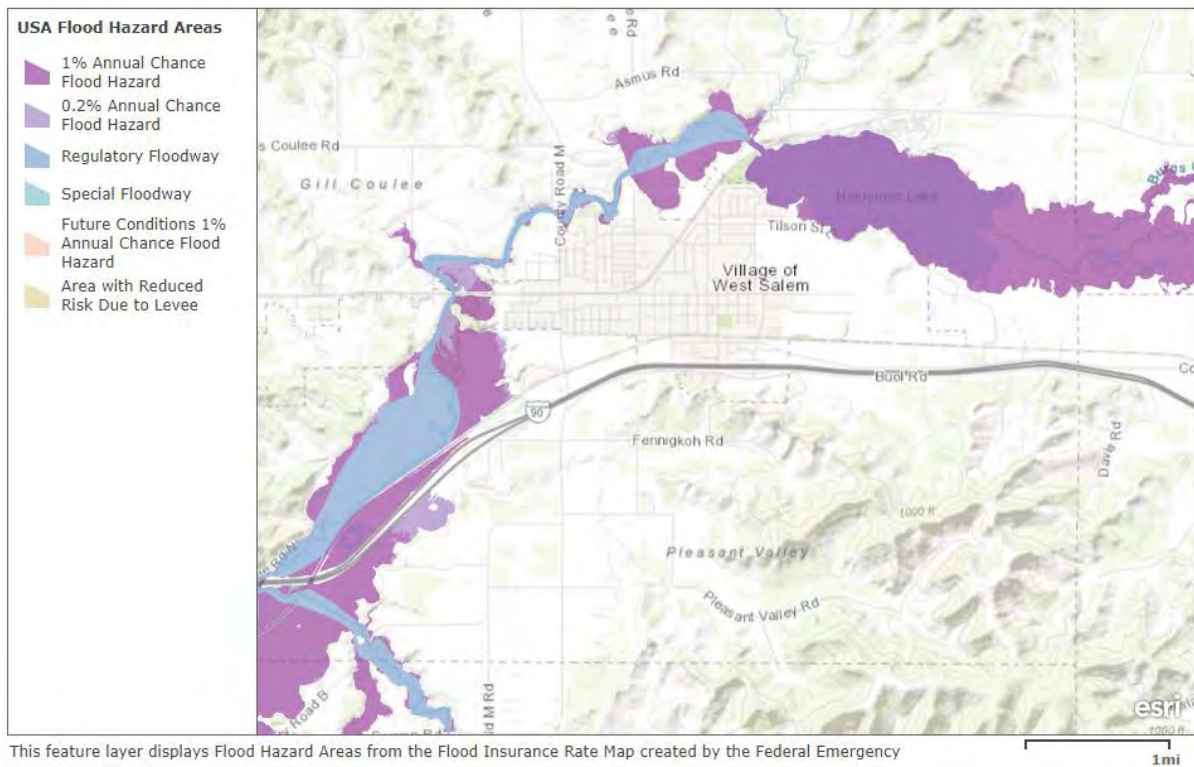
Woodlands

Hamilton's landscape can be characterized by farmed ridge tops and wooded valley slopes. Oak is the predominant hardwood with maple replacing oak after logging operations. Approximately 32% or 10,698 acres of Hamilton is forested. The State's Managed Forest Law (MFL) program is set up to preserve and manage existing forested lands. Landowners can sign up for the program and receive a reduced tax rate provided program requirements are followed. Proceeds for the program come from a stumpage fee that is required when the timber is harvested by the landowner.

Floodplains/Wetlands

The Federal Emergency Management Agency maintains a variety of flood map products. FIGURE 12 displays a flood plain map for the Hamilton and West Salem region. As shown, map shows that only areas along the La Crosse River in the Town are designated as a Special Flood Hazard Area that would be inundated by a 100-year flood. There are limited wetlands in Hamilton, and a 1% chance of flood hazard or higher each year indicates a 'high risk'. These areas have a 25% chance of flooding during a 30-year mortgage, for insurance purposes.

FIGURE 12. FEMA FLOOD MAP



Wildlife Resources

The agricultural fields, scattered forestlands, and spring fed streams provide excellent habitat for wildlife. White-tailed deer and eastern wild turkeys are abundant in the town. Squirrels, rabbits, pheasants, ruffed grouse, raccoons and a wide variety of songbirds make their home in Hamilton. The spring fed streams have a plentiful supply of brown and brook trout. Lake Neshonoc has populations of bass, crappies and sunfish.

Air Quality

Hamilton has a total population of less than 2,500 people and limited industrial businesses. Therefore, air quality in the Town is excellent. Potential threats to air quality in the future that will have to be evaluated will include unregulated outdoor burning and neighboring urban municipalities (City of La Crosse, etc.).

Stream/Environmental Corridors

Hamilton is approximately 94% forested/agricultural/open land. Most of the drainage for the town goes into the La Crosse River watershed, which is comprised of approximately eight additional smaller watersheds. The stream corridors that make up the watersheds would also be characterized as the environmental corridors as they consist of most floodplains and wetlands in the Town.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Wisconsin in accordance with the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) has developed the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Working Lists. The Wisconsin Natural Heritage Working Lists contains species known or suspected to be rare in the state. They include species legally designated as "Endangered" (*in danger of being extirpated from all or a portion of its range*) and "Threatened" (*the Wisconsin portion of the species population is either on the verge of extirpation or is a relic population*). Within La Crosse County there are 22 species listed as "Endangered" and 29 that are listed as "Threatened." Examples of the "Endangered" species present in La Crosse County are the Snowy Egret, Crystal Darter, Ebony Shell Mussel and the Carolina Anemone (plant).

Cultural Resources

ARCHEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

A search of the Wisconsin National Register of Historic Places revealed 52 registered buildings or sites in La Crosse County. The register included historic houses, churches, mounds, historic camps and burial sites. One site (Swennes Archaeological District) in Hamilton has been registered in the Wisconsin National Register of Historic Places. The location of the site is restricted as it is a prehistoric camp or village site (TABLE 17).

Wisconsin's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) was searched and 44 structures/objects in Hamilton were in the inventory. The AHI contains data on buildings, structures and objects that illustrate Wisconsin's history. The AHI documents a wide range of historic properties such as the round barns, log houses, metal truss bridges, small town commercial buildings, and Queen Anne houses. It is a permanent record maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society. Eight of the structures identified in Hamilton were bridges primarily located on Hwy 108 and Hwy 16 including the Old Hwy. 16 bridge. Included in

the inventory were the North American Hydro Plant (Neshonoc Dam and Power House) as well as the historically named McMillan Mill and Power Company, which is also currently named the North American Hydro Plant.

TABLE 17. ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORICAL SITE INVENTORY

Current Name	Location Town-Range-Section	Construction Date	Description
Henry F. Heider Farm	1606W-05	1880	Queen Anne house
Fritz Miller Farm	1706W-31	1918	American Foursquare house
Lewis House	1706W-34	1855	Octagon house
HAMILTON CEMETERY	1606W-04	1870	Cemetery
North American Hydro Plant	1706W-27	1896 1940	Astylistic Utilitarian Building power plant
VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK	1606W-05	1935	Park
Unnamed	1606W-04		
VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK	1606W-05	1927	Stone arch bridge
VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK	1606W-05	1927	Pavilion
Maple Grove Country Club	1606W-08		Italianate house
Pleasant Valley School	1606W-09		Prairie School
Unnamed	1606W-09		Greek Revival house
Unnamed	1606W-09		Other Vernacular house
Unnamed	1606W-10	1888	Gabled Ell house
Unnamed	1606W-15		Gabled Ell house
Hayes-Swanson House	1706W-27	1930	Tudor Revival house
Bridge	1706W-27 Old Hwy 16 & State Hwy 108	1927	Concrete bridge
Bridge	1606W-27 Corner of old Hwy 16 & Hwy 108	1926	Concrete bridge
Unnamed	1706W-20		Other Vernacular house
Unnamed	1706W-22		Queen Anne house
Unnamed	1706W-22		Italianate house
Unnamed	1706W-24		Gabled Ell house
Unnamed	1706W-25		Prairie School house
Unnamed	1706W-26		Gabled Ell house
Unnamed	1706W-28		Greek Revival house
Unnamed	1706W-30		Queen Anne house
Bridge	1706W-32 Old B, .1 Mile East of Gill Coulee		Overhead truss bridge
Unnamed	1707W-11		Italianate house
Unnamed	1706W-31	1880	Barn
Swarthout Park	1706W-34	1955	Park
STH 16 Bridge	1706W-34 State Highway 16 & La Crosse River	1941	Steel beam or plate girder bridge
State Highway 108 Bridge	1706W-34	1926	Concrete bridge
North American Hydro Plant	1706W-34	1896	Dam
North American Hydro Plant	1706W-34	1896	Astylistic Utilitarian Building power plant
Hayes/Swanson Farm	1706W-34		Astylistic Utilitarian Building silo
Hayes/Swanson Farm	1706W-34		Quonset

Old 16 Bridge	1706W-34	1926	Concrete bridge
State Highway 108 Bridge	1706W-34	1940	Steel beam or plate girder bridge
Oiness Farmstead	1706W-06	1910	Two Story Cube agricultural complex
Unnamed	1706W-22	1910	Two Story Cube agricultural complex
Unnamed	1706W-15	1890	Cross Gabled agricultural complex
Unnamed	1606W-15	1880	Side Gabled
Unnamed	W3970 W. Scotch Coulee Rd.	1890	Gabled Ell agricultural complex
Unnamed	1706W-02		Side Gabled agricultural complex

Recreational Resources

Numerous recreational resources are available in Hamilton. The Town maintains two town parks the Shorewood Park and the Settlement Park. The lakes and streams in the town offer great fishing and the public road system provides residents and visitors with excellent biking and pedestrian activities. As previously described in Section 13, 240 acres of the 3,109-acre Coulee Experimental Forest is in Hamilton and provides walking, hiking trails, and hunting opportunities. The La Crosse River State Bicycle Trail goes through Hamilton and connects to the Great River State Trail and the Sparta-Elroy State Trail. In addition, several snowmobile trails traverse the Town offering winter recreation opportunities.

Hamilton is home to numerous recreational clubs and businesses as the La Crosse Interstate Fairgrounds and Speedway, Black Hawk Archery Club, Maple Grove Country Club, the Corn Maze, and Gills Coulee Model Planes are all located in Hamilton.

COUNTY PARKS

There are three county operated public parks in the Town which offer recreational opportunities. A description of the recreational opportunities at each facility follows.

Veterans Memorial County Park

This 232-acre park is in the approximate geographic center of La Crosse County within Hamilton. Principal access is by way of STH 16 and is approximately 10 miles from the City of La Crosse and the park is adjacent to the Village of West Salem. Included within the park are approximately 3 1/2 miles of paved roads, four shelter houses serving the picnic areas, and approximately 120 camping sites. The campground includes electrically equipped sites for trailers and motor homes, and an area for tent camping. The campground has a concessionaire operated camp store and a showers building equipped with hot and cold running water and flush toilets. There are five vault toilets available to the four picnic shelters and other users of the park. Two artesian wells and two hand pumps, in addition to the spigots at the shower house, provide water to the

park users. Constructed recreational facilities include three ball diamonds, four grass volleyball courts, one sand court in the camping area, canoe landing on the La Crosse River, a 1/2-mile paved leg to the La Crosse River State Trail and an extension to a snowmobile trail. There is a lagoon with a picturesque bridge providing a crossing for the park road. There are hiking trails and access to both the La Crosse River bottomland ecosystem and a scenic overlook. In addition, a trail at the front of the park connects the Village of West Salem to the park without utilizing State Highway 16.

The County sponsored bicycle trail extension to the State Trail was completed in 1997 using a cost share grant from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) Enhancement Program. A recent gift of 22 acres of land to the Park in which the County constructed a walking/biking/roller blading trail accessing the Park from the east side. The addition of the new land enables the park to border on the western Village limit.

Neshonoc Swarthout County Park

The 20 acres of Neshonoc Swarthout Park is located at the northwest end of the lake, within Hamilton. Rustic Road R-31 has its north terminus located in this park. The park is located along the lake shore just above the dam and along the south shore of the La Crosse River below the dam, and extends on both sides of STH 16 and STH 108, with the east side,

on the lake shore, having a picnic shelter, tables and grills, vault toilets, hand pump, one grass volleyball court, playground apparatus, and a boat ramp and



courtesy pier. There is also a historic marker which describes the former community of Neshonoc, an early commercial rival of West Salem. Below the dam there is a canoe launch area and an extensive area of wildlife food plots and natural wetlands.

Lake Neshonoc South County Park

This 60 acre tract is part of the larger County owned land that was formerly used as a farm by the health care facility. Although most of the remainder of this land is being considered for sale to private developers for other uses, the portion bordering on Lake Neshonoc's

south shore has been set aside as a County park. There is currently 1/2 mile of lakefront, 3/4 mile paved road, a boat launch ramp, pier/dock, and a parking area for



approximately 24 vehicles with trailers. Most of this property is currently “undeveloped” with abandoned farm fields and meadows and some native hardwood cover. The western part of the property is within the Village of West Salem limits and the eastern portion is in Hamilton.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below are the Comprehensive Planning Goals described in State Statute that are related to the Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Element. Following each goal is a discussion how they were addressed during the planning process.

- Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.

This goal is addressed in the plan by recommendations that support state and local regulations and programs aimed at preserving natural resources.

- Preservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.

This goal is addressed by recommending that development proposals be analyzed for historical significance by reviewing State Historical Society databases pertaining to historic structures.

6) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic development element includes goals, objectives, and actions to help guide the development of economic resources within the Town. This element also includes an assessment of local strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses. The Town Survey identified an overwhelming desire for increased economic development in the Town. Preferred types of uses include:

To be determined by the survey

GOAL 1

Promote agricultural and related small/home businesses to maintain the existing rural lifestyle and local economy.

GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) The economic development goals derived from public input during the planning process identified the businesses and industries desired in the town. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton support policies and programs that will promote or maintain the desired uses. The desired business/industries are described as follows:

Productive Agriculture

The Town of Hamilton is a rural town and historically agriculture and agriculture related businesses (animal agriculture, cash cropping, etc.) have been the backbone of the local economy. Residents during the planning process have indicated that they wish for the town to remain rural and agriculture to remain a vital part of the local economy. In addition, agriculture research businesses have located in the Town of Hamilton and it is recommended that conditions be maintained that support these business operations and the expansion of such uses.

Home/Small Businesses

Home/small businesses were also identified during the planning process as being important to the town's rural lifestyle. Home/small businesses being described as small home offices, craft outlets, repair businesses, etc. Generally, these businesses can be described as family operated, one to five employees and having a limited visual impact on the community. These businesses are often important because they provide supplemental income to existing farm operations and allow the land to remain in productive agriculture rather than being sold to competing uses (residential) that may detract from the rural atmosphere.

Recreation/Tourism

Recreational uses and tourism were also identified during the planning process as businesses or opportunities to enhance the local economy. Passive recreation and tourism uses that will not detract from the rural qualities of the town are the most desired uses.

- b) Support various forms of agriculture such as organic agriculture, orchards, vineyards, value added agriculture, etc. as a way of providing more agricultural opportunities in the local economy.
- c) Recommend to the La Crosse County Zoning Department that when revising the comprehensive zoning ordinance agricultural districts that home/small businesses be defined and considered as conditional uses in the agricultural districts.

GOAL 2

Maintain rural landscape as a means of supporting recreational and tourism uses.

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) As part of the Comprehensive planning process and future updates, it is recommended that the town develop and implement a land use plan that enhances the rural landscape, therefore, preserving recreational and tourism opportunities in the Town.
- b) During the planning process the La Crosse County Fairgrounds located in the Town of Hamilton was identified as an important economic/educational asset to the Town of Hamilton. It is recommended that the Town works to maintain the fairgrounds in the Town of Hamilton and through land use regulation protect the fairground property from uses that could negatively impact the site.
- c) It is recommended the Town of Hamilton review developments with sensitivity to development impacts that would negatively affect the La Crosse River State Bicycle Trail.
- d) Maintain Lake Neshonoc as a valuable natural resource and recreational attraction. Evaluate land uses proposed to be located adjacent to the lake to ensure they are compatible uses.
- e) Continue to support county and state recreational facilities in the Town of Hamilton as a means to provide recreational opportunities for visitors and tourists.

GOAL 3

Promote the location of large-scale industrial development along travel corridors (County Road B, County Road C, and County Road M).

GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Large businesses are defined as businesses having 6 or more employees with the potential to impact the rural character of the town. Therefore, locations for large businesses are recommended to be located along travel corridors with direct access to Interstate-90. This will eliminate traffic from impacting town road facilities and residents throughout the Town of Hamilton. The land use map developed designated a location for large businesses north of County Road B to the southeast of the Village of West Salem.
- b) Develop requirements that new businesses must meet to minimize their impact on adjoining land uses. Items to consider include screening fence/landscaping, light requirements, sign requirements, etc.
- c) It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton work with local business organizations (La Crosse Area Development Corporation and related) to promote business sites in the Town of Hamilton.

GOAL 4

Recognize Hamilton as a part of the regional economy to maintain residents and lifestyle.

GOAL 4 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Continue to monitor County, Regional and State programs that promote the desired businesses identified during the planning process by town residents. Specific programs to promote/monitor:
 - County Programs**
 - La Crosse County Business Fund
 - Regional Programs**
 - Western Wisconsin Technology Zone
 - Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) programs administered through the Mississippi River
 - Regional Planning Commission (ex. Public Works and Economic Development Program, Economic Adjustment Program, etc...)
 - State Programs**
 - Wisconsin Department of Transportation Local Transportation Enhancements Program (TE)
 - Wisconsin Department of Transportation Local Transportation Economic Assistance Program (TEA)
 - Value Added Dairy Initiative (Grow Wisconsin)

Wisconsin Department of Commerce Enterprise Development Zone Program
 Wisconsin Department of Commerce Milk Volume Production Program
 Wisconsin Department of Commerce Dairy 2020 Planning Grant Program
 Wisconsin Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Program
 Wisconsin Department of Commerce Entrepreneurial training Grant

- b) Work to enhance the economic strengths and minimize the economic weaknesses of the Town of Hamilton. Specifically, work cooperatively with adjacent units of government on economic development issues with the realization that each unit of government is a component of the regional economy.

GOAL 5

Capitalize on residents' ability to work from home and support infrastructure to do so, while maintaining rural quality of life.

GOAL 5 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Explore current patterns and preferences of work from home employees
 b) Continue to promote broadband and cell connectivity
 c) Explore potential for co-working spaces and other specialized office space, if there is determined to be demand.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

As shown in TABLE 18, 98.3% of town residents that are 25 years or older have graduated from high school, while 34.5% have a bachelor's degree or higher. These percentages compared favorably to the State of Wisconsin and the United States in which have 89.4% and 85% of the population 25 years and older have graduated from high school, respectively.

TABLE 18. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

	Hamilton town, La Crosse County, Wisconsin	La Crosse County, Wisconsin	Wisconsin	United States
Population 25 years and over	1,516	70,494	3,739,243	199,726,659
Less than 9th grade	0.4%	2.6%	3.7%	6.2%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	1.3%	4.5%	6.9%	8.7%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	27.7%	30.1%	34.0%	29.0%
Some college, no degree	23.1%	21.4%	20.6%	20.6%
Associate's degree	13.0%	12.6%	9.0%	7.5%
Bachelor's degree	19.5%	18.5%	17.1%	17.6%
Graduate or professional degree	15.0%	10.4%	8.6%	10.3%
Percent high school graduate or higher	98.3%	92.9%	89.4%	85.0%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	34.5%	28.8%	25.8%	27.9%

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

More than 69% (1,421) of Hamilton residents 16 and older are employed (TABLE 19).

Shown in TABLE 20 primary industries for residents include: healthcare (24%), manufacturing (12%), education and retail trade (10% each). Rounding out the remaining top ten industries are: construction, finance, professional, public administration, transportation & warehousing, and agriculture.

TABLE 19. LABOR FORCE PROFILE (CIVILIAN)

Age Group	Population	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force Participation Rate
16+	2,086	1,421	26	1.8%	69.4%
16-24	243	179	2	1.1%	74.5%
25-54	947	837	13	1.5%	89.8%
55-64	413	311	4	1.3%	76.3%
65+	483	93	6	6.1%	20.5%

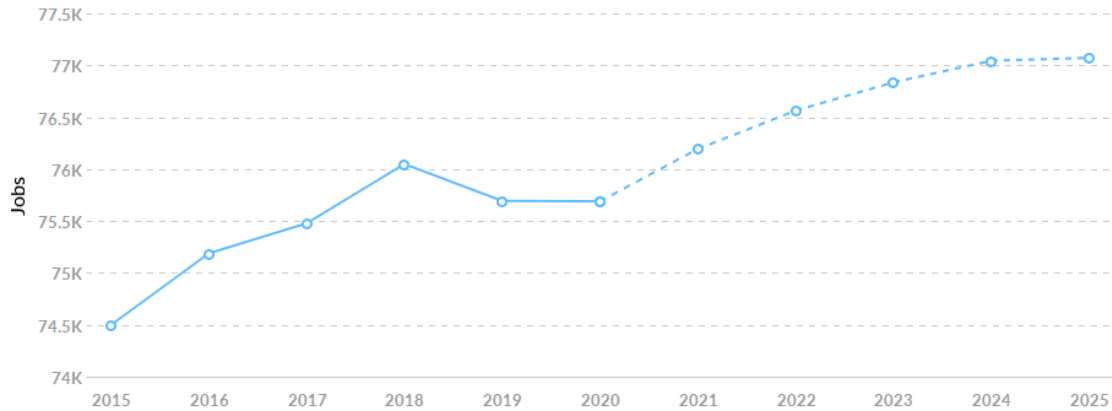
TABLE 20. EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Industry	Percent Employed*
Health Care/Social Assistance	24%
Manufacturing	12%
Educational Services	10%
Retail Trade	10%
Construction	8%
Finance/Insurance	5%
Professional/Scientific/Tech	5%
Public Administration	4%
Transportation/Warehousing	4%
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	3%
Remaining Categories	16%
Source: ESRI, US Census	
*Rounded	

EMPLOYMENT FORECASTS

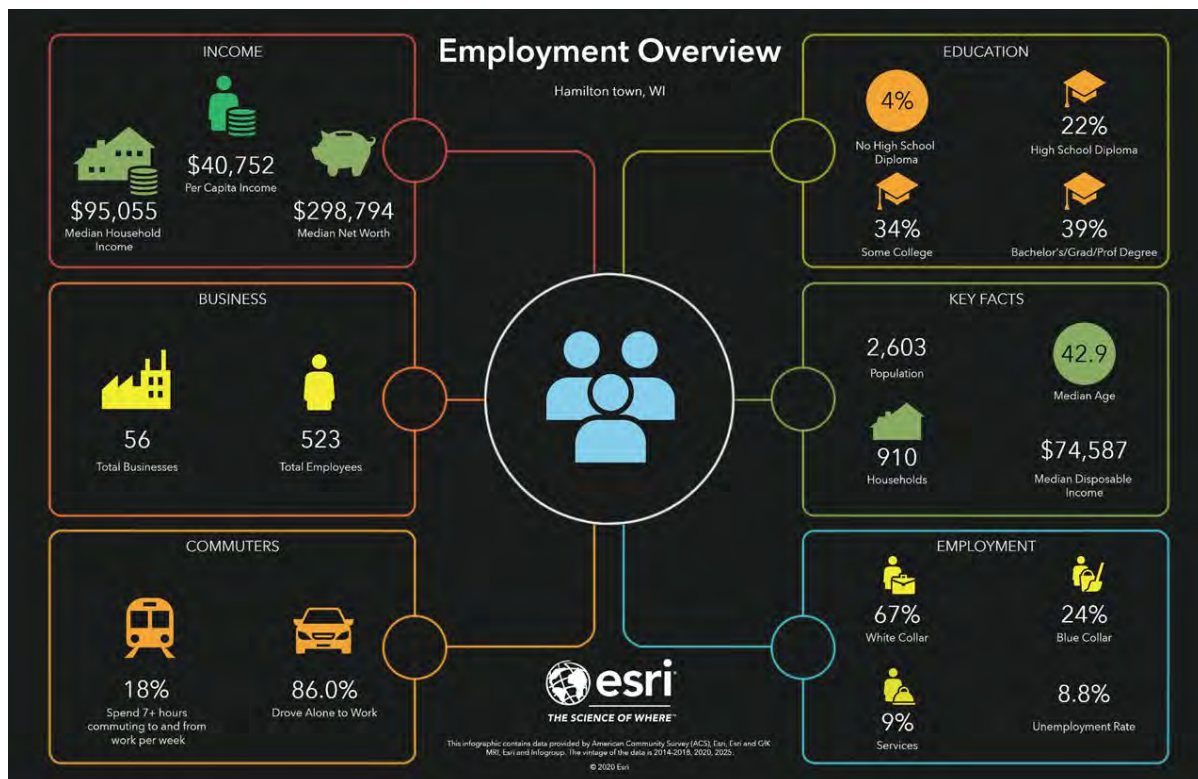
From 2015 to 2020, jobs increased by 1.6% in La Crosse County, WI from 74,498 to 75,690. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 6.2%, a -4.6% disparity. FIGURE 13 below shows a projected increase in jobs from 2020 to 2025 in La Crosse County. FIGURE 14 provides a general employment overview and summary for Hamilton.

FIGURE 13. JOB PROJECTIONS LA CROSSE COUNTY



Source: BLS's Occupational Employment Statistics (OES), Emsi Q4 2020 Data

FIGURE 14. EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW



The industries with the largest increase in number of jobs from 2015 to 2020 in La Crosse County include Utilities (20%), Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (15%), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (12%). The highest earning industry in the County is Utilities with an average of \$130,670. Over 20 percent of employees are participating in health care/social assistance occupations, which is also the most common occupation type within La Crosse County as found in TABLE 21. Retail trade is the second most frequent occupation, with just over 13 percent of Town residents participating in related occupations. Over 12 percent of the Town is in manufacturing which is like the Village of Holmen and La Crosse County.

TABLE 21. LA CROSSE COUNTY INDUSTRIES AND EARNINGS

Industry	2015 Jobs	2020 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2020 Earnings Per Worker
Utilities	368	442	74	20%	\$130,670
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,699	1,387	-312	-18%	\$82,175
Information	928	878	-50	-5%	\$81,098
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,915	2,136	221	12%	\$79,945
Finance and Insurance	3,178	3,543	365	11%	\$78,408
Health Care and Social Assistance	14,306	15,098	792	6%	\$72,241
Wholesale Trade	3,511	3,451	-60	-2%	\$70,930
Transportation and Warehousing	2,570	2,861	291	11%	\$70,446
Construction	3,035	3,159	124	4%	\$67,024
Government	9,864	9,353	-511	-5%	\$64,479
Manufacturing	7,784	8,107	323	4%	\$63,711
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	813	799	-14	-2%	\$49,040
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	2,724	2,419	-305	-11%	\$41,483
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	144	115	-29	-20%	\$36,894
Educational Services	1,757	1,825	68	4%	\$33,303
Retail Trade	8,366	8,069	-297	-4%	\$32,218

Other Services (except Public Administration)	3,677	4,131	454	12%	\$29,432
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,033	1,185	152	15%	\$23,136
Accommodation and Food Services	6,814	6,728	-86	-1%	\$18,065

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) 2020

ECONOMIC BASE

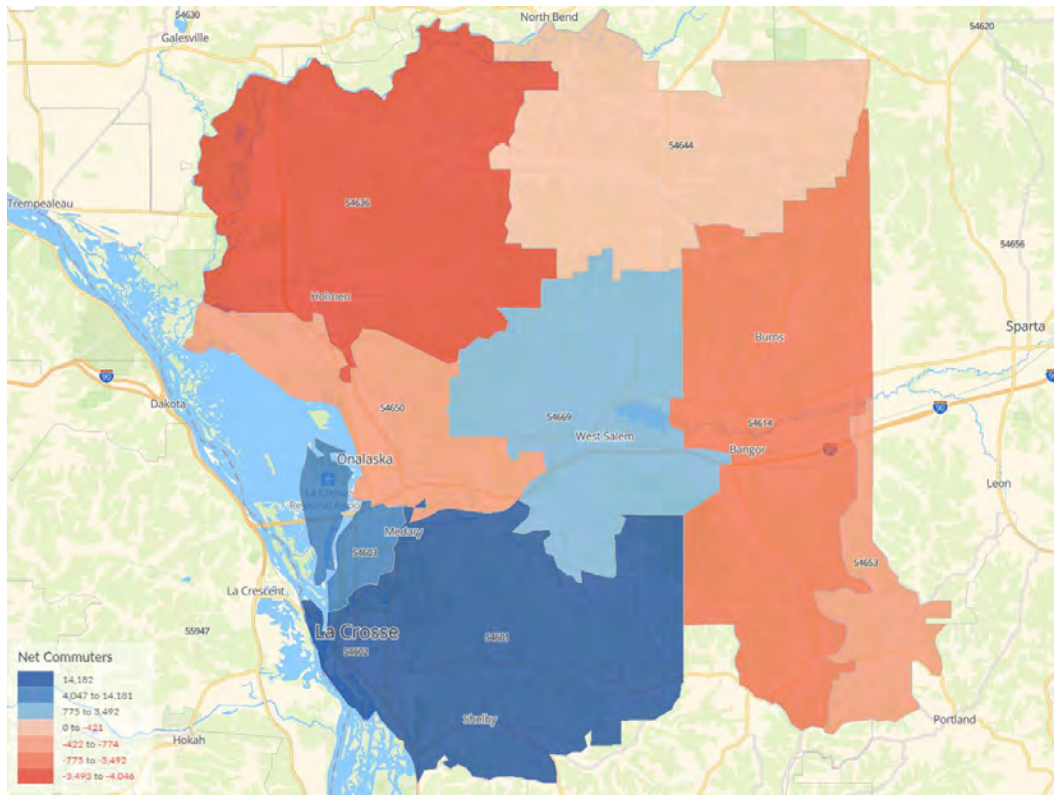
When considering economic base, it is important to look at regional economic drivers. TABLE 22 lists the top fifteen employers for La Crosse County in 2012. The zip code including Hamilton and West Salem has a net gain in place of residence vs. place of employment, meaning that the area attracts employees and commuters (FIGURE 15).

TABLE 22. TOP EMPLOYERS IN LA CROSSE COUNTY

Company	Number of Workers
Gundersen Lutheran	1,000+
Mayo Clinic	1,000+
Trane	1,000+
Kwik Trip	1,000+
La Crosse County	1,000+
La Crosse Public Schools	1,000+
University of Wisconsin La Crosse	1,000+
CenturyTel	500-999
Wal-Mart	500-999
Logistics Health Inc.	500-999
City of La Crosse	500-999
Holmen Public Schools	500-999
Western Technical College	500-999
La Crosse Area YMCA	500-999
APAC	500-999

Source: La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce 2012

FIGURE 15. PLACE OF WORK VS PLACE OF RESIDENCE



Hamilton residents reflect a favorable disposable income profile than both West Salem and La Crosse County as a whole. Average disposable income is nearly \$78,000 in Hamilton, while West Salem is \$60,000, and \$58,500, respectively (TABLE 23).

TABLE 23. DISPOSABLE INCOME PROFILE

	Hamilton Number	Hamilton Percent	West Salem Number	West Salem Percent	La Crosse County Number	La Crosse County Percent
<\$15,000	49	5.4%	196	10.0%	5,478	11.2%
\$15,000- \$24,999	50	5.5%	224	11.4%	4,796	9.8%
\$25,000- \$34,999	87	9.6%	261	13.3%	7,078	14.5%
\$35,000- \$49,999	120	13.2%	292	14.9%	8,573	17.6%
\$50,000- \$74,999	220	24.2%	403	20.6%	11,023	22.6%
\$75,000- \$99,999	171	18.8%	307	15.7%	5,564	11.4%
\$100,000- \$149,999	142	15.6%	218	11.1%	4,415	9.0%
\$150,000- \$200,000	37	4.1%	29	1.5%	988	2.0%
\$200,000+	34	3.7%	27	1.4%	922	1.9%
Median Disposable Income	\$64,432		\$50,216		\$46,552	
Average Disposable income	\$77,825		\$60,161		\$58,531	

Source: US Census Bureau ACS, ESRI

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDING TRENDS

TABLE 24 outlines where the industrial and business parks are in La Crosse County. The table also provides the size of the parks and land availability as of 2020. There are currently no industrial parks located in the Hamilton. The nearby Village of Holmen has 113 acres of land available for commercial and light industrial use.

TABLE 24. LA CROSSE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARKS 2020

County	Community	Name of Site	Date	# of Acres	Acres Sold	Acres for Sale	Zoning	Utilities to Site	Year Utilities Installed	Absorp. Rate
La Crosse	V Bangor	Bangor Indus. Park	2003	80	15	65	Industrial	No		<5
La Crosse	V Holmen	Holmen Indus. Park	1975	50	50	0	Industrial	Yes	1975	<5
La Crosse	V Holmen	N Star Bus. Park	1997	21.5	21.5	0	Commercial	Yes	1997	<5
La Crosse	V Holmen	Holmen Bus. Park	2000	7	7	0	Commercial	Yes	2000	<5
La Crosse	V Holmen	Cedar Crossing Ind. Park	1991	25	20	5	Commercial	Yes	1991	<5
La Crosse	V Holmen	McGilvray Park	2017	30	5	25	Commercial	Yes	2017	<5
La Crosse	V Holmen	Kings Bluff Business Park Phase 1	2018	25	10	15	Light Industrial	Yes	2018	>5
La Crosse	V Holmen	Bluffview Business Park Phase 1	2019	40	12	28	Light Industrial	Yes	2019	>5
La Crosse	V Holmen	Bluffview Business Park Phase 2	2020	15	10	5	Commercial	Yes	2020	>5
La Crosse	V Holmen	Hawkeye Business Park	2020	40	5	35	Commercial	Yes	2020	>5
La Crosse	C La Crosse	Airport Indus. Park	1988	98	98	0	Industrial	Yes	1988	<5
La Crosse	C La Crosse	Airport Interstate Park	1984	32	32	0	Industrial	Yes	1984	<5

La Crosse	C La Crosse	Interstate Indus. Park	1970	92	92	0	Industrial	Yes	1970-83	<5
La Crosse	C La Crosse	Int'l Business Park	1998	77.8	41.67	36.13	Industrial	Yes	1998-99	5-10
La Crosse	C Onalaska	Valley Vue Bus. Park	1985	0.69	0	.69	Reg. Business	Yes	1985	<5
La Crosse	C Onalaska	Elmwood Bus. Ctr.	1992	15.86	0.69	15.17	Reg. Business	Yes	1992	<5
La Crosse	V West Salem	W. Salem Indus. Park	1972	60	60	0	Lt Indus.	Yes	1972	<5
La Crosse	V West Salem	Lakeview Indus. Park	1997	160	75	85	Industrial	Planned	2000-01	<5

Source: Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission 2020

ENVIRONMENTALLY CONTAMINATED SITES

The Comprehensive Planning Law requires communities to evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Environmental Remediation and Redevelopment Program maintains a list of contaminated sites, or brownfields. The DNR identifies brownfields as "abandoned or under-utilized commercial or industrial properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination."

As of January 2020, four sites in Hamilton are shown on the Wisconsin DNR Bureau For Remediation And Redevelopment (BRRT) database. Each of the statuses have been closed, with the most recent occurring in 2005.

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

The State of Wisconsin's Department of Workforce Development's "La Crosse County Workforce Profile" provides insight into the regional employment forecast for the County. This section illustrates employment forecasts for the La Crosse County area. TABLE 25 lists the top 10 occupations experiencing the fastest growth rates and the most job openings in La Crosse County. Many of the fastest growing occupations fall into either the Architecture and Engineering, Computer and Mathematical, and Personal Care Service categories, followed by Business and Financial Operations.

TABLE 25. GROWING OCCUPATIONS IN LA CROSSE COUNTY

Occupation	Change in Jobs 2015-2020	% Change in Jobs 2015-2020
Production	767	14%
Educational Instruction and Library	473	11%
Business and Financial Operations	366	14%
Personal Care and Service	298	15%
Healthcare Support	295	8%
Computer and Mathematical	251	19%
Management	181	6%
Architecture and Engineering	180	21%
Construction and Extraction	137	5%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	76	1%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Information, Emsi Report 2020

CORONAVIRUS IMPACT PLANNING

In addition to its impact on public health, coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has caused a major economic shock. The nation has experienced the highest rates of unemployment since the Great Depression. La Crosse County had its highest unemployment rate in April 2020 at 12.3% while the State was at 13.6%.

The Town of Holland is home to 56 businesses employing 321 individuals (2014-2018 *American Community Survey*). In the midst of the pandemic, 93% of residents have access to internet at home allowing the option for virtual work and online education. In the Town of Holland, 63% of individuals are ages 18 to 64.

Potential individuals in the at-risk category for health and economic impacts of COVID-19 (based on Esri 2020 forecasts key indicators) include:

- 615 individuals based on age (65+)
- 3.1% of individuals have no health insurance
- 14 household within the community are without a registered vehicle
- 197 households have an individual with a disability
- 23 households are below the poverty line

Various organizations have created grants and programs for Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES Act Funding). These organizations include but are not limited to:

- Coulee Cap
- Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce
- U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development
- U.S. Economic Development Organization
- U.S. Small Business Administration
- Wisconsin Economic Development Organization
- Wisconsin Small Business Development Center
- Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES FOR FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Fostering economic development is always challenging to rural towns due to lack of infrastructure and minimal institutional economic development resources. Hamilton shares some of these issues but is at an advantage due to its strategic location and access to a regional business center (La Crosse).

It is important to view economic development in a larger or more regional context. The 2008 La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan identified the following strengths and weaknesses of the La Crosse economy:

Strengths

- Regional center
- Access to multiple transportation modes
- Low unemployment rate
- Great natural amenities
- Available land and building space
- High quality of life
- Educated and diverse workforce
- Topography and geography of the area
- Higher education opportunities
- Healthcare and medical facilities options
- Strong, diverse manufacturing base
- Diversity
- Regional economic base separate from larger population centers (Twin Cities, Milwaukee, Madison)

Weaknesses

- Lack of cooperation between communities
- Infrastructure limitations
- Isolation from larger population centers (Twin Cities, Milwaukee, Madison)
- Topography and geography of the area
- Per capita income below the State average
- Property tax system encourages sprawl

COUNTY, REGIONAL, AND STATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Numerous county, regional, and state economic development programs apply to the Hamilton. The following is a list of selected programs that could be beneficial to economic development in Hamilton.

County Programs

- La Crosse Business Fund

Regional Programs

- Western Wisconsin Technology Zone
- Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) programs administered through Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (ex. Public Works and Economic Development Programs, Economic Adjustment Program, etc.)

State Programs

- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Funding
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation Local Transportation Enhancements Program (TE)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation Local Transportation Economic Assistance Program (TEA)
- Value Added Dairy Initiative (Grow Wisconsin)
- Wisconsin Department of Commerce Enterprise Development Zone Program
- Wisconsin Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Program
- Wisconsin Department of Commerce Entrepreneurial training Grant
- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Programs (Business Attraction, Export, Entrepreneur, etc.)

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below are the Comprehensive Planning Goals described in State Statute that are related to the Economic Development Element. Following each goal is a discussion how they were addressed during the planning process.

- ***Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.***

This goal was addressed in the planning process in the Land Use Element as the land use map defined and identified economically productive areas and designated most of those areas in the Exclusive Agriculture land use district.

- ***Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.***

Implementation activities in this element promote a range of business activities that are desired in the Town of Hamilton. The element also stresses the importance of cooperation between local units of government and the recognition of a region economy.

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7) INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

This element of the Comprehensive Plan analyzes the relationship of Hamilton in terms of planning and decision making to adjacent local governmental units and quasi-public, regional, state, and federal governmental entities. It provides goals, objectives, and actions to increase intergovernmental cooperation and involvement. A description of the relationship between Hamilton and other local, regional, and state entities resides in this section.

GOAL 1

Promote programs policies, and development patterns that enhance and maintain Hamilton's identity.

GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton, Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska continue to explore cooperation options. Such cooperation options or agreements should strive to meet the following criteria for the Town of Hamilton:
 - Maintain the Town of Hamilton's identity by keeping a town presence (maintaining property adjacent to the highway with the Town limits) on Highway 16 west of the Village of West Salem
 - Preserve the rural appearance of the town and area (protect view sheds)
 - Minimize commercial/industrial development on/adjacent to State Highway 16 between the City of Onalaska and Village of West Salem
- b) Support the development of a county conservation subdivision ordinance that can be utilized in the Town of Hamilton as means of maintaining the Town's rural landscape.

GOAL 2

Maintain cooperative relationships with local, state, and federal governments and agencies.

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Continue and build upon existing road maintenance agreements with the Town of Onalaska, Town of Medary and Town of Burns. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton formalize all "road maintenance sharing agreements" with neighboring towns to ensure the services continue to be provided efficiently and any liability issues are addressed.
- b) Support county and regional economic development efforts to improve the local economy by increasing the number of employment opportunities and tax base.
- c) Work with the County Highway Department and neighboring towns on finding efficiencies in road construction and maintenance responsibilities. The Town of Hamilton continuing to maintain active communications with the WisDOT, County Highway Department and neighboring towns will aide to implement the policy.
- d) Continue participation in the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's WISLR program which helps ensure state road aid funding. In addition, the WISLR program can help participants in identifying budgeting efficiencies.
- e) Continue to be an active member of the La Crosse County Towns Association. Attending meetings of the La Crosse County Towns Association is important to the Town of Hamilton in maintaining open dialogue with its neighboring towns and county agencies. Membership in this association and meeting attendance will be important in identifying and resolving any

conflicts that may arise with neighboring towns by providing a forum for communication. Therefore, the plan recommends the Town Board continue attendance at Towns Association meetings.

- f) Utilize the La Crosse County Planning Departments website capabilities/links to provide information regarding the Town of Hamilton to interested residents and neighboring municipalities.
- g) Continue to maintain county administered zoning and police protection. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton continue to utilize the administrative capabilities of the county about Zoning Ordinance administration and protective services.

GOAL 3

Review and evaluate neighboring municipalities comprehensive plans to ensure consistency and compatible development.

GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Review and evaluate neighboring towns comprehensive plans. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton reviews and evaluates the comprehensive plans of neighboring governmental units as they are developed or revised in order to identify areas of potential conflict and/or coordination opportunities.
- b) Continue to review and remain active in the La Crosse County Comprehensive Planning process. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton reviews and evaluates the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan as it is developed and revised in order to identify areas of potential conflict and/or cooperation opportunities. In particular, participate with county initiatives that improve public transportation, emergency services, and zoning and planning services/programs.
- c) Strive to maintain an open dialogue with the five school districts that serve the Town of Hamilton in order to evaluate the school districts facility/educational needs.

GOAL 4

Explore developing boundary agreements/service agreements with neighboring municipalities and governmental agencies.

GOAL 4 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Consider cooperative agreements for police protection with local and regional units of government.
- b) Strive to maintain cooperative agreements for fire protection with area municipalities. Historically, this cooperative agreement has been vital to efficiently providing emergency services to town residents. This plan recommends the Town of Hamilton's continued participation in the joint fire department.
- c) Evaluate joint purchases and sharing of materials/equipment with neighboring municipalities to provide community services in the most efficient manner possible.

GOAL 5

Plan for growth of Hamilton in conjunction with future development in the Village of West Salem and focus future expansion near the existing built environment of the Village.

GOAL 5 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Continue to meet with the Village of West Salem to ensure future development in the area is compatible and a benefit to each community.
- b) It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton continue to evaluate and analyze cooperative boundary agreement(s) with the Village of West Salem, City of Onalaska, and potentially the Village of Bangor over the planning period. Explore the feasibility of revenue sharing and the extension of public utilities to Town of Hamilton developments.

The Town of Hamilton, located in La Crosse County and as previously described, is bordered on the north by the Town of Farmington, on the south by the Town of Barre, on

the east by the Town of Burns and Town of Bangor, and on the west by the Towns of Medary and Onalaska. The incorporated Village of West Salem lies within the boundaries of the Town of Hamilton. The school districts of West Salem, Onalaska, Holmen, Melrose-Mindoro and Bangor serve the residents of the Town of Hamilton. The Town historically has maintained positive relationships with its neighboring municipalities and jurisdictions.

State and Federal Agencies

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)

The Town of Hamilton has little contact with the WDNR. The WDNR does have jurisdiction over the waterways in the Town of Hamilton and maintains floodplain regulations that are enforced through the County Zoning Office. No intergovernmental conflicts were identified in the planning process.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)

Hamilton is part of WisDOT Southwest District and participates in the WisDOT Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) program. The WISLR program maintains a complete listing of public roads in the Town of Hamilton by jurisdiction, classification, and number of miles. This program assists in the facilitation of state funding for town road maintenance. Hamilton also participates, as requested, in State Roadway projects.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

The Town of Hamilton has minimal interaction with federal agencies. In the event of a natural disaster (flooding, tornado, etc.) FEMA would be the federal agency to assist in relief efforts. The Town recognizes this and has participated in the development of the La Crosse County All Hazards Mitigation Plan.

Regional Planning Jurisdiction

Hamilton is located within the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission's (MRRPC) jurisdiction. The MRRPC prepares and adopts regional or county-wide plans and represents Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pierce, Pepin, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties. The RPC was established to:

- Carry out comprehensive and intergovernmental planning;
- Have jurisdiction throughout the seven-county area, including incorporated and unincorporated areas;
- Meet area-wide requirements so local jurisdictions could receive federal grants;
- Provide an organization to receive federal grants.

Hamilton is also located within the Western Wisconsin Technology Zone which allows up to \$5M in state income tax credits and is administered by the MRRPC. The MRRPC also administers the La Crosse County Business Fund.

LA CROSSE COUNTY

La Crosse County encompasses 481 square miles and is in western Wisconsin along the Mississippi River. The County's 2019 population was estimated at 118,016. La Crosse County is approximately 150 miles southeast of Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN, 175 miles from Waterloo, Iowa, and 145 miles from Madison, WI. The County is comprised of 18 local units of government: 12 towns, 4 villages, and 2 cities. Interstate 90 and the La Crosse River bisect the County from east to west. Trempealeau and Jackson County border La Crosse County to the north, Monroe County lies to the East, Vernon County lies to the south, and the Mississippi River and Minnesota lie to the west. The County is currently working on an updated Comprehensive Plan, which is an update to the County's existing plan, the La Crosse County Development Plan 2020. In addition, the County has adopted numerous other plans, studies, and ordinances that provide policy and direction to local communities, such as Hamilton, including:

- La Crosse County, Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Plan, 1980 –Amended in 2014
- La Crosse County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, 1998 – Amended in 2020
- La Crosse County Land & Water Resource Management Plan, 1999 – Amended in 2020
- Zoning Ordinance – Comprehensive Revision in 2012
- Land Division Ordinance

La Crosse County is also party to general cooperative agreements for fire, police, rescue, road maintenance, solid waste, recycling, and other services with several towns, villages, and cities in the County.

SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES

In general the Town of Hamilton has maintained strong intergovernmental relationships with its neighboring local units of government. A testament to this is the operation of the joint fire department consisting of the local governments of the Village of West Salem, Town of Hamilton, and Town of Barre. The joint department has mutual aid agreements with the surrounding fire departments. The operation of the joint first responders group is another example of intergovernmental relationships. These are excellent examples of intergovernmental cooperation to provide needed services. This type of cooperation has minimized any intergovernmental conflicts.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Hamilton is serviced by five school districts with the West Salem School District servicing the majority of the town. The school district has recently constructed updated facilities enabling it to meet the immediate needs of the district. During the planning process no intergovernmental conflicts were identified with the districts.

Existing or Potential Conflicts and Processes to Resolve Conflicts

Development pressures, maintaining rural character, balancing development, agriculture, and commercial.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below is the Comprehensive Planning Goal described in State Statute that is related to the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element. Following the goal is a discussion how it was addressed during the planning process.

- *Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.*

The policy recommendations and actions previously discussed in this element clearly demonstrate that coordination and cooperation of the Town of Hamilton with nearby units of government are not only encouraged but vital to the Town of Hamilton providing services and maintaining the existing quality of life residents enjoy.

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8) LAND USE

This element of the Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives, and actions to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property. The element contains an analysis on opportunities for redevelopment and existing or potential land use conflicts. The element also explains future land use designations and delineates these uses on the Future Land Use Map.

GOAL 1

Focus residential growth in Hamilton to designated planned areas encouraging growth in locations with adequate sewer and water capabilities, on marginal agricultural land, adjacent to existing residential development with suitable public road access.

GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) At the discretion of the Town, require new commercial/residential developments to prepare a community impact analysis which illustrates the impact of the proposed development on the town's transportation system, area school systems, tax base and any other information the town determines necessary. It is recommended that Hamilton determine the development threshold at which a community impact analysis will be required.
- b) Request from La Crosse County that the non-residential acre "plan review guideline" established in the La Crosse County Plan be increased for the Town of Hamilton from 40 to 60 acres to accommodate increased commercial/industrial development in the Town of Hamilton.
- c) It is recommended that development be minimized on land defined as agricultural land. Agricultural land is a common term but depending on the user has a wide range of definitions. To clarify the term in the context of the comprehensive plan agricultural land is defined as soils designated as Class I, II, III on the Town of Hamilton Soils Map.
- d) It is recommended that development (building/driveway construction) be prohibited on slopes greater than 30% to preserve bluffs and minimize soil erosion. The Town of Hamilton supports limiting development on slopes between 20%-30%. It is recommended that developments (building/driveway construction) requested on slopes between 20%-30% be required to receive a conditional use/special exception permit that will address erosion control, emergency access, and any additional site conditions deemed applicable by the reviewing bodies. Developments (building/driveway construction) on slopes less than 20% would be considered permitted and would only require standard building/zoning permits.

GOAL 2

Encourage cluster development in suitable areas over inefficient scattered residential development patterns.

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Promote and Define Conservation Subdivisions
Information collected and reviewed during the planning process and previous comprehensive plan demonstrated that conservation subdivisions would benefit the future development of the Town of Hamilton and assist the town in meeting its planning goals. A conservation subdivision can be described as a development with common open space and compact clustered lots. A purpose of conservation subdivisions is to preserve agricultural land/open space/natural resources while allowing for residential development. Conservation subdivisions, when developed in the Town of Hamilton, will allow for the projected future residential development to occur in the Town while at the same time

reduce development costs for the landowner, minimize future maintenance and service costs for the Town, and the conservation subdivision will help preserve the rural character of the Town. Traditional rural land use regulations and non-regulated rural developments typically create scattered development patterns. Often large lots (5 acres or more) are required by the regulating unit of government resulting in requiring rural residential development to consume large amounts of land which promotes scattered development, encourages inefficient land use, and facilitates land uses that compete with traditional agricultural.

- b) It is recommended that as residential development proposals are presented to the Town Board that conservation subdivision standards are recommended to be utilized when applicable. To achieve this, it is recommended that the Town of Hamilton work with La Crosse County in developing a conservation subdivision ordinance to be utilized in the Town of Hamilton. In addition, determine if conservation subdivision design standards should be required on all new developments.
- c) It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton implement "Coulee Visions" planning principles when considering approval of new developments. Coulee Visions was developed as a guide that illustrates land use and transportation planning alternatives for local units of government when preparing comprehensive plans. Coulee Visions focuses on:
 - Revitalize core areas
 - Encourage redevelopment
 - Discourage "sprawl" type development
 - Reduce public infrastructure costs
 - Do not move jobs from one community to another
 - Reduce vehicular travel demand
 - Increase capacity through transportation system management
 - Preserve existing infrastructure
 - Improve and expand transit system
 - Enhance bicycle and pedestrian system effectiveness
- d) Evaluate development proposals based on their design and location with the purpose of discouraging proposals that promote scattered development.

GOAL 3

Encourage agriculture and agriculture-related businesses and the preservation of agricultural land.

GOAL 3 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Enforce standards for rezoning of "Exclusive Agricultural" lands. Findings for rezoning are based upon the consideration of:
 - Adequate public facilities to accommodate development either exist or will be provided within a reasonable time.
 - Provision of public facilities to accommodate development will not place and unreasonable burden on the ability of affected local units of government to provide them.
 - The land proposed for rezoning is suitable for development and development will not result in undue water or air pollution, cause unreasonable soil erosion, or have and unreasonably adverse effect on rare or irreplaceable natural areas.
 - b) Develop a review process for new residences proposed to be in Exclusive Agriculture areas. Consider adopting an ordinance/policy requiring applications for new residences in Exclusive Agriculture areas to appear before the Town Board or Plan Commission for the location of the new residence to be reviewed. The reviewing board shall take into consideration the soils, slope, driveway location, existing agricultural uses, etc. when reviewing the proposed location.
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- c) An issue brought up during the planning process that the Plan Commission felt needed to be addressed was that from time to time when property owners in the Exclusive Agriculture District have constructed second homes for immediate family members, per the County Zoning Ordinance the property the home is constructed on remains in Exclusive Agriculture. There have been instances when the residence has been sold to a non-family member without being rezoned to a residential district. When the new owner attempts to make improvements to the existing structure they are then required to have the property rezoned. When these cases arise, the Town of Hamilton recommends that the rezoning requests be approved and be considered consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

GOAL 4

Preserve the existing rural lifestyle within the town (rural setting, openness, friendly neighbors, family, overall quality of life)

GOAL 4 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) It is recommended that future land use decisions be based on and be consistent with the adopted land use map developed during this planning process and described in this planning element.
- b) Residential Housing in Exclusive Agriculture Areas
The plan recognizes that from time to time low density residential development will be proposed for locations in the Town of Hamilton designated as Exclusive Agriculture. The plan recommends that when these cases arise that they go through a rezoning process. The time for the necessary approvals is anticipated to take approximately 3-5 months provided the proposal meets the rate of development described in the following paragraph. It was clear during the planning process, that substantial residential growth was not desired by town residents. Therefore, a 3-5 month review process was determined to be acceptable and necessary to properly review such development proposals. It is important to understand that by applying for a zoning change does not guarantee its approval. Such decisions will be made by the Town Plan Commission, Town Board, and County Board based on the recommendations and public processes identified in the plan.

It is further recommended that in cases where Exclusive Agriculture properties are requested for residential development that they be developed at a rate as defined by the Exclusive Agriculture District (1 house per 35 acres). For example, if a landowner owns 140 acres designated as Exclusive Agriculture and requests rezoning for a certain number of new housing units, the number of new housing units recommended to be permitted will be based on a rate of 1 house per 35 acres. To calculate the number of new housing units permitted the reviewing committees will take the number of acres owned by the property owner (140) and divide that acreage by 35, which results in 4 new housing units permitted. In the case of a fractional answer, the fractional number will be rounded up if it is equal to or exceeds .75. In the future, residential rezoning requests pertaining to the affected properties (all 140 original acres) will be taken into consideration with the intent to avoid reutilizing the acreages for the purpose of permitting additional residential development. To be eligible for such a request a property owner must own a minimum of 35 contiguous acres. It is important to understand that for the purposes of the above calculations, a parcel is defined as all property owned by a landowner that is contiguous. Contiguous property includes property under the same ownership that is adjacent or separated by a public road or stream. In addition, an existing residence on the parent parcel will not be counted against the density permitted as determined by the calculation. The minimum lot size for the proposed housing site(s) is recommended to be a minimum of 1 acre.

Once it is determined that no further housing units are permitted to be constructed based on the density rate of the parent parcel, at the discretion of the Town Board the property

owner must record an affidavit restricting (or other enforceable document) further residential development on the property.

Upon receiving requests for zoning changes meeting the density requirements stated above, the Town Board and Town Plan Commission will evaluate a request and formulate a recommendation in favor/opposed to the request based on the following criteria/questions:

1. Has the property remained under the same ownership for 10 or more years?
 2. Is the property to be developed non-productive agricultural land?
 3. To determine if land is non-productive agricultural land the Town Plan Commission and Town Board will take into consideration:
 - the slope of the site
 - the productivity of the soils based on the La Crosse County Soil Survey with the preference of preserving Class I, II, and III soils.
 - the five year crop history for the site to determine the past productivity of the land (information to be provided by the applicant)
- c) If multiple single-family units are proposed will clustered development principles be utilized?
- d) Will the project minimize the need for additional transportation infrastructure or substantial improvements to existing transportation infrastructure?
- e) Does the location of the proposed housing development avoid when possible impacting the rural lifestyle of adjoining property owners?
- e) It is recommended that failure (a "no" response to any of the criteria) of the applicant to satisfactorily meet any of the criteria listed will result in the Town Board and/or Town Plan Commission denying the request.
- f) Rezoning requests adhering to the above requirements/parameters and process shall be considered consistent with the Land Use Element of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan. In addition, it is intended that this process and criteria developed by the Town of Hamilton be viewed by the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors as a method to ensure consistency in future planning and development.
- g) Continue to coordinate planning efforts with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska on parcels adjacent to municipal boundaries.
- h) Evaluate La Crosse County's proposed voluntary Purchase of Development Rights Program and determine if it would benefit the Town of Hamilton and aid in preserving productive agricultural lands.
- i) Increase Plan Commission and Town Board officials' knowledge of the planning and zoning process as well as comprehensive plan implementation tools. Support attendance at meetings and training opportunities for elected or appointed officials.

GOAL 5

Minimize additional commercial and industrial development along the Highway 16 corridor to maintain the identity of Hamilton.

GOAL 5 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) It is recommended that to maintain the identity of the Town of Hamilton and its rural appearance that no additional commercial or industrial development be permitted along the Highway 16 Corridor from the Village of West Salem limits west to the Town of Hamilton west town line. All development proposals reviewed by the Town Board along this corridor should be reviewed with the purpose and emphasis of maintaining the Town's identity and rural character.
- b) The plan recommends that the Town Board research and consider "charter town" status for the Town of Hamilton if it is determined to be in the best interest of the town and its residents. Legislation has been drafted regarding defining and authorizing Charter Towns. Such

legislation would provide towns with more independence and authority to maintain their boundaries.

- c) It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton participate in joint meetings with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska and explore cooperation options. Such cooperation options or agreements should strive to meet the following criteria for the Town of Hamilton:
 - Maintain the Town of Hamilton's identity by keeping a presence (maintaining property adjacent to the highway within the Town limits) on Highway 16 west of the Village of West Salem
 - Preserve the rural appearance of the town and area (protect view sheds)
 - Minimize commercial/industrial development on/adjacent to State Highway 16 between the City of Onalaska and Village of West Salem
- d) It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton and La Crosse County explore long range options for the preservation of agricultural land within the corridor. Options should address compensation for landowners in the corridor for maintaining open space (voluntary purchase of development rights, conservancy organizations/programs, etc.).

GOAL 6

Balance individual property rights with the property rights of neighbors and the common good of Hamilton.

GOAL 6 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Continue to follow the planning process in the adopted "Town of Hamilton Public Participation Plan" which detailed activities to gain public input through public meetings, public surveys, and public awareness of the planning process. Following the public participation plan will ensure that balance in the form of public input and opinions will be achieved during the planning process.
- b) b. Utilize public input in the planning process and update the comprehensive plan a minimum of once every 10 years.

EXISTING LAND USE

There are over 25,000 acres in the township. 54% of the acres in Hamilton are classified as agricultural, followed by 20% agricultural forest, and forest. 7% of acreage is classified as residential, and 5% is undeveloped (TABLE 26). In the last 15 years, there have been modest shifts between agricultural and forest-related classes, and an increase of about 500 acres in residential.

TABLE 26. HAMILTON ACRES BY REAL PROPERTY CLASS

Real Property Class		2005	2010	2015	2020
Total Real Property	Acres	27,782	26,748	25,934	25,485
	Difference in Acres from the previous year	-341	-471	-363	-115
Agricultural	Acres	15,920	15,865	14,330	13,692
	Difference in Acres from the previous year	75	-263	-1	-622
Agricultural Forest	Acres	4,111	3,973	4,581	5,002
	Difference in Acres from the previous year	4,111	-22	-59	586
Commercial	Acres	384	324	326	351

	Difference in Acres from the previous year	0	4	0	5
Forest	Acres	5,204	3,762	3,012	2,965
	Difference in Acres from the previous year	-4,575	-158	-305	172
Manufacturing	Acres	101	114	76	76
	Difference in Acres from the previous year	0	-1	0	0
Other	Acres	395	309	273	264
	Difference in Acres from the previous year	0	-11	-2	-11
Residential	Acres	1,330	1,585	1,670	1,833
	Difference in Acres from the previous year	51	-14	7	129
Undeveloped	Acres	337	816	1,666	1,302
	Difference in Acres from the previous year	-3	-6	-3	-374

In terms of land use value, residential parcel classes account for 78% of the total value in Hamilton (TABLE 27). Commercial (7%), and other (6%) follow. Despite comprising a large percentage of the land area, agriculture and forest-related property represents less than 5% of total value.

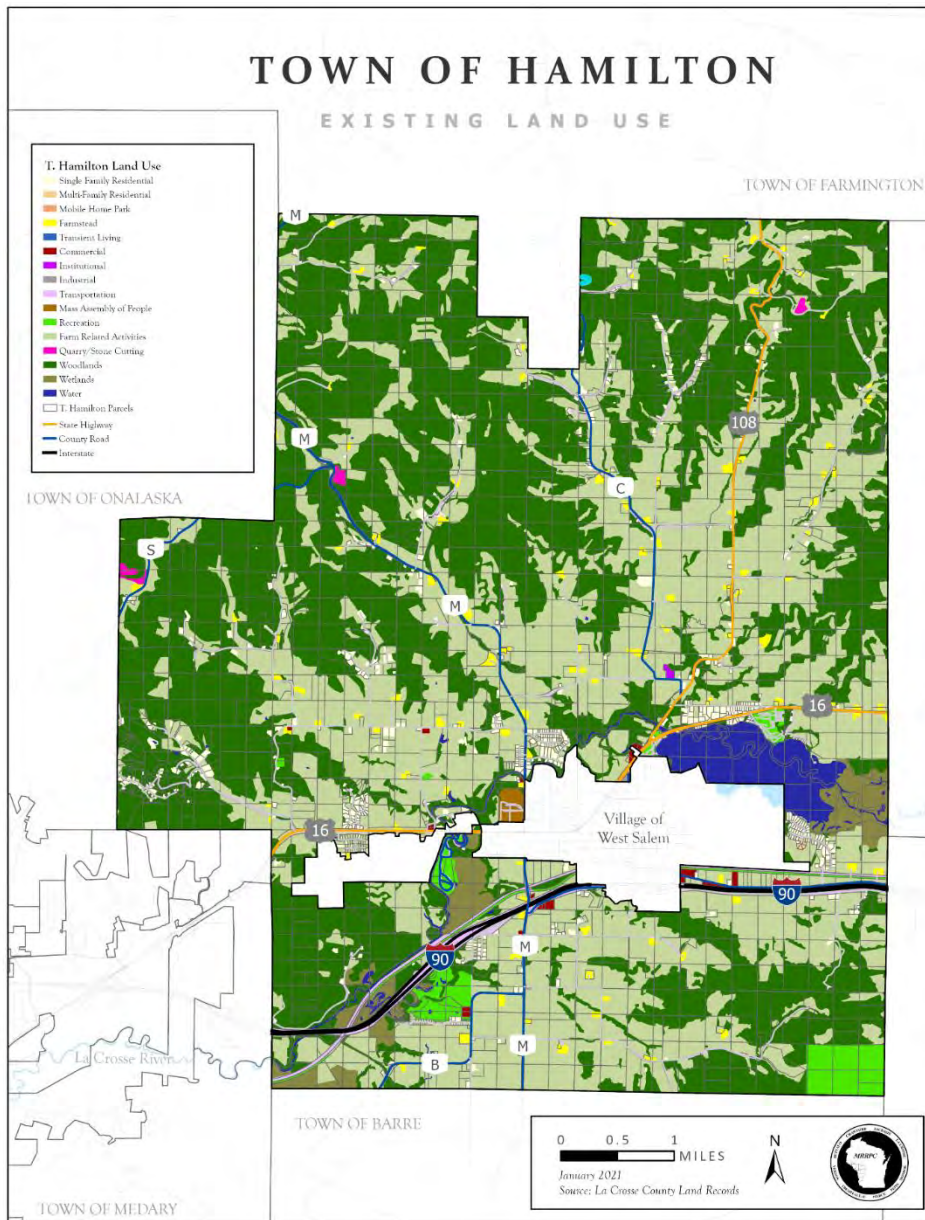
TABLE 27. LAND USE INVENTORY - BY VALUE

Land Type	Value	Percent of Land Use (rounded)
All	310,482,100	
Residential	242,201,100	78%
Other	18,304,100	6%
Commercial	21,414,600	7%
Productive Forest Land	11,974,100	4%
Agricultural Forest	10,494,500	3%
Personal	1,622,200	<1%
Agricultural	2,267,600	<1%
Undeveloped	1,674,400	<1%
Manufacturing	529,500	<1%
Wisconsin Department of Revenue Equalized Value Data Visualization Tool (wi.gov)		

LAND USE SUPPLY

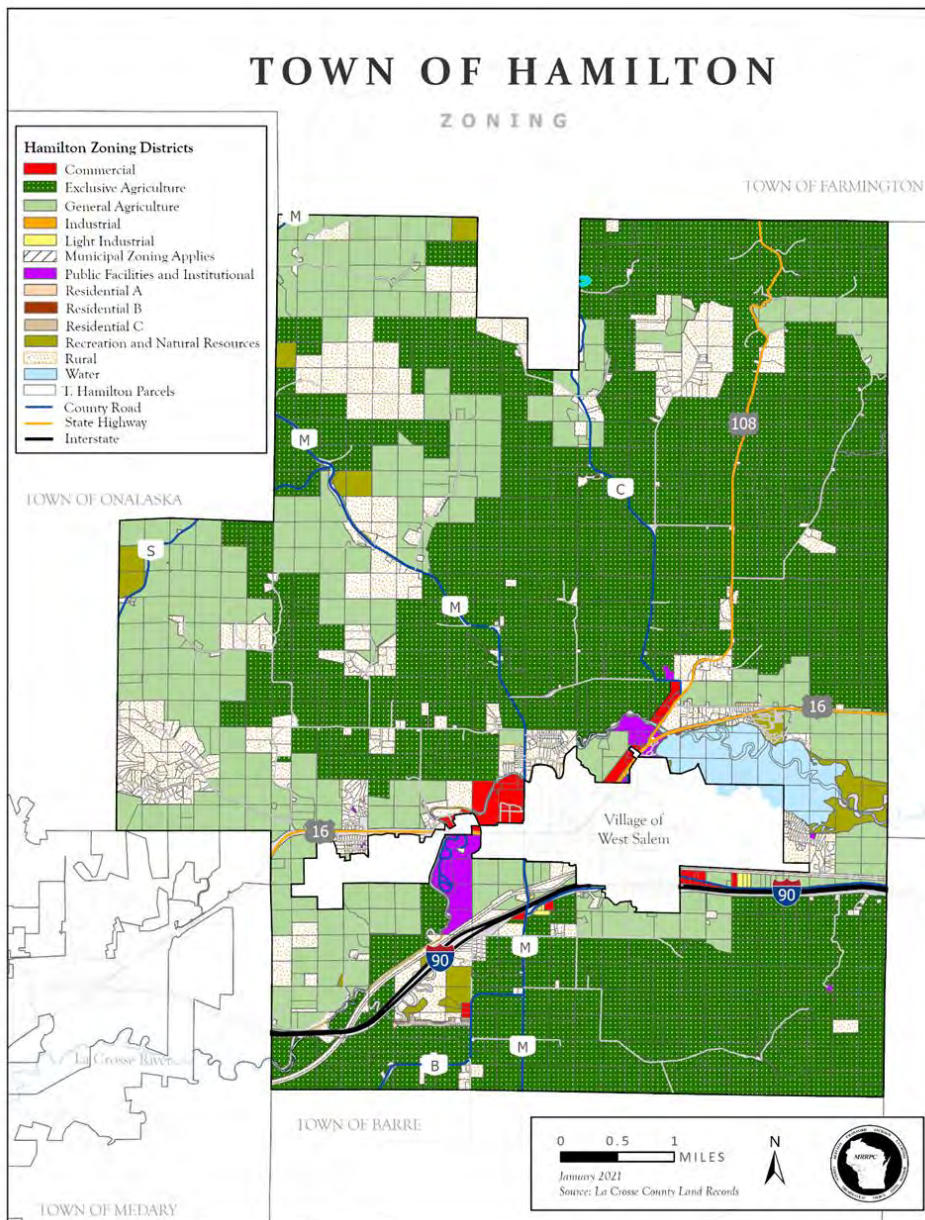
Hamilton's land supply is based on several factors including physical suitability, local and county regulations, and community goals. Intergovernmental agreements and annexations are also considerations when looking at the available land supply at the

FIGURE 16. EXISTING LAND USE



community level. Based on physical suitability, there is a supply of land that could be used to support development in the Town. Local policy will more closely determine how this supply is defined and how it is used. FIGURE 16 shows existing land use in Hamilton. Hamilton zoning is consistent with La Crosse County and is shown in FIGURE 17 below.

FIGURE 17. HAMILTON ZONING



LAND USE DEMAND

As noted earlier, demand for land in Hamilton and surround rural areas continues to grow at a moderate pace. Development pressures from the La Crosse metro area are a concern, but the Town has taken steps to maintain rural character and quality of life. Due to Hamilton's location near expanding urban areas some unique agricultural uses have evolved to meet demand of neighboring areas. A corn maze is operated seasonally each fall to celebrate the Fall season adjacent to US Highway 16 on the west side of West Salem. In addition, riding stables provide boarding and equestrian activities are operated in Hamilton. As a result of residential supply and demand, residential real estate sale price averages have risen to among the highest in the region (FIGURE 18). Average sale prices in Hamilton have risen about \$60k since 2011. County residential sales patterns are shown in FIGURE 19.

FIGURE 18. RESIDENTIAL SALES - HAMILTON

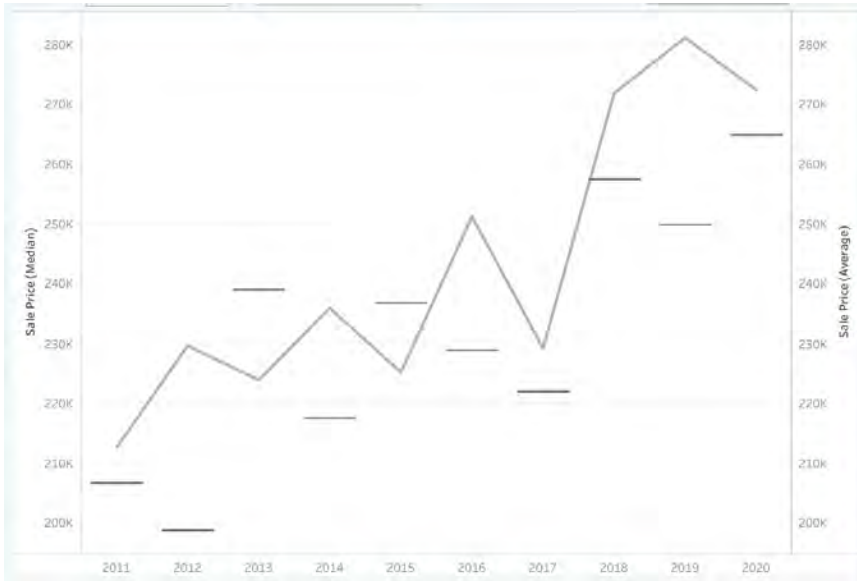
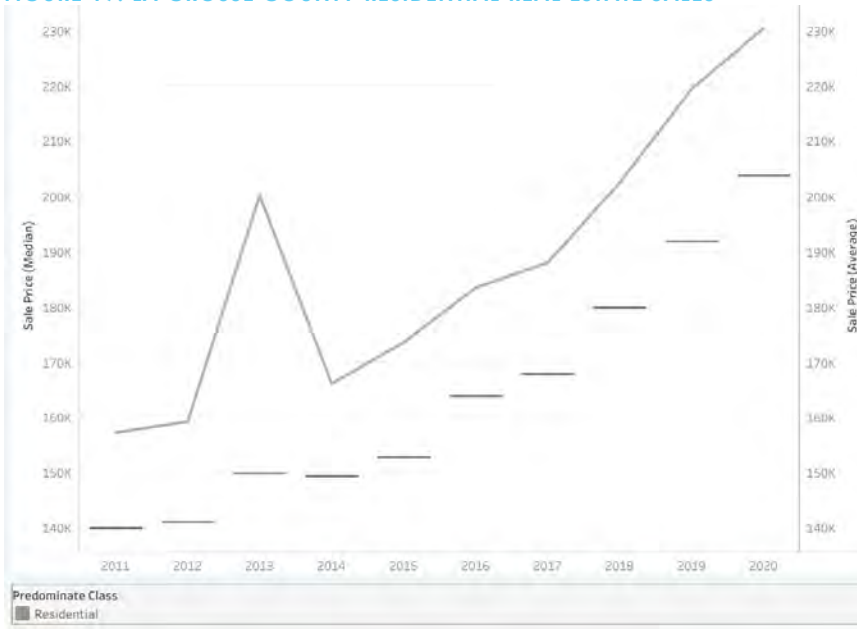


FIGURE 19. LA CROSSE COUNTY RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE SALES



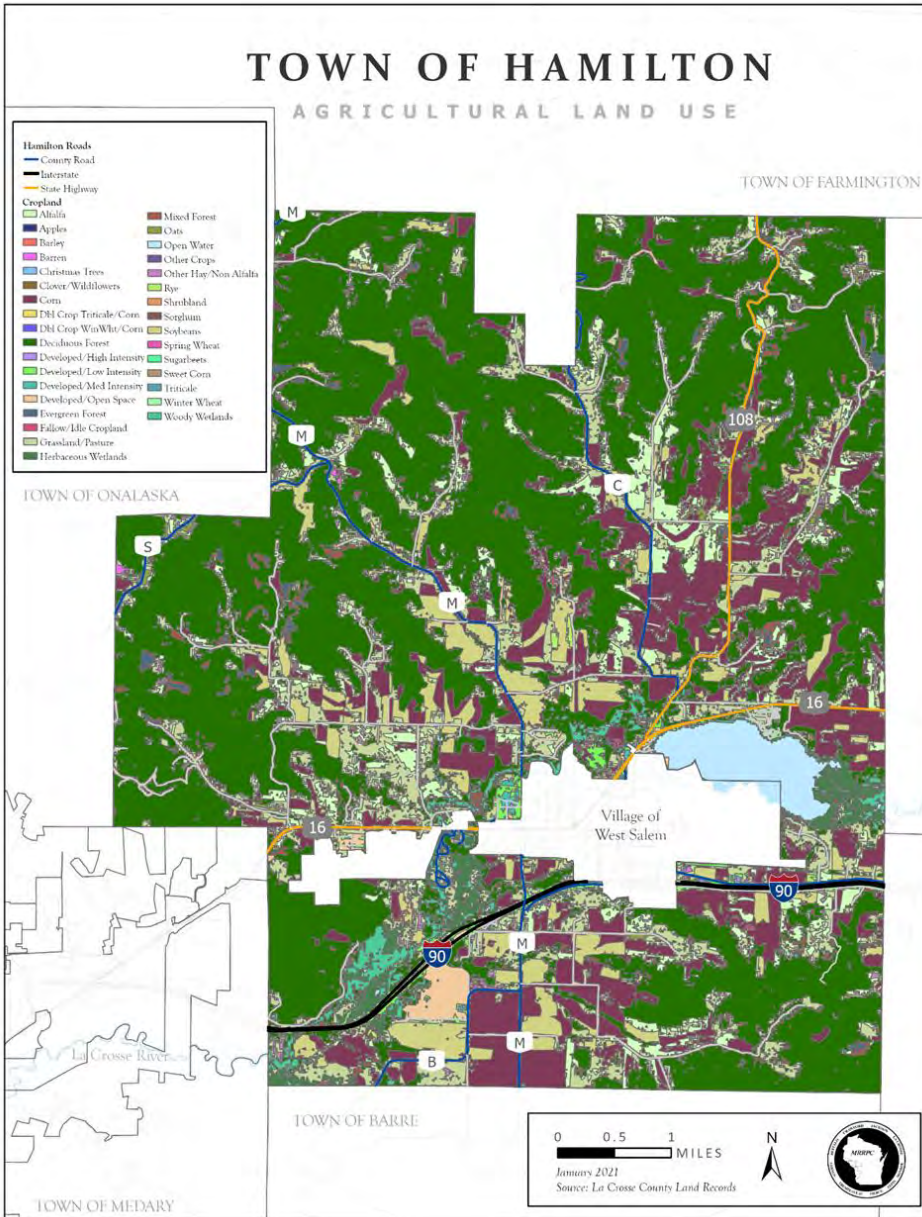
DEVELOPMENT DENSITY

Development density remains relatively low for the area, but consistent with surrounding townships (TABLE 28).

TABLE 28. POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD DENSITY, 2020

	Population	Housing Units	Total Area (Sq Miles)	Population (per sq mile)	Housing Units (per sq mile)
Town of Hamilton	2,498	949	54.25	46	17.5
Village of West Salem	5,035	1,994	3.44	1,472	583.0
La Crosse County	120,515	51,291	480	266.6	113.5
Source: US Census Bureau 2010, Esri forecasts 2020					

FIGURE 20. AGRICULTURAL LAND USE



FUTURE LAND USE PROJECTIONS

At current density for residential acres, TABLE 29 displays scenarios for residential demand based on earlier population and housing unit projections. As shown in row A, current land demand could increase to nearly 2,100 acres in 2040 from the current 1,833, assuming the current housing unit density of 1.93 per acre. Alternatively, holding residential acreage constant would result in a density change from 1.93 to 1.69 units per acre by 2040.

TABLE 29. DENSITY PROJECTIONS

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	2598	2,780	2,895	2,975	3,065
Housing Units	949	980	1,027	1,055	1,087
A) Residential Acres	1833	1,892.9*	1,982.9*	2,037.7*	2,099.3*
B) Density with Current Residential Acres	1.93	1.87	1.79	1.74	1.69
*increase in acreage using current residential housing unit density					

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT

Hamilton does not currently have redevelopment opportunities, or a formal “Main Street”. At present, the current town hall will present a development opportunity once the new facility is constructed. However, this will be annexed to West Salem, per a previous agreement.

EXISTING OR POTENTIAL LAND USE CONFLICTS

An important part of the planning process is identifying land use conflicts and providing ways to minimize their impact. Previously in the plan, the following existing and potential land use conflicts were identified.

Below each existing/potential land use conflict is a description of the method utilized or recommended to address each item.

Ongoing conflicts between the desire to preserve the rural character and agricultural appearance of the town with increased development pressure and private property owner's interests.

- The Plan Commission believes that the comprehensive planning process and development of a land use map is working to minimize this conflict. Future planning updates recommended at a minimum of 10 years will continue to address this issue.

Identification of Smart Growth Areas

- This conflict is addressed in the development of Land Use Map by identifying residential growth areas near existing developments adjacent to the Village of West Salem as “Smart Growth Areas”. It is recommended that

Wisconsin Local Comprehensive Planning Goals

1. BALANCE INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS WITH COMMUNITY INTERESTS AND GOALS.
2. PROMOTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT OF LANDS WITH EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE AND REHABILITATION OF EXISTING RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES.
3. ENCOURAGEMENT OF LAND USES, DENSITIES AND REGULATIONS THAT PROMOTE EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND RELATIVELY LOW MUNICIPAL, STATE GOVERNMENTAL AND UTILITY COSTS.
4. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF LAND USES THAT CREATE OR PRESERVE VARIED AND UNIQUE URBAN AND RURAL COMMUNITIES.

cooperation with the Village of West Salem on future plan updates be continued to address locations for "Smart Growth Areas".

Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska's expansion and growth into the Town of Hamilton

- It is recommended that this planning document be shared with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska and that periodically joint meetings between the respective Boards and Councils be conducted.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

Land use categories are consistent with La Crosse County, and Hamilton coordinates with the County on development applications regularly. This section will be updated as the County Comprehensive Plan is completed in mid-2022.

FUTURE LAND USE

In accordance with feedback in surveys and the continued desire of residents for Hamilton to retain rural character, with targeted development for commercial opportunities, the future land use only includes minor changes. Rural residential has been designated north of Old Neshonoc Road, and Commercial has been designated on Buol Road near I-90 (FIGURE 21).

TOWN OF HAMILTON

FUTURE LAND USE

Existing Land Use

- Single Family
- Multi-Family
- Mobile Home Park
- Farmstead
- Transient Living
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Industrial
- Transportation
- Mass Assembly of People
- Recreation
- Farm Related Activities
- Quarry/Stone Cutting
- Woodlands
- Wetlands
- Water

Future Land Use

- Rural Residential
- Commercial

Map of the Town of Hamilton showing Future Land Use. The map is color-coded according to the legend. Major roads are shown as grey lines with route numbers. Water bodies are blue. The map includes an inset of the town's location within the County of Hamilton and a north arrow with a scale bar.

Map of the Town of Hamilton showing Future Land Use. The map is color-coded according to the legend. Major roads are shown as grey lines with route numbers. Water bodies are blue. The map includes an inset of the town's location within the County of Hamilton and a north arrow with a scale bar.

As noted, commercial land use is encouraged by the Town to continue along major corridors, including County M and County C. A current roster of businesses is shown in TABLE 30.

TABLE 30. HAMILTON BUSINESSES

Location	Businesses
South of West Salem: County M and County C	West Salem Planing and Moulding, Cal West Seeds, Becker Trailers, Tractor Central, Advanced Pumping
Southeast of West Salem on County B	Cottage Grove Nursery, Coulee Region RV Center, Schwans, Sandoz Seeds, RL Carriers, Maxwell-White Plumbing
North of West Salem on County M	7 Rivers Home Improvements, Salem Auto Body, La Crosse County Fairgrounds
West of West Salem on Highway 16	Thunder Valley Taxidermy, Corn Maze
Northeast of West Salem on Highway 16	Jolly's Home Grown, Linda's Bakery, Neshonoc Campground



Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below are the Comprehensive Planning Goals described in State Statute that are related to the Land Use Element. Following each goal is a discussion how they were addressed during the planning process.

1. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.

This goal was addressed in the planning process through the creation and adoption of a Public Participation Plan which detailed activities to gain public input through public meetings, public surveys, and general public awareness of the planning process.

2. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.

In the preparation of the plan this goal was reviewed by the Town of Hamilton Plan Commission and the redevelopment of properties was not applicable to the town since much of the town is undeveloped. The plan does encourage the maintenance of existing structures by recommending the continued enforcement of the Uniform Dwelling Code.

3. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.

The goal was met by encouraging conservation subdivisions for residential developments, focusing development near the Village of West Salem (potential public sewer and water availability) and utilizing "Coulee Visions" land use principles.

4. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.

This goal is addressed by utilizing various land use districts that encourage the preservation of agricultural land and promote the use of conservation subdivisions.

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9) IMPLEMENTATION

This element of the plan is a compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence, including proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, or subdivision ordinances. The element describes how each of the elements of the comprehensive plan will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive plan and shall include a mechanism to measure the local governmental unit's progress toward achieving all aspects of the comprehensive plan.

GOAL 1

Provide the opportunity for the public to have continued input in the plan and plan implementation

GOAL 1 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan will be updated at a minimum once every 10 years. During the plan update process resident involvement will be incorporated by notification of public meetings, updated surveys and a public hearing being held on any modifications. The plan update will include measuring plan performance at achieving goals, revising statistical information, updating projections and analysis of past projections. The final stage of the update process will include revising and/or updating implementation strategies to meet the changing needs of the Town.
- b) Plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. recommended for development and implementation because of the planning process will be developed and/or approved by the Town Board and/or the Town Plan Commission both of which hold public meetings that are open to the public to attend and comment.

GOAL 2

Explore policies, programs, and other methods to implement the various recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

GOAL 2 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

- a) Each element of the comprehensive plan detailed plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. to be developed or utilized to implement the comprehensive plan. As a means to organize, schedule and monitor the implementation of the plan, a implementation schedule has been created as part of the implementation element.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below is the Comprehensive Planning Goal described in State Statute that is related to the Implementation Element. Following the goal is a discussion how it was addressed during the planning process.

- *Building community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.*

As described throughout the planning process the Town of Hamilton is a rural town with no main street or specific design standards. However, the Town does have a rural identity of which its residents indicated they desired to maintain. The recommendations in the Land Use Element specifically address methods to maintain the Town's identity. In

addition, the plan recommends continued cooperation with the La Crosse County Zoning Department in the administration of county zoning ordinances in the Town.

REGULATORY MEASURES

Regulatory measures used to guide development are an important means of implementing the recommendations of a comprehensive plan. Various examples, including the County zoning ordinance and Hamilton development regulations, comprise the principal regulatory devices used to protect existing development as well as help to guide future growth and development as identified in this Plan. The Town, County or State officially adopts these regulatory and land use control measures as ordinances (or as revisions to the existing ordinances).

ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning is used to guide and control the use of land and structures on land. In addition, zoning establishes detailed regulations concerning the areas of lots that may be developed, including setbacks and separation for structures, the density of the development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose for zoning is to avoid undesirable side effects of development by segregating incompatible uses and by maintaining adequate standards for individual uses.

The establishment of zoning districts is generally conducted after careful consideration of the development patterns indicated in the Plan. Amending zoning district boundaries has the overall effect of changing the plan (unless amendments correspond to changes within the plan), therefore, it is reasonable to assume that indiscriminate changes may result in weakening of the plan. La Crosse County controls the content of the zoning ordinance and Hamilton along with the County determine the local district map. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and Plan Commission recommendations.

Action: The existing La Crosse County ordinance is sufficient for current usage. However, amendments may become necessary to implement portions of this Plan. For example, may be a need for increased County coordination and collaboration for specific Hamilton goals and objectives.

OFFICIAL MAPS

An official map shows the location of areas which the municipality has identified as necessary for future public streets, recreation areas, and other public grounds. By showing the area on the official map, the municipality puts the property owner on notice that the property has been reserved for future taking for a public facility or purpose. The municipality may refuse to issue a permit for any building or development on the designated parcel; however, the municipality has one year to purchase the property upon notice by the owner of the intended development.

There are no immediate plans for the Town to draft an official map. However, should local officials want to ensure consistency of the Future Land Use Plan with capital improvements, an official map should be drafted.

Action: Adopt an official map if, or at which time, changes in the rate of development require increased long-term infrastructure planning. Involve the Village of Holmen in locations within the extraterritorial area.

EROSION/STORMWATER CONTROL ORDINANCES

The purpose of stormwater or erosion control ordinances is to set forth stormwater requirements and criteria which will prevent and control water pollution, diminish the threats to public health, safety, welfare, and aquatic life due to runoff of stormwater from development or redevelopment. Adoption of local ordinances for stormwater do not preempt more stringent stormwater management requirements that may be imposed by WPDES Stormwater Permits issued by the Department of Natural Resources under Section 147.021 Wis. Stats.

Stormwater runoff is a concern in areas with extreme topography. Where new development occurs, Hamilton should require drainage plans as part of the development application.

Action: As part of the development application protocol, include a requirement for stormwater drainage plans to be completed that retain stormwater onsite. Continue to work with La Crosse Urban Stormwater Group to educate the community on stormwater management.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCES

An historic preservation ordinance is established to protect, enhance, and perpetuate buildings of special character or the special historic or aesthetic interest of districts that represent a community's cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history. The jurisdiction's governing body may create a landmarks commission to designate historic landmarks and establish historic districts.

In accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 101.121 and 44.44, a political subdivision (city, village, town or county) may request the State Historical Society of Wisconsin to certify a local historic preservation ordinance in order to establish a "certified municipal register of historic property" to qualify locally designated historic buildings for the Wisconsin Historic Building Code. The purpose of the Wisconsin Historic Building Code, which has been developed by the Department of Commerce, is to facilitate the preservation or restoration of designated historic buildings through the provision of alternative building standards. Owners of qualified historic buildings are permitted to elect to be subject to the Historic Building code in lieu of any other state or municipal building codes.

Locally, there is no historic preservation ordinance although preserving and enhancing historic structures and rural heritage has been identified as a community goal.

Action: Periodically review the need for development of a local historic buildings/structures reservation ordinance.

SITE PLAN REGULATIONS

A site plan is a detailed plan of a lot indicating all proposed improvements. Some communities have regulations indicating that site plans may need to be prepared by an engineer, surveyor, or architect. Additionally, site plan regulations may require specific inclusions like general layout, drainage and grading, utilities, erosion control, landscaping and lighting, and building elevations.

Action: The current review process is sufficient for local needs, though increased requirements for the development of stormwater plans should be explored.

BUILDING CODES / HOUSING CODES

The Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) is the statewide building code for one- and two-family dwellings built since June 1, 1980. As of January 1, 2005, there is enforcement of the UDC in all Wisconsin municipalities. The UDC is primarily enforced by municipal or county building inspectors who must be state-certified. In lieu of local enforcement, municipalities have the option to have the state provide enforcement through state-certified inspection agencies for just new homes. Permit requirements for alterations and additions will vary by municipality. Regardless of permit requirements, state statutes require compliance with the UDC rules by owners and builders even if there is no enforcement.

Action: Review building codes to ensure they meet goals of citizens and the Township

MECHANICAL CODES

In the State of Wisconsin, the 2000 International Mechanical Code (IMC) and 2000 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) have been adopted with Wisconsin amendments for application to commercial buildings. Hamilton requires builders follow State mechanical codes for all structures built within the jurisdiction.

Action: State mechanical codes are sufficient. No action required.

SANITARY CODES

The Wisconsin Sanitary Code (WSC), which is usually enforced at the county-level, provides local regulation for communities that do not have municipal sanitary service. The WSC establishes rules for the proper siting, design, installation, inspection and management of private sewage systems and non-plumbing sanitation systems. Hamilton requires new residential construction to follow La Crosse County standards.

Action: La Crosse County codes are sufficient. No action required.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

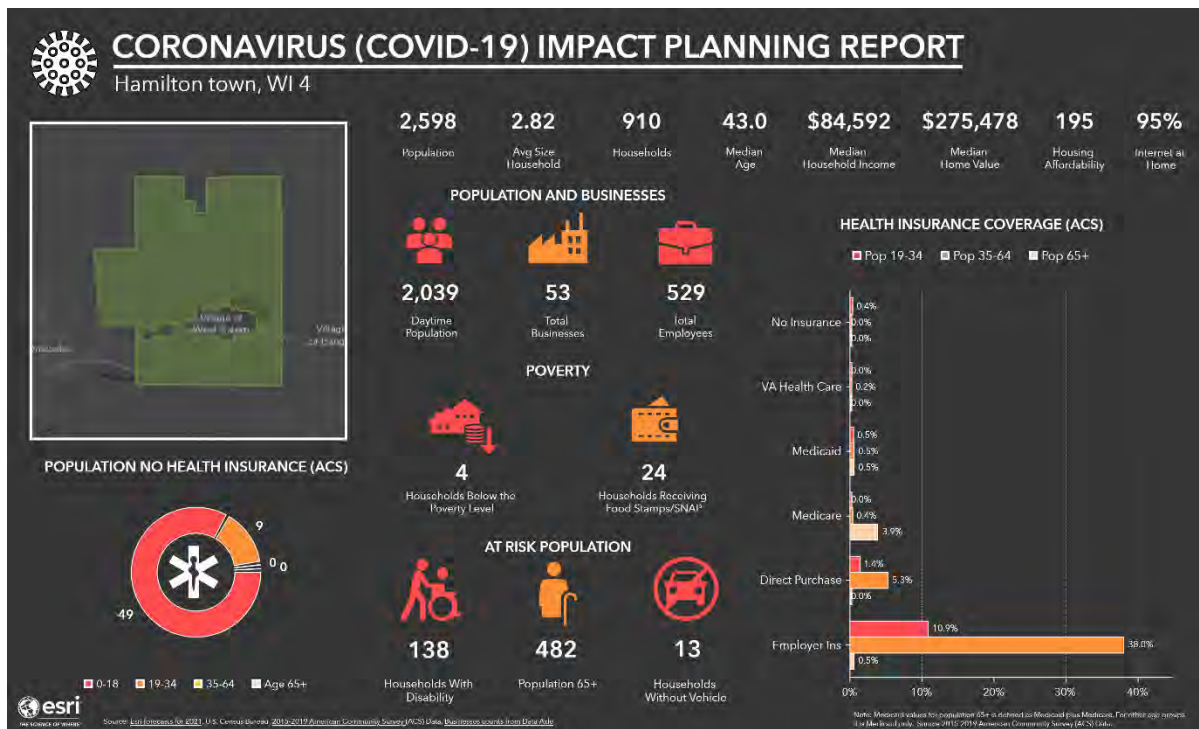
The following implementation schedule has been developed for the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan. Items identified in previous elements that require action by the Plan Commission or Town Board over the planning period have been scheduled. General policies that will guide the future development of the Town of Hamilton are not included in the implementation schedule. It is recommended that a full review of applicable plan elements be conducted when evaluating future development proposals.

Actions to be implemented 2022-2031

- Review La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan (scheduled completion 2022) and amend Township Plan as necessary
- Construct new town facilities
- Continue to monitor development patterns and encourage land uses consistent with plan themes
- Monitor COVID-19 trends and implement township strategies as practicable

CORONAVIRUS IMPACT PLANNING

In addition to its impact on public health, coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has caused a major economic shock. The nation has experienced the highest rates of unemployment since the Great Depression. La Crosse County had its highest unemployment rate in April 2020 at 12.3% while the State was at 13.6%. Summary graphics for Coronavirus as it pertains to Hamilton is shown below.



APPENDIX A: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Public Participation Plan for the Update of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2022

1. Introduction

Section 66.1001 (4)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes requires the governing body of the local government unit to adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation, including open discussions, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice is provided, in every stage in the preparation of the updated comprehensive plan. These written procedures contained within this Public Participation Plan have been developed to meet this requirement. This Plan will guide public participation throughout the Town's Comprehensive Planning Update Process. This Public Participation Program offers all citizens, businesses, other units of government, and other parties a range of opportunities to participate through the planning process in a meaningful way to shape the future of the Town. Effective public input is critical for the success of this planning process because it is the citizens, businesses, and other organizations that will experience the results of the objectives, policies, goals and programs of the Comprehensive Plan in the future.

The participation program is designed to be inclusive. It encourages people to participate in the process and to maximize the effectiveness of their contributions. The opportunities are open to everyone.

Our public participation process will:

- Ensure all planning decisions are open to public comment;
- Produce better planning decisions;
- Support and add credibility to all Town decision-making processes
- Provide opportunities to disseminate information about the Plan and process to all segments of the Town;
- Strengthen the relationship among our decision makers, residents, and stakeholders.

2. Public Participation Methods and Opportunities

The Town of Hamilton has established the following list of public participation methods and opportunities.

- a. Open Plan Commission Meetings

Plan Commission meetings scheduled during the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan update process will have an agenda item providing the opportunity for any public comment on or regarding the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan.

b. Review and Distribution of the Planning Documents

During the Comprehensive Plan update process the public may review and obtain copies of proposed, alternative, or amended elements of the Town's Comprehensive Plan from the Town upon request. This information may also be distributed through the Town's website.

c. Website

The Town will post on its website information related to the Town Comprehensive Plan update planning process. This information may include agendas, minutes, draft plan elements, amendments, reports, maps, and photographs.

d. Written Comments

The Town will always welcome and consider written comments and will respond either in writing or by public comment during public meetings and/or through the media.

e. Meeting Notices

The Town will post meeting notices for each meeting and event in a timely manner at accessible locations, and the notices will meet the requirements for proper notification regarding purpose of meeting, date, time and location.

f. Public Hearing

The Comprehensive Planning Law requires local units of government to hold at least one (1) formal public hearing with a Class 2 public notice prior to adoption of a revised Comprehensive Plan' resolution or ordinance. Prior to adoption of the revised Comprehensive Plan, the Town will conduct this required public hearing.

g. Plan Recommendation Resolution

The Plan Commission or other body of the Town that is authorized to amend the Town Comprehensive Plan may recommend the adoption or amendment of the Comprehensive Plan only by adopting a resolution by a majority vote of the entire commission or other body. The vote shall be recorded in the official minutes of the committee or other body. The resolution shall refer to maps and other descriptive material that relate to one or more elements of a comprehensive plan. Upon adoption of the plan amendment, the Plan and its resolution shall be distributed by the Town to recipients listed in Section 66.1001(4)(b) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

i. Plan Adoption by Ordinance

No comprehensive plan that is recommended for adoption or amendment under. above may take effect until the Town Board enacts an ordinance that adopts the comprehensive plan or amendment. Upon adoption of this ordinance it shall be filed with at least all of the entities specified in Section 66.1001(4)(b) of the Statutes.

j. Other

Planning is a continuous process that does not end with the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan. Since new issues and unforeseen circumstances will always arise the Town may amend its Comprehensive Plan with proper public input and in accordance with Town policies and State Statutes at any time.

3. Adoption (see appendix B)

Town of Hamilton adopted this Public Participation Plan on this _____ day of _____, 2022.

Blaine Lee, Town of Hamilton Board Chair

Sarah Schultz, Town of Hamilton Town Clerk

APPENDIX B – ORDINANCE FOR ADOPTION

ORDINANCE TO ADOPT THE TOWN OF HAMILTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2021 – 2040.

The Town Board of the Town of Hamilton, Wisconsin do ordain as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to section 62.23(2)(3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Hamilton, is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in section 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 2. The Town Board of the Town of Hamilton, La Crosse County, Wisconsin, has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by section 66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 3. The plan commission of the Town of Hamilton, by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the document entitled "The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2021-2040" containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 4. The Town of Hamilton has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 5. The Town Board of the Town of Hamilton, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2021-2040", pursuant to section 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 6. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the Town Board and publication/posting as required by law.

Adopted this 8th day of February, 2022.

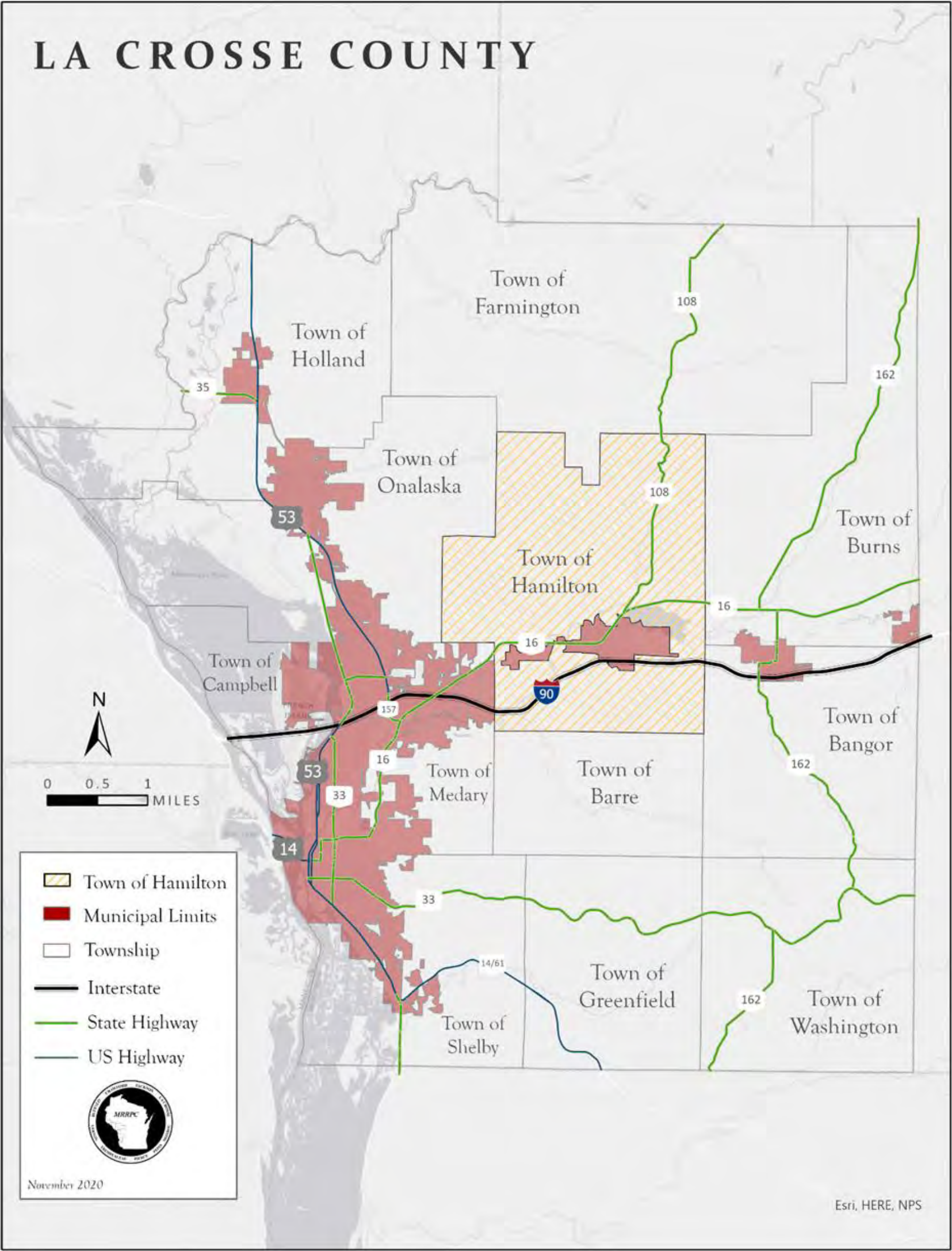
Blaine K See
Blaine Lee, Town Chairman

2/8/2022
Date

Approved:

Attest: Sara Schultz
Sara Schultz, Town Clerk

APPENDIX C – MAPS AND GRAPHICS



DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Hamilton Town, WI

Geography: County Subdivision

KEY FACTS

2,603

Population



910

Households

42.9

Median Age

\$74,587

Median Disposable Income

EDUCATION

4%

No High School Diploma



23%

High School Graduate



34%

Some College



39%

Bachelor's/Grad/Prof Degree

INCOME



\$95,055

Median Household Income



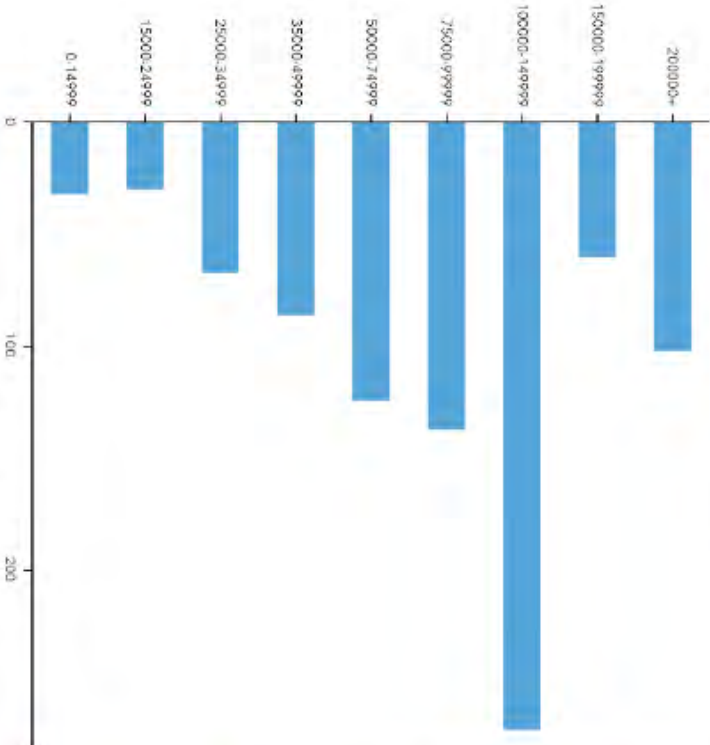
\$40,752

Per Capita Income



\$298,794

Median Net Worth



EMPLOYMENT



67%

White Collar



24%

Blue Collar



9%

Services

8.8%

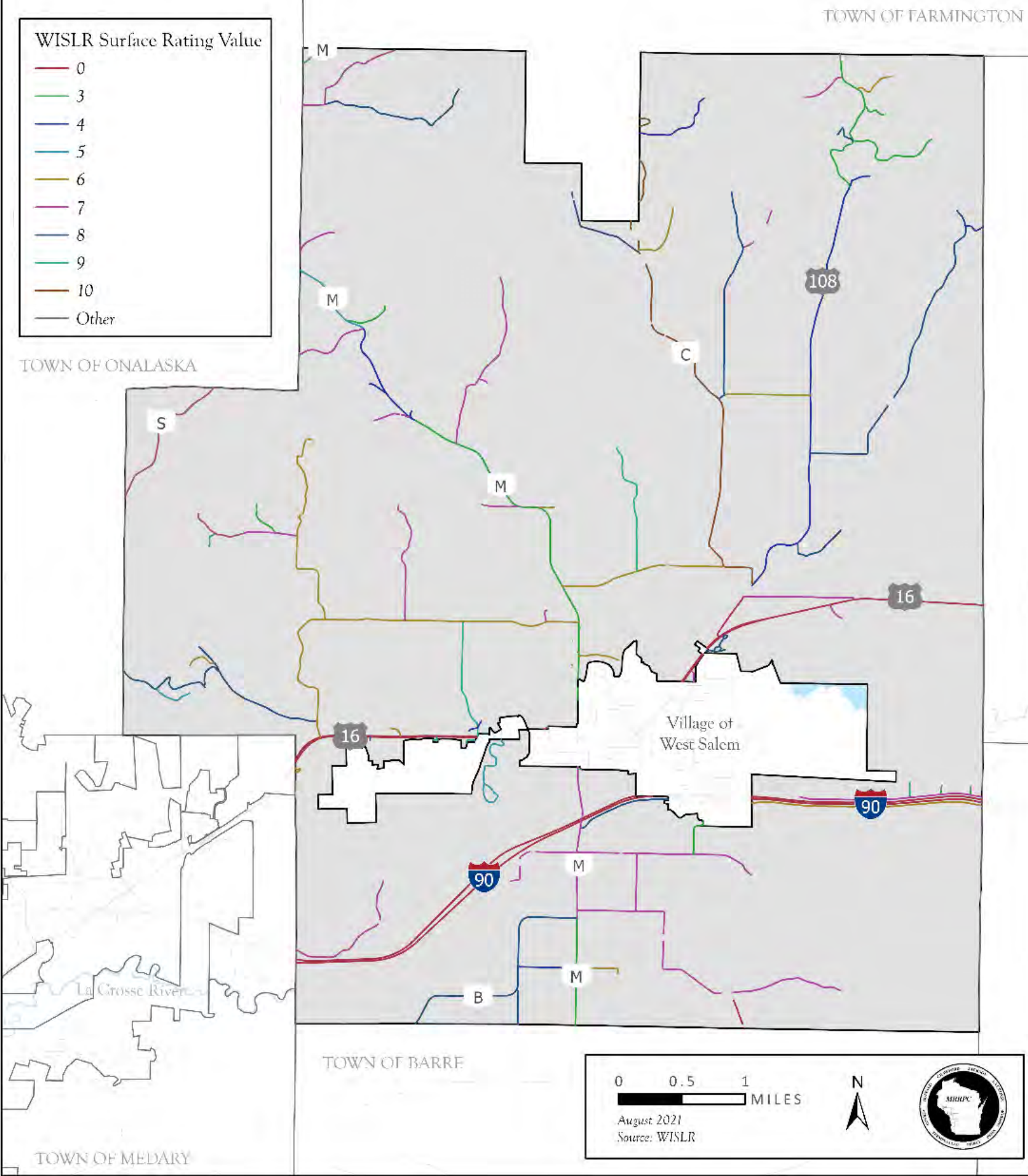
Unemployment Rate

This infographic contains data provided by Esri. The vintage of the data is 2020, 2025.

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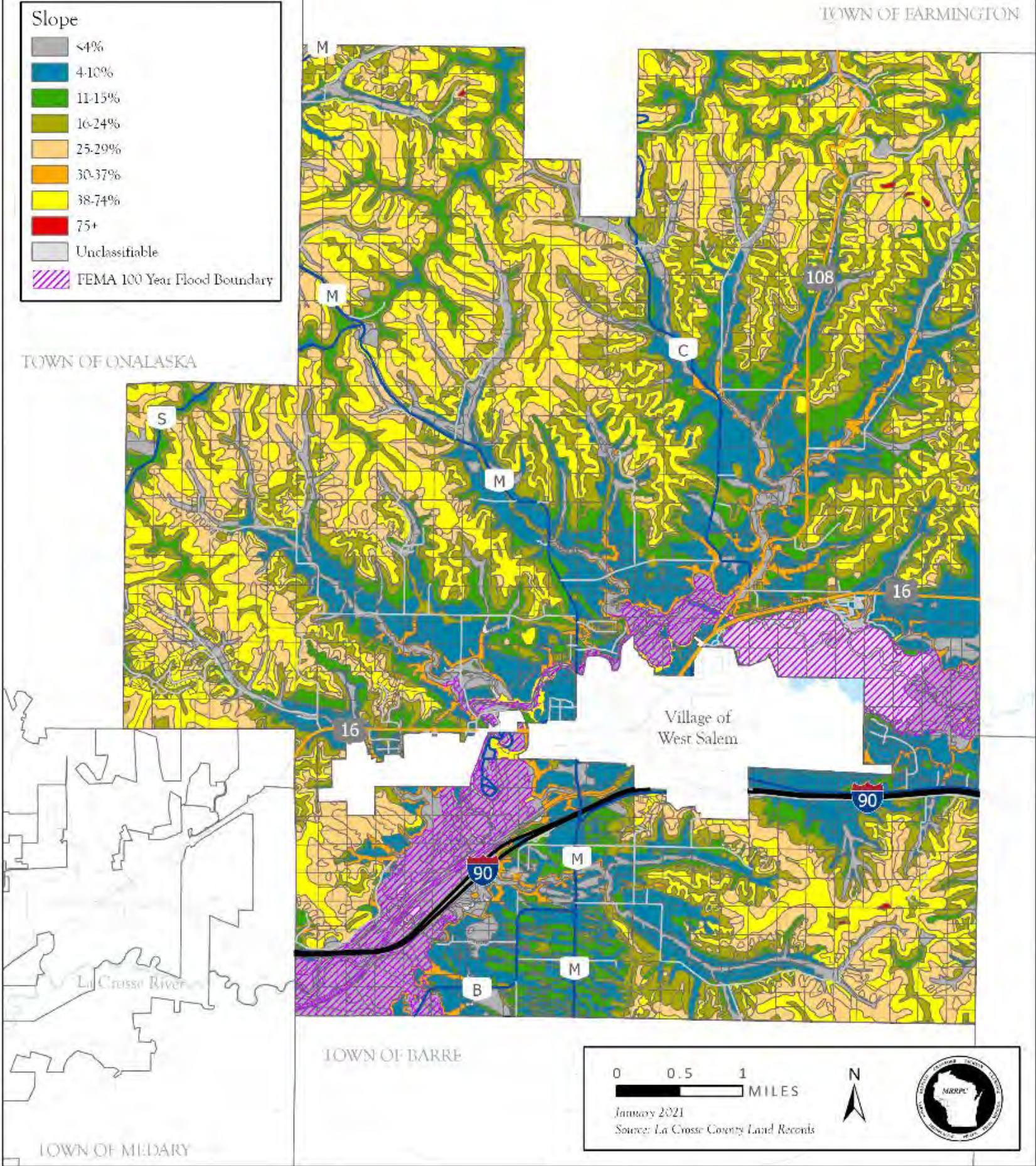
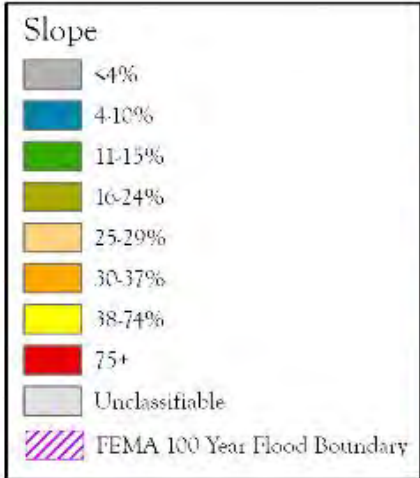
TOWN OF HAMILTON

TRANSPORTATION



TOWN OF HAMILTON

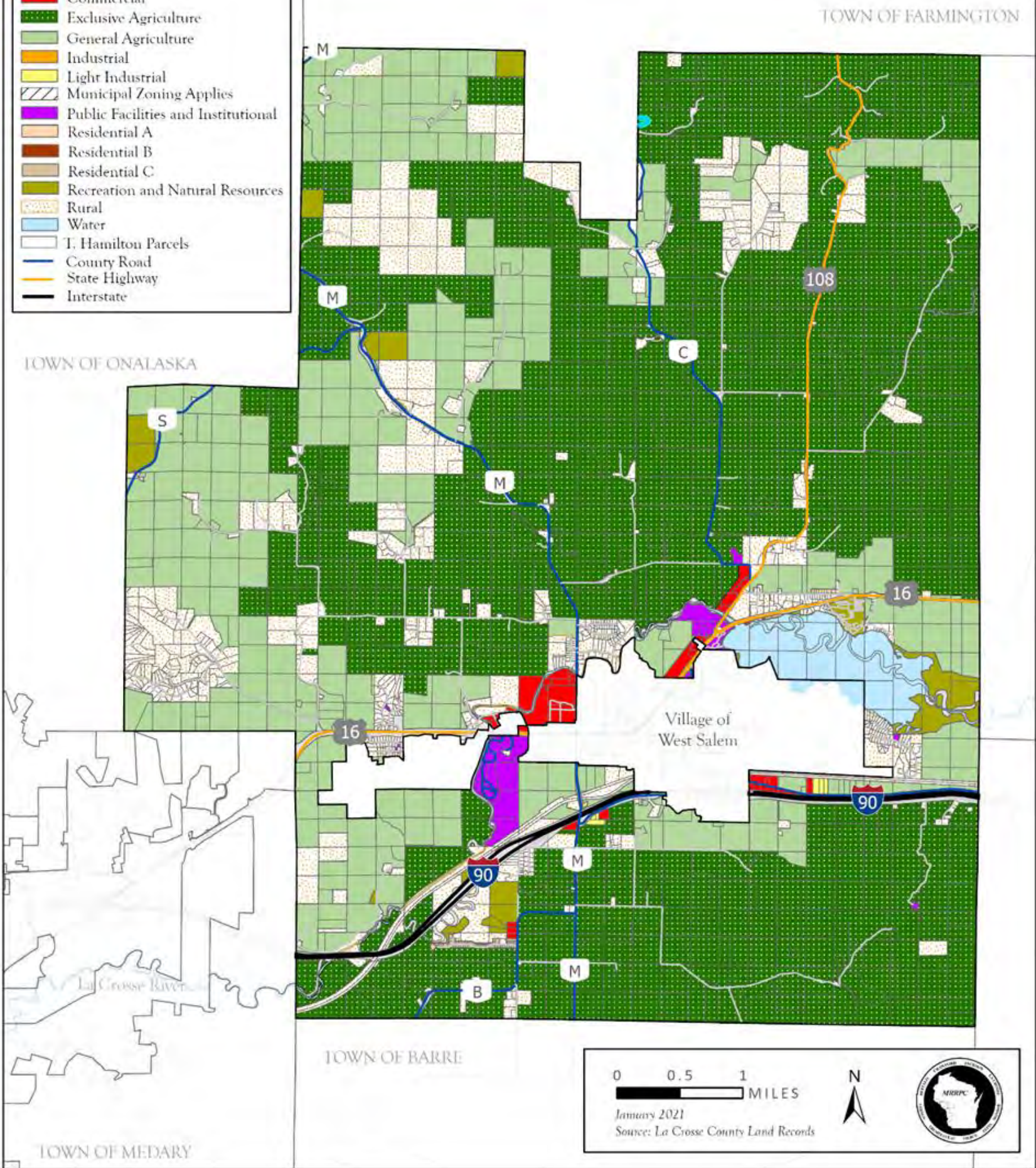
SLOPE



TOWN OF HAMILTON

ZONING

- Hamilton Zoning Districts**
- Commercial
 - Exclusive Agriculture
 - General Agriculture
 - Industrial
 - Light Industrial
 - Municipal Zoning Applies
 - Public Facilities and Institutional
 - Residential A
 - Residential B
 - Residential C
 - Recreation and Natural Resources
 - Rural
 - Water
 - T. Hamilton Parcels
 - County Road
 - State Highway
 - Interstate



TOWN OF HAMILTON

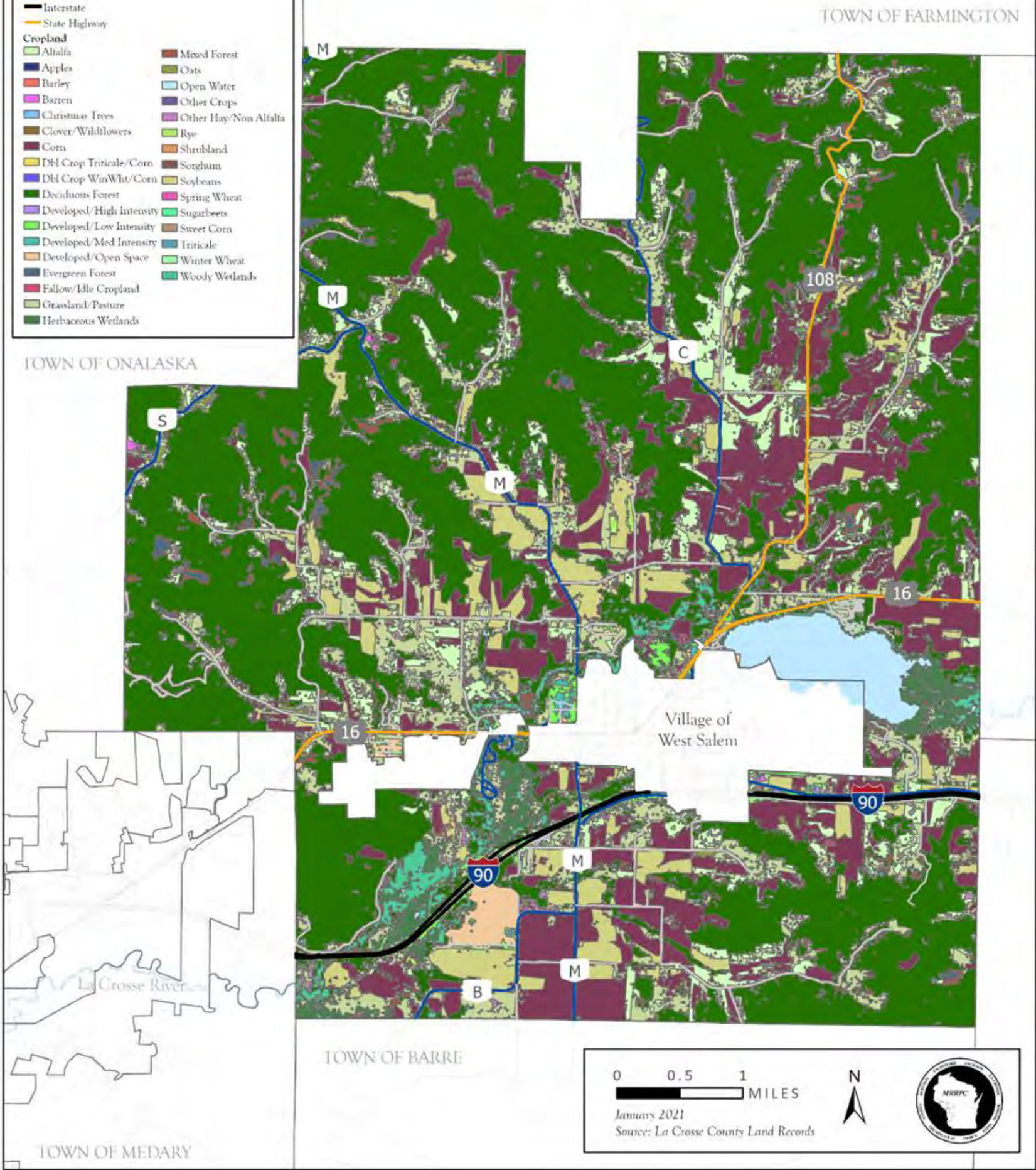
AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

Hamilton Roads

- Country Road
- Interstate
- State Highway

Cropland

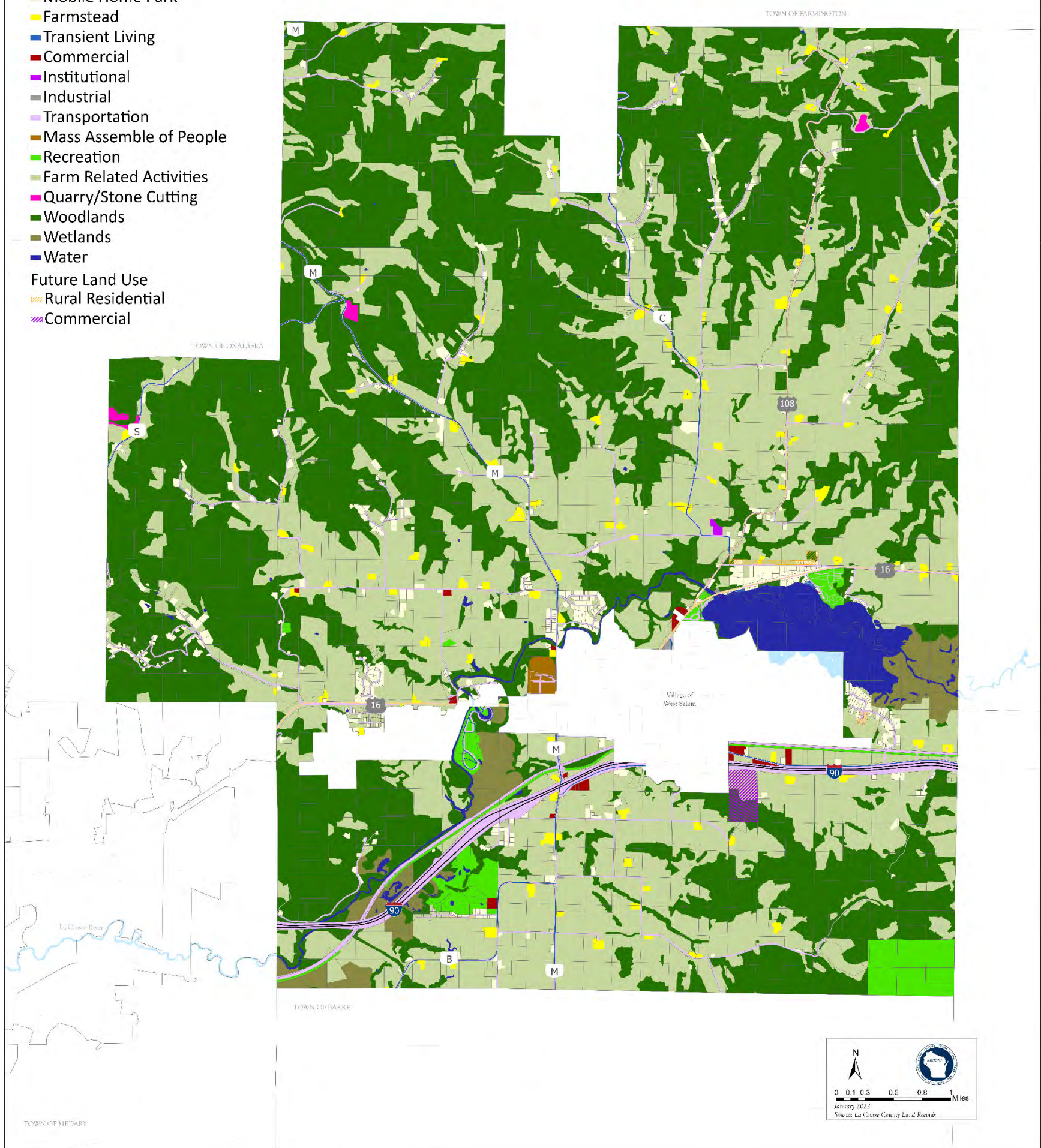
Alfalfa	Mixed Forest
Apples	Oats
Barley	Open Water
Barren	Other Crops
Christmas Trees	Other Hay/Non Alfalfa
Clover/Wildflowers	Rye
Corn	Shrubland
DBL Crop Triticale/Corn	Sorghum
DBL Crop Win/Whit/Corn	Soybeans
Deciduous Forest	Spring Wheat
Developed/High Intensity	Sugarbeets
Developed/Low Intensity	Sweet Corn
Developed/Med Intensity	Triticale
Developed/Open Space	Winter Wheat
Evergreen Forest	Woody Wetlands
Fallow/Idle Cropland	
Grassland/Pasture	
Herbaceous Wetlands	



TOWN OF HAMILTON

FUTURE LAND USE

- Existing Land Use
- Single Family
 - Multi-Family
 - Mobile Home Park
 - Farmstead
 - Transient Living
 - Commercial
 - Institutional
 - Industrial
 - Transportation
 - Mass Assemble of People
 - Recreation
 - Farm Related Activities
 - Quarry/Stone Cutting
 - Woodlands
 - Wetlands
 - Water
- Future Land Use
- Rural Residential
 - Commercial



APPENDIX D – BEYOND COULEE VISION 2040

Beyond Coulee Vision 2040

The La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the La Crosse/La Crescent urbanized area. The LAPC is required to develop a transportation plan with a 20-year-or-more planning horizon that includes “both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods.” *Beyond Coulee Vision 2040* is the long-range transportation plan for the MPO and it includes land use and transportation goals for the MPO planning area.

The LAPC is required to update the long-range transportation plan every five years. The next plan update will occur in 2025. To assist in future plan updates, it is being requested of local units of government that when updating their comprehensive plan, they include an analysis of the LAPC planning goals. The analysis will aid the LAPC in developing/modify goals that reflect the desires of the local units of government in the MPO planning area.

LAPC Goal Analysis

LAPC - Land Use Goals	Not Applicable, Agree, Disagree (state concerns)*
Housing and neighborhoods in the City of La Crosse will attract new investment and more residents, especially through renovation and enhancement of existing housing stock.	Not Applicable
Senior housing options will continue to expand, and new housing intended for residents who remain mobile and active should be located within a 10-minute walk of retail and services.	Agree
New housing will continue to include a range of housing types and lot sizes, including a priority on single family lots smaller than 1/2-acre.	Agree
The region places a high priority on infill development to enhance the utilization of existing urban infrastructure and enhance the concentration of uses so that more residents are within a 10-minute walk of their daily retail needs.	Agree
New buildings and development areas will often include a mix of uses.	Agree
Towns, villages and cities will pursue and approve boundary agreements that allow some growth in unincorporated areas.	Hamilton periodically explores boundary agreements to protect and preserve Township goals.
LAPC – Transportation Goals	
New roads for the primary purpose of facilitating regional commuter traffic will generally be avoided – community preference is for	Agree

expansion of existing roads and transit enhancements instead.	
Road projects will be designed to improve the safety and mobility of all users, with emphasis placed on maintaining neighborhood connections and cohesiveness.	Agree
The region will have a flexible and fully interconnected grid of streets and highways.	Agree
A Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) will be created to fund and maintain transportation systems.	Agree
Transit use will increase among all age groups.	Agree
Fixed-route regional transit, such as Bus Rapid Transit, should be actively studied and pursued. Routes should be identified and necessary right-of-way protected (or gradually acquired) until implementation becomes feasible.	Agree
Intelligent transportation systems and mass data gathering technologies will be utilized to the extent practicable to improve the safety and mobility of our transportation networks.	Agree
Growth will be accommodated without a significant increase in congestion through the use of many strategies, including road and highway improvements, traffic signal timing improvements, new/enhanced transit services, enhanced and expanded bike and pedestrian facilities, scheduling adjustments by major employers, and other approaches.	Agree
Truck routes in the region will be efficient and clearly identified, especially including those through the City of La Crosse.	Agree
Mississippi River locks and dams will be upgraded to accommodate modern shipping requirements.	Agree
Interstate passenger rail service to Minneapolis and Milwaukee/Chicago will increase in frequency and reliability.	Agree
Public and private landowners will reduce their subsidy of automobile use through a mix of strategies.	Agree
Bike and pedestrian facilities will be present everywhere.	Agree