

Town of Osceola

Polk County, WI

2030 Comprehensive Plan

Adopted October 2009



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Town of Osceola 2030 Comprehensive Plan

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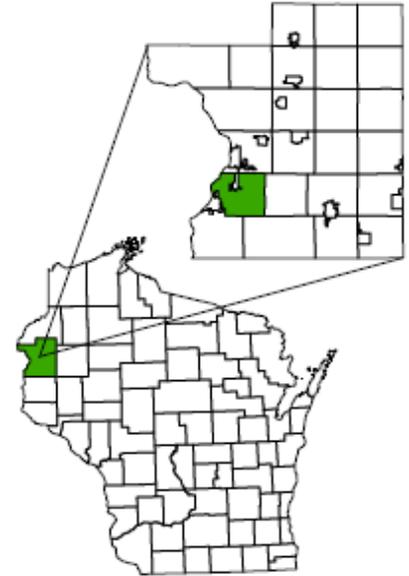
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INTRODUCTION

Location

The Town of Osceola is located in southwestern Polk County, Wisconsin. It lies in Township 33 N and Range 19-18 W. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Town has a total area of 36.7 square miles, of which 35.0 square miles is land and 1.7 square miles is water. The Town borders the Town of Garfield to the east, the Town of St. Croix Falls to the north, the Town of Farmington and the Town of Alden to the south, and also borders the St. Croix River and the State of Minnesota to the west. Within the Town lie the Village of Osceola, the Village of Dresser, and unincorporated Nye. The Town of Osceola boasts an abundance of water resources, including Lotus Lake, Horse Lake, Sand Lake, Poplar Lake, and the St. Croix River as well as plenty of public land, mainly Interstate State Park.



History

The first recorded inhabitants of the area were Native Americans. The Sioux and Chippewa tribes both lived in the region as did explorers and trappers.

In April of 1836, the federal government established the Territory of Wisconsin. It included lands that are now Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and parts of the Dakotas. In 1837, the federal government signed a treaty with the Sioux and Chippewa tribes. They were given \$9,000 and the rights to hunt, fish, trap and collect maple sap. The treaty was not honored very well, but did allow for the movement of Europeans into the region. Wisconsin became a state in 1848. St. Croix County originally encompassed parts of Polk, Pierce, and Burnett counties. This larger territory was divided up into smaller counties, and Polk County was established in 1853.

The Town was first named LeRoy. The area included all of the land from Cedar Bend south of, now Osceola, north to St. Croix Falls and east to what is now the Town of Lincoln. A town meeting was held April 21, 1853 to organize the town government. The name LeRoy was used to honor LeRoy Hauble, who was killed cutting timber to be used in the construction of a sawmill. It included the small settlements of Osceola, Dresser, and Nye. There were only two qualified members at the meeting, Samuel Thompson and Christian Weble, who became the supervisors. A few days later they appointed Stephen Rowclif the Town Clerk and Joseph Richmond Town Treasurer. The early concerns of this board were boundaries, roads, and assessments for tax purposes. The terms of office were one year, and meetings were held in the school house in Osceola. The name “Town

Introduction

of Osceola” was first used at the March 30, 1859 Town Board meeting. No explanation for the name change was given. The name Osceola was used to honor the Seminole Chief by that name.

Polk County was named after President James K. Polk. Osceola was selected the county seat even though it was not incorporated. An election held in the fall of 1898 moved the county seat to Balsam Lake, the geographic center of Polk County.

The Village of Osceola was incorporated on July 13, 1886. The Town of LeRoy owned a small Town Hall in the Village that was used by both municipalities. The Town sold the building to the Village in 1889 for \$200.

Development of the Comprehensive Plan

The concept of a comprehensive plan came from Wisconsin’s comprehensive planning and “smart growth” law signed by Governor Thompson in October 1999. Part of this law requires that all planning decisions made by Wisconsin municipalities be consistent with a comprehensive plan, which is to be created by January 1, 2010. The plan is to be reviewed at least every 10 years thereafter. Wisconsin Statutes define comprehensive planning as the following:

66.1001 Comprehensive planning. (note: previously, s. 66.0295)

(1) DEFINITIONS. In this section:

(a) “Comprehensive plan” means:

1. For a county, a development plan that is prepared or amended under s. 59.69 (2) or (3).
2. For a city or a village, or for a town that exercises village powers under s. 60.22 (3), a master plan that is adopted or amended under s. 62.23 (2) or (3).
3. for a regional planning commission, a master plan that is adopted or amended under s. 66.0309 (8), (9) or (10). (note: previously, s. 66.945(8), (9) or (10))

(b) “Local governmental unit” means a city, village, town, county or regional planning commission that may adopt, prepare or amend a comprehensive plan.

According to State law, a comprehensive plan shall contain the following elements:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. Issues and Opportunities | 6. Economic development |
| 2. Housing | 7. Intergovernmental Cooperation |
| 3. Transportation | 8. Land Use |
| 4. Utilities and community facilities | 9. Implementation |
| 5. Agricultural, natural, and cultural resources | |

Introduction

In order to add some “teeth” to this plan, each element will include goals, objectives, and policies in order to allow for implementation. For the purposes of this plan, these will be defined as the following:

Goals: General statements of desired outcomes of the community; broadly written but specific enough to be able to gauge progress

Objectives: More specific and subset of goals; providing measurable strategies

Policies: “Operational Actions” to meet goals and objectives; identify existing policies, and those requiring further approval

Programs: A system of projects or services necessary to achieve plan goals, objectives, and policies

- ❖ The policies and programs are combined into “Implementation” for each element.

Plan Purpose

The intent of the “smart growth” legislation is to allow municipalities to decide on their own how they want to develop for the next 20 years. Planning is a natural human characteristic; it helps to achieve goals and objectives in an orderly fashion. Looking 20 years ahead allows municipalities to deal with future problems today and make necessary corrections to change unwanted trends while maintaining positive ones. This plan is not meant to determine what an individual can or cannot do with their property, but to gain the collective support of all individuals as to what is best for everyone, regardless of personal gain or loss. While this plan is considered a legal document, it is meant to be used as a guide for not only the municipality, but also for business owners, residents, and community leaders.

Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Osceola - 1998

In 1998, the Town of Osceola completed a Comprehensive Plan. This plan looked at housing, population, open space and recreation, agriculture, transportation, and Town revenue. Goals, objectives, and policies were also formulated to direct future development in the Town of Osceola. The former plan sufficiently captured the values and beliefs of citizens at the time. It includes detailed data and maps of existing land use at the time and desired future growth. This will allow for the Town to better calculate the changes that have occurred since then, both in development and opinions of residents. Finally, the plan included a matrix of implementation strategies. The progress of these policies and programs will be reviewed and updated. The intent of the policies and programs will also be compared to up-to-date opinions and beliefs of residents.

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During the development of the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, Town officials and members of the public met to identify issues and opportunities for the Town of Osceola. The meeting, which was held on January 6, 1997, ranked comments that were made and then allowed everyone to vote for the five they thought to be the most important. As listed in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, the following potentials and problems are shown below with the number of votes received shown in parentheses after each item.

1. Need to preserve prime farmland for farming. (2)
2. County zoning is inadequate. (8)
3. Traffic flow on town roads. (0)
4. Annexation of town land by surrounding municipalities. (2)
5. Spot zoning to commercial. (2)
6. Sign program. (0)
7. Slow police response time. (0)
8. Lack of weed control in Lotus Lake. (2)
9. Need for compatible land uses next to each other. (3)
10. Access to STH 35 should be controlled through service roads. (2)
11. Town should maintain parks and lake accesses better. (1)
12. Taxes are too high. (2)
13. Difficult to enforce ordinances under current situation. (4)
14. Lack of adequate sand and gravel on roads, especially near bus stops. (1)
15. Lack of a plan. (2)
16. No opportunity to develop a clustered housing development. (1)
17. Lack of a sanitary district to serve proposed development. (4)
18. Poor intergovernmental communication. (2)
19. Not enforcing park dedications. (0)
20. Inadequate road standards in new subdivisions (turn-arounds for school busses, emergency vehicles, etc.) (0)
21. No curbside recycling pickup. (0)
22. Lack of citizen participation in the township. (5)
23. Financing changes/projects in the town. (2)

Town officials and citizens met again on February 3, 1997, to identify potentials for the Town of Osceola. These potentials were ranked by voting for the five they thought to be most important. The number of votes received is in parentheses after each item.

1. Osceola is one of the most beautiful areas in the state. (8)
2. Good road maintenance. (2)
3. Good transportation routes. (2)
4. Good governmental unit. (4)
5. Close to employment. (5)
6. Time is at hand to do future planning right. (8)
7. Opportunity for industrial and residential growth. (8)
8. Lots of recreational opportunities. (6)
9. Opportunity for new businesses. (5)
10. Good fire and ambulance equipment. (4)

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11. Close to large cities. (4)
12. Good medical facilities and good choices. (3)
13. Excellent schools (St. Croix Falls and Osceola). (7)
14. Close proximity to the Osceola airport. (0)
15. Good farming community and the opportunity to keep it strong. (1)
16. Good supply of gravel in the area (lime and trap rock). (0)
17. Good construction contractors. (0)
18. Opportunity to promote and manage the tourism dollar. (3)
19. Low crime rate. (4)
20. Nice public buildings (meeting hall and garage). (0)
21. Plenty of opportunities to eat out. (1)
22. Good shopping opportunities. (3)
23. Large Variety of churches. (2)
24. Many opportunities for youth and children (4-H, churches, schools). (0)
25. Good variety of clubs and organizations for adults. (0)
26. Good water quality in the town. (3)
27. Several nice lakes in the area. (0)
28. Nice parks and golf course. (1)
29. Good utility services. (1)

As stated in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Osceola created goals, objectives, and policies to reflect the community's image of itself and how it wishes to develop in future years. The following goals, objectives, and policies are listed below:

Planning and Land Use

Maintain the town of Osceola as one of the most beautiful areas in the state:

- Consider the impacts on wetlands, lakes, and waterways when making land use determinations.
- Consider the impacts on the watershed areas according to the watershed plans that are available.
- Preserve the recreational opportunities that are currently available in the town.

Take advantage of the opportunities for growth and manage it effectively:

- Try to ensure that adjacent land uses are compatible with regard to such factors as smoke, noise, odor, traffic, activity, and appearance.
- Development should be directed toward soils which have adequate bearing capacity and are suitable for excavation and site preparation as much as possible.
- Guide development in a manner that is fair to the town as a whole and is as fair as possible to developers.
- Adopt a growth management strategy to prevent non-farm development from encroaching upon farms.

Introduction

Handle land use and planning issues at the local level as much as possible:

- Adopt and enforce zoning and subdivision regulations at the town level to guide growth.
- Establish specific guidelines for zoning changes and development approvals.
- Utilize and encourage citizen input in land use determinations.

Housing

Provide for housing development and suitable living areas for new residents:

- Prevent the incursion of incompatible, non-residential uses into single-family residential areas.
- Provide for proper utility services to new development including the possible creation of sanitary districts where feasible.

Economic Development

Provide for economic development in the town:

- Work to encourage tourism.
- Designate areas for commercial and industrial development.
- Promote uses that are low water and sewer users where there are no public utilities.

Traffic and Transportation

Provide for adequate and safe transportation facilities for the town:

- Consider impacts on local and regional roads when making determinations on development applications.
- Protect and preserve the rail corridors for future uses including mass transit.
- Separate local and through traffic wherever feasible.
- Limit access on major arterial roads.
- Provide for connecting links between subdivisions and allow for alternate access to subdivisions.

Public Facilities and Parks

Maintain and improve the town's park and open space areas:

- Continue to devote resources to first maintain and improve the existing park and open space areas and then to develop any new park and open space.
- Use parks and open space as buffers between incompatible land uses, as delineators or constraints on urban development, or as necessary complementary uses for other land development.

Archaeological and Historic Preservation

Identify and preserve historic and archaeological sites:

- Encourage the protection of historic sites.

Public Participation Plan

The Town of Osceola passed a Public Participation Plan on February 11, 2008 as required in State Statutes 66.1001 (4)(a). The following list consists of public participation methods chosen by the Plan Commission to be considered during the creation of the Comprehensive Plan. These methods are designed to increase the public's awareness of planning and participation activities and help them become further involved in the process.

The Town of Osceola proposes to implement any the following methods of public participation:

- 1. Plan Commission meetings.** The Town of Osceola Plan Commission will develop the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Commission may invite key citizens for specific issues and not require them to remain active members throughout the process. The planning consultants, Stevens Engineers, will facilitate the meetings, provide background research, and write the document. The Plan Commission decides what is included in the plan and approves the contents of the final document with ultimate adoption authority lying with the Town Board. All Plan Commission meetings are open to the public.
- 2. Informational flyer.** An informational flyer will be posted or sent out by the Town.
- 3. Newspaper article.** The Town will send a press release to the *Osceola Sun* newspaper announcing all meetings of the Plan Commission and meetings for public comment. In addition, the Town will periodically send a press release out on the progress of the plan. The local media will be encouraged to attend and report on what takes place during the comprehensive planning process.
- 4. Display.** Comprehensive planning information will be available at the Town Hall for public review and comment.
- 5. Community events.** The Plan Commission will release information to the local 'Community Event' section of the *Osceola Sun and Country Messenger* Newspapers.
- 6. Release of a community wide survey.** The Town will mail out a survey to all residents and/or property owners in the municipality or a statistically valid sample number of them. Residents and/or property owners will be asked a series of questions to determine their values, preferences, and opinions about the Town of Osceola. The Plan Commission will consider the survey results to develop the plan.

7. **Hosting an open house.** In addition to participating in the regular meetings to develop the plan, the public will be invited to attend open houses or public comment meetings at key points in the planning process. At these meetings a brief summary of the plan to date will be given and the public will be given an opportunity to comment on the plan. These meetings may take place at a regular Town Plan Commission or Town Board Meeting.
8. **Holding at least one public hearing.** A public hearing will be held in accordance with §66.1001(4)(d) prior to the Town Board adopting the Comprehensive Plan.
9. **Written comments.** The public is invited to provide written comments for the development of the comprehensive plan. The Plan Commission will accept written comments submitted to the Town Clerk. The Clerk will record the transmittal and forward copies of the comments to the Plan Commission for consideration.
10. **Kick-Off meeting.** The Plan Commission will host a public ‘kick-off’ meeting to give town residents the opportunity to learn more about the comprehensive planning process and to provide input about growth and other land use-related issues.
11. **Website.** The Town of Osceola is in the process of developing a website. Upon completion of the website, completed elements of the *draft* comprehensive plan will be posted for public review and comment.

Community Survey

In March 2008, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to all 1,309 Town of Osceola households and non-resident property owners for which mailing addresses were available. The surveys were followed up with reminder postcards. The overall response rate was 36 percent (476 completed questionnaires). The data provided in the report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.9 percent with 95 percent confidence. In general, the sample aligns with the demographic patterns in the 2000 Census data.

Visioning Process

As part of public participation, a vision statement is included that describes how the Town of Osceola desires to look twenty years from now. This vision statement does not need to be set in stone, but should be used as a guide when looking at goals, objectives, policies, and programs throughout the Comprehensive Plan. A vision statement provides a basis for which Town Board and Plan Commission members can focus and work towards.

Vision Statement

The Town of Osceola is a rapidly growing community that wishes to protect and preserve the resources of today for the benefit of future generations without compromising the opportunities that development brings. In order to create a balance, the Town of Osceola believes in the following statements:

- Maintain the Town of Osceola as one of the most beautiful areas in the state.
- Take advantage of the opportunities for growth and manage it effectively.
- Handle land use planning issues at the local level as much as possible.
- Provide for housing development and suitable living areas for new residents.
- Provide for economic development in the town.
- Provide for adequate and safe transportation facilities for the town.
- Maintain and improve the town’s park and open space areas.
- Recognize the symbiotic relationship between the Town of Osceola, the Village of Osceola, and the Village of Dresser.

The Town of Osceola wishes to reflect all decisions made by the local government on these statements in order to provide the services residents expect and can be proud of.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (or SWOT) are methods that can be used in many different contexts. They encourage brainstorming for ideas in order to find characteristics about any subject. When using them in the context of municipalities, they can help define one against another. A SWOT analysis is meant to get communities to thinking about:

- Where they have been
- Where they are
- Where they want to be in the future
- How they want to get there

A SWOT Analysis was completed for most elements of the comprehensive plan by the Plan Commission.

SWOT Analysis

A brief definition of a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat as used in a SWOT analysis are as listed:

Strength: *Something that makes a community standout when compared to other communities. Something that makes you proud to call the community home. A strength can be a physical asset, a program, an environmental condition or an impression or feeling.*

Weakness: *Opposite of a strength. Problem that needs to be addressed.*

Opportunity: *Something that could be done to improve the community. A potential.*

Threat: *A threat may be internal or external. A threat can be anything that could jeopardize the future success of a community.*

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Planning involves reviewing data and looking for trends. Finding these trends allows for better predictions to be made about the future of a community. The purpose of this element is to look at the demographic trends for the Town of Osceola in order to better plan for growth in the next twenty years.

Introduction

According to the 2000 Census, the population of the Town of Osceola was 2,085 and there were 744 households. According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the population is expected to increase to 4,700 by the year 2030, while the number of households is expected to increase to 1,864. Both are significant increases that will influence future land use decisions in the Town.

The population in the Town of Osceola is predominantly white, and the largest percentages of residents were between 25 and 54 years old (48.7%). The largest percent increase from 1990 to 2000 was in the 45 to 54 age group (114.4%). Since this data is 10 years old, it can be assumed higher growth will occur in the 55 to 59 and 60 to 64 age groups by 2010.

Between 1990 and 2000 the Town saw large percentage increases in the number of residents with bachelors and graduate or professional degrees, and a decrease in the percentage of residents without a high school diploma.

The Town's median household income in 2000 was \$55,509, while the median family income was \$59,688; both were significantly higher than the median incomes for the County and the State.

The Town's labor force was approximately 76% of its total population in 2000. The majority of residents (57%) work in management, professional, sales, office, and related occupations. The vast majority of workers (93.6%) from the Town commuted to their employment destinations alone in 2000; the mean travel time to work was 28.7 minutes.

Issues and Opportunities Element Requirements:

Background information on the local governmental unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs of the local governmental unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local governmental unit over a 20-year planning period. Background information shall include population, household and employment forecasts that the local governmental unit uses in developing its comprehensive plan, and demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local governmental unit.

§ 66.1001(2)(a). Wis. Stat.

Population Forecasts

Population changes can result from a number of controllable and uncontrollable factors. These factors include local, regional, and national economies, migration in and out of an area, birth rates, death rates, physical and cultural setting of an area, infrastructure improvements, taxes, and lifestyle preferences.

The increase in population from 2000 to 2001 in Polk County was the 6th highest in the state. The Town of Osceola was one of the fastest growing communities in Polk County and the western Wisconsin region. One likely reason for such an increase is the migration of people from the Twin Cities and surrounding area. Many people feel that the abundance of water resources and open land, combined with only a little over an hour drive to the Twin Cities, makes the area ideal for cabins, summer homes, and as a retirement destination.

Table 1.1 shows population projections for the Town of Osceola as well as other municipalities. Wisconsin population projections are developed by the Wisconsin Demographic Services Center in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 16.96.

In 2000, the population of the Town of Osceola was 2,085 people. The population was estimated to be 2,681 in 2005; this number is projected to increase to 4,700 by 2030. This projected increase is the highest of all the municipalities in Polk County. This makes the Town's Comprehensive Plan even more important. Facing this much growth, the Town of Osceola must have a functional plan which will help guide the Town through tough decision-making processes and help keep it consistent.

The population projections that are shown in this plan do not take into consideration the impacts of local issues, such as the possible construction of the Stillwater Bridge (see the Transportation Element), which could dramatically increase the population throughout western Wisconsin by 2030.

Methodology for Population Projections:

Data input for the basic procedure comprised population counts from the decennial census of 1980, 1990 and 2000 and the January 1, 2002 population estimates as developed by the Wisconsin Department of Administration. A preliminary projection of a municipality's population is made by means of linear extrapolation. It is assumed that the annual amount of future population change will be similar to the annual amount of past population change. The average annual population change (G) is calculated as follows:

$$G = ((P2002-P1980)/21.75) + ((P2002-P1990)/11.75) + ((P2002-P2000)/1.75)/3$$

Where P is population, G is average annual numerical population change, and 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2002 are reference years of the population data. The above formula first calculates annual population change over three varying time spans, all of which end in 2002. An average of the three is assumed to represent the community's underlying demographic dynamics better for projection purposes. The component based on the 1980-2002 period provides the quality of stability to the process. The 1990-2002-year period reflects sustained change while the most recent years represent a community's current demographic dynamics.

Migration:

Migration includes all changes of residence including moving into, out of, or within a given area. Foreign country, or state, county and city of previous residence is collected and coded. In 12 states, minor civil division (MCD) is also coded.

Table 1.1: Town of Osceola comparative population change (1980-2030)

	Census 1980	Census 1990	Census 2000	2005*	2010**	2015**	2020**	2025**	2030**	Percent Change 2000-2030
Town of Osceola	1,066	1,337	2,085	2,681	3,078	3,506	3,934	4,338	4,700	125.4%
Village of Osceola	1,581	2,075	2,421	2,641	2,826	3,042	3,254	3,450	3,612	49.2%
Village of Dresser	670	614	732	833	896	969	1,041	1,107	1,162	58.7%
Town of St. Croix Falls	873	1,034	1,119	1,237	1,315	1,405	1,494	1,575	1,641	46.6%
Town of Farmington	1,195	1,267	1,625	1,831	1,990	2,168	2,347	2,510	2,652	63.2%
Town of Garfield	1,010	1,107	1,443	1,639	1,791	1,963	2,133	2,292	2,428	68.3%
Polk County	32,351	34,773	41,319	44,744	47,415	50,576	53,724	56,547	58,866	42.5%
State of Wisconsin	4,705,642	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,589,920	5,772,370	5,988,420	6,202,810	6,390,900	6,541,180	20.3%

Source: Prepared by Demographic Services Center, Wisconsin Department of Administration (2008)

Household Forecasts

Predicting the number of households can let a municipality know what to expect in the years to come. It can also help determine how many housing units are needed to meet the projected growth demands.

Table 1.2 shows projected households in the Town of Osceola and other neighboring municipalities. In 2000, there were a total of 744 total households in the Town. A household, as defined by the Demographics Services Center, consists of all persons who occupy a room or group of rooms as their separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other person or persons in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall.

The number of households in the Town of Osceola in 2000 was 744. This number is expected to increase to 1,864 by the year 2030, which is a 150.5% increase. These statistics reflect the population projections, and again show that the Town of Osceola faces the largest growth in Polk County. Notice that the percent change in household projections is higher than the percent change in population projection in the Town of Osceola. Basically, the number of households in the Town (many other municipalities) are increasing at a greater rate than the population.

Household:

A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence.

Housing unit:

A house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other individuals in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall. For vacant units, the criteria of separateness and direct access are applied to the intended occupants whenever possible.

Issues and Opportunities

One of the most compelling reasons for this may be the decrease in number of persons per household in Polk County, which is also a regional trend. As seen in Table 1.2, the number of persons per household in Polk County was estimated at 2.50 in 2000 and is projected to drop to 2.31 by 2030. A combination of lifestyle preferences and the economy have all been part of the growing shift to owner-occupied single family homes. Like other developed countries, American families are getting smaller and people are having fewer children. Also, many young adults are moving out of their parents' houses and buying houses of their own. This could be as result of the low interest rates that have made home ownership easier in the recent years. This sometimes means that less people are renting housing units.

Methodology for Household Projections:

The development of household projections at the municipal level is a multiple step process that relies on a series of previously derived projections. County-level projections by age and sex developed by the Demographic Services Center serve as the basis for subsequent projection series because they provide county control totals. From this initial set of county projections, a new set of projections can be made for the number of households, household population, group quarters and average household size for each county. Next, an independent set of municipal projections of the total population were derived and summed to the original county control totals. Once all of these elements are in place, municipal household projections can be calculated. By producing detailed projections in this manner, all of the projection series are consistent in their basic assumptions about population change and household formation.

Table 1.2: Town of Osceola comparative household change (2000-2030)

	Census 2000	Estimated 2005	Projected 2010	Projected 2015	Projected 2020	Projected 2025	Projected 2030	Percent Change 2000-2030
Town of Osceola	744	974	1,154	1,342	1,529	1,704	1,864	150.5%
Village of Osceola	1,022	1,116	1,231	1,353	1,470	1,574	1,664	66.1%
Village of Dresser	302	350	388	429	468	503	532	76.2%
Town of St. Croix Falls	420	473	519	566	611	651	684	62.9%
Town of Farmington	525	603	675	752	827	892	952	81.3%
Town of Garfield	529	612	689	772	852	924	989	87.0%
Polk County	16,254	17,876	19,507	21,221	22,866	24,284	25,506	62.6%
Persons per Household in Polk County	2.54	2.50	2.43	2.38	2.35	2.33	2.31	

Source: Prepared by Demographic Services Center, Wisconsin Department of Administration (2008)

In addition to population and household projections, looking at the change in housing unit occupancy can describe many characteristics of a municipality. As shown in Table 1.3, the number of total housing units increased by 247 between 1990 and 2000, or a 42.4% increase. Of these housing units, owner-occupied units increased more than renter-occupied units, showing that a greater portion of residents are buying homes. There were also fewer seasonal, recreational, or occasional housing units, such as cabins and summer homes. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of seasonal homes in the Town of Osceola decreased by almost 24%. This trend is fairly consistent across Polk County. This means that more people are seeing the Town of Osceola as a place to live year-round than just as a seasonal home. This is usually a beneficial trend, as year-round occupied housing units bring more to the local economy than seasonal units.

Table 1.3: Town of Osceola occupancy and tenure (1990-2000)

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Total Housing Units	582	829	42.4%
Occupied Housing Units	472	744	57.6%
Owner occupied	414	669	61.6%
Renter occupied	58	75	29.3%
Vacant housing units	110	84	-23.6%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	84	64	-23.8%
Persons per owner-occupied unit	2.9	2.9	
Persons per renter-occupied unit	2.34	1.97	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Employment Forecasts

Employment projections specifically for the Town of Osceola do not exist. Instead, employment projections are made for larger regions with similar characteristics.

Table 1.4 shows estimated occupation numbers in 2004 and projected change of occupations to 2014 in the west central Wisconsin area (Barron, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, and St. Croix counties).

The occupations that are estimated to have the highest positive percent change in the area include those involved with personal services, such as healthcare and personal care. Computer and mathematical occupations also show a high estimated change. Production occupations show a low percent change and production workers have a negative change in employment.

Table 1.4: West Central Wisconsin employment projections (2004-2014)

	Estimated Employment			
	2004	2014	Change	% Change
Total, All Occupations	173,880	194,330	20,450	11.8%
Management Occupations	6,070	6,860	790	13.0%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	5,560	6,530	970	17.4%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	2,060	2,570	510	24.8%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	2,960	3,230	270	9.1%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,410	1,640	230	16.3%
Community and Social Service Occupations	2,800	3,300	500	17.9%
Legal Occupations	670	780	110	16.4%
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	11,010	12,740	1,730	15.7%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	1,930	2,190	260	13.5%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	8,580	10,920	2,340	27.3%
Healthcare Support Occupations	5,830	7,510	1,680	28.8%
Protective Service Occupations	3,260	3,480	220	6.7%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	16,870	19,260	2,390	14.2%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	5,380	6,290	910	16.9%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	4,570	5,640	1,070	23.4%
Sales and Related Occupations	17,120	18,320	1,200	7.0%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	27,090	28,170	1,080	4.0%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	270	300	30	11.1%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	7,480	8,740	1,260	16.8%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	6,700	7,400	700	10.4%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers, All Other	150	170	20	13.3%
Production Occupations	21,580	22,220	640	3.0%
Production Workers, All Other	440	430	-10	-2.3%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	14,670	16,240	1,570	10.7%

Employment is a count of jobs rather than people, and includes all part- and full-time nonfarm jobs. Employment does not include self-employed or unpaid family workers. Employment is rounded to the nearest ten, with employment less than five rounded to zero. Totals may not add due to rounding.

* Data is suppressed to preserve the confidentiality of employers.

Projections information is derived using the November 2004 OES Survey, 2004 QCEW and 2004 CES (3/2005 Benchmark) data. Unpublished data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and US Census Bureau was also used. Wage information derived from the May 2005 Estimates Delivery System.

Source: Department of Workforce Development, Office of Economic Advisors (2006)

According to the WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, in 2002, the greatest demand for workers included occupations considered as first-time, or temporary, jobs that workers often leave as other opportunities open up. Turnover is high and wages are low. The fastest growing occupations required more training and included better wages. There were often fewer openings in these jobs. The ten fastest growing and ten most available jobs for the west central Wisconsin area in 2002 were as follows:

Fastest Growth:

- Computer Support Specialists
- Network/Computer Systems Admin
- Computer Software Engineers Apps

- Medical Assistants
- Social/Human Service Assistants
- Medical Records/Health Information Technicians
- Computer/Information Systems Managers
- Hotel/Motel/Resort Desk Clerks
- Child Care Workers
- Pharmacy Technicians

Most Openings:

- Retail Salespersons
- Cashiers
- Combined Food Preparation/Server Workers (includes fast food)
- Waiters/Waitresses
- Registered Nurses
- Nursing Aides/Orderlies/Attendants
- Stock Clerks/Order Fillers
- Truck Drivers/Heavy/Tractor-Trailer
- Bartenders
- Laborers/Freight /Stock/Material Movers/Hand

Demographic Trends

Like most rural areas within the Midwest, the Town of Osceola has a mostly white population. Even with the steady migration rates in the past decade, there has been little change in the minority population in the Town. Table 1.5 compares the racial characteristics in the Town in 1990 and 2000.

Table 1.5: Town of Osceola racial characteristics (1990-2000)

	1990	2000	Percent Change
One Race	1,337	2,070	54.8%
White	1,323	2,060	55.7%
Black or African American	0	3	(X)
American Indian and Alaska Native	10	2	-80.0%
Asian	1	4	300.0%
Some other race	3	1	-66.7%
Two or more races	0	15	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Table 1.6 shows the trends in marital status in the Town of Osceola between 1990 and 2000. Marital status is reported for people who are 15 years or older. Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of population that was married decreased as more people remained single, separated, or divorced.

Table 1.6: Town of Osceola marital status (1990-2000)

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Population 15 years and over	1015	1,604	58.0%
Never married	214	346	61.7%
Now married, except separated	684	1,087	58.9%
Separated	6	12	100.0%
Widowed	46	44	-4.3%
Divorced	65	115	77.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Age Distribution

Changes in age distribution can help a municipality anticipate what services will be needed in future years. Having an increasing number of retired residents may reflect the need for nursing or assisted-living homes. On the other hand, having a decreasing number of retired residents may show that this age group is going elsewhere to find services that meet their needs. The number of young couples may reflect affordable housing and/or strong education services. However, a low number of young couples may show the need for more affordable housing and/or better education services. The changes in age distribution in the Town show a tremendous rate of growth compared to the rest of Polk County. Other parts of the county are only seeing retirees migrating there to live year-round, while the Town of Osceola is experiencing migration of people of all ages, especially established families, to live year-round. Like many other parts of the county, the highest population increase was that of the 45 to 54 age group. The second fastest growing age group was 55 to 59. After that, most of the age groups were nearly even. One point of interest is the large increase in the population 9 years and younger from 1990 to 2000. This shows that the Town is viewed as a viable place to raise children. The low numbers representing the 20 to 24 age group are normal as many of these residents are attending institutions of higher education.

Table 1.7: Town of Osceola age distribution (1990-2000)

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Total Population	1,337	2,085	55.9%
Male	700	1,074	53.4%
Female	637	1,011	58.7%
Under 5 years	97	163	68.0%
5 to 9 years	113	187	65.5%
10 to 14 years	112	177	58.0%
15 to 19 years	101	154	52.5%
20 to 24 years	59	65	10.2%
25 to 34 years	233	279	19.7%
35 to 44 years	254	423	66.5%
45 to 54 years	146	313	114.4%
55 to 59 years	50	86	72.0%
60 to 64 years	53	65	22.6%
65 to 74 years	81	119	46.9%
75 to 84 years	33	46	39.4%
85 years and older	5	8	60.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Education

The Town of Osceola is split between two school districts; Osceola and St. Croix Falls. In 2000, there were 610 students who were 3 years and over enrolled in some type of educational facility. At the time of the census, there were 79 students enrolled in a graduate or professional school. The Town is also relatively close to a number of institutions of higher education, which makes it easier for local businesses and industries to provide continuing education to their employees and for students to pursue highly-skilled careers. Listed below are major institutions within 60 miles of the Town. These are described in more detail in the Economic Development Element.

- Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in New Richmond and Rice Lake
- Chippewa Valley Technical College in River Falls and Menomonie
- University Wisconsin – Stout
- University Wisconsin – River Falls
- University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Table 1.8 displays the level of education that residents in the Town of Osceola have attained. The number of residents with less than 9th grade education decreased by almost 59% between 1990 and 2000, most likely as older generations with less education are phased out. The highest percent change was in graduate or professional degree attainment, which is becoming increasingly important as requirements for job placement continue to increase. These trends will most likely continue for the foreseeable future.

Table 1.8: Town of Osceola educational attainment (1990-2000)

Educational Attainment	1990	2000	Percent Change
Total (population 25 years and over)	963	1,374	42.7%
Less than 9 th grade	68	28	-58.8%
9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	125	97	-22.4%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	374	469	25.4%
Some college, no degree	166	335	101.8%
Associate degree	104	128	23.1%
Bachelor’s degree	86	201	133.7%
Graduate or professional degree	40	116	190.0%
Percent high school graduate or higher	80.0%	90.9%	13.6%
Percent bachelor’s degree or higher	13.1%	23.1%	76.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Income Levels

Table 1.9 compares the per capita income for Polk County and the State of Wisconsin from 2000-2005. While the per capita income in Polk County is lower than the rest of the state, both are increasing at approximately the same rate.

Table 1.9: Per capita personal income in dollars

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Polk County	\$23,403	\$23,656	\$23,635	\$24,577	\$26,361	\$27,130
Wisconsin	\$28,568	\$29,398	\$30,028	\$30,752	\$32,095	\$33,278

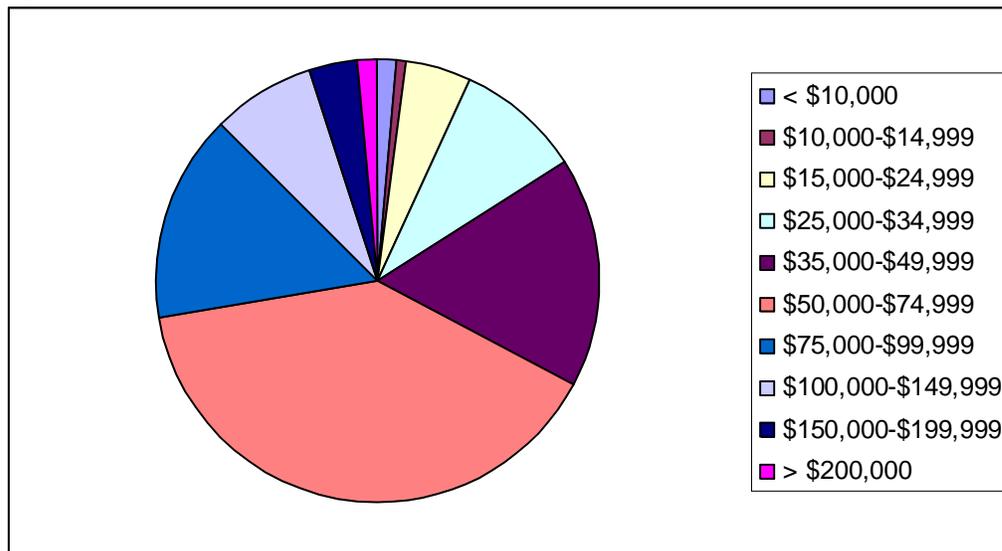
Source: Regional Economic Information System Bureau of Economic Analysis (2007)

Table 1.10 shows the Town’s household income in 1999. The largest percentage of households made \$50,000-\$74,999 (39.4%). The median household income in 1999 was \$55,509, which was significantly higher than for Polk County (\$41,183) and the State (\$43,197). Female full-time, year-round workers made approximately \$12,500 dollars less than male full-time, year-round workers in 1999.

Table 1.10: Town of Osceola household income (1999)

	Number	Percent
Households	755	100.0%
Less than \$10,000	22	1.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	21	0.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	55	4.8%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	70	9.1%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	139	16.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	265	39.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	105	15.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	48	7.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	22	3.6%
\$200,000 or more	8	1.3%
Median household income (dollars)	\$55,509	(X)

Figure 1.1: Town of Osceola household income (1999)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

As shown in Table 1.11, the Town had a median family income of \$59,688 in 1999. This is well above both the Polk County median (\$48,538) and the State median (\$21,271). Of the 606 families, 9 were living below the poverty level. Four of these families had children under the age of 18 years. There were a total of 48 individuals in poverty.

Table 1.11: Town of Osceola family income (1999)

	Number	Percent
Families	606	100.0%
Less than \$10,000	9	1.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4	0.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	29	4.8%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	55	9.1%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	101	16.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	239	39.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	93	15.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	46	7.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	22	3.6%
\$200,000 or more	8	1.3%
Median family income (dollars)	\$59,688	(X)
Families in Poverty	9	(X)
With related children under 18 years	5	(X)
Individuals in Poverty	48	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Employment Characteristics

Table 1.12 details the Town’s labor force. These figures represent population 16 years of age or older that is either employed or unemployed but seeking employment. In 2000, the unemployment rate in the Town was 3.1%, which was below the Polk County rate of 3.9%. By 2004 the unemployment rate in Polk County climbed to 5.4% and managed to rise above Wisconsin’s rate of 4.9% (Polk County Economic Profile, October 2005). The labor force is increasing faster than the number of available jobs in Polk County because of the high migration from the Twin Cities.

Table 1.12: Town of Osceola employment status (2000)

	Number	Percent
Population 16 years and over	1,563	100.0%
In labor force	1,192	76.3%
Civilian labor force	1,192	76.3%
Employed	1,156	74.0%
Unemployed	36	2.3%
Percent of civilian labor force	3.0	(X)
Armed Forces	0	0.0%
Not in labor force	371	23.7%

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

The overwhelming majority of residents of the Town of Osceola rely on driving individually to their place of employment, as shown in Table 1.13. The mean travel time

to work in 2000 was 28.7 minutes. A growing number of residents in western Wisconsin are choosing to commute further in order to take advantage of the economy around the Twin Cities. Another perspective is that a growing number of employees in the Twin Cities are moving further away in order to enjoy a more rural character.

Table 1.13: Town of Osceola commute patterns (1990-2000)

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Workers 16 years and over	704	1,146	62.8%
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	471	912	93.6%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	117	140	19.7%
Public transportation (including taxicab)	7	3	-57.15
Walked	14	21	50.0%
Other means	5	16	220.0%
Worked at home	90	54	-40.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

In 2000, the largest percentage of the employed workforce was in professional and management-related occupations (35.6%). The second most common occupations in the Town of Osceola were in sales and office occupations (21.6%).

Table 1.14: Town of Osceola occupations (2000)

	2000	Percent
Employed civilian population 16 years and older	1,156	100.0%
Management, professional, and related occupations	411	35.6%
Service occupations	140	12.1%
Sales and office occupations	250	21.6%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	12	1.0%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	113	9.8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	230	19.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Community Survey

In March 2008, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to all 1,309 Town of Osceola households and non-resident property owners for which mailing addresses were available. The surveys were followed up with reminder postcards. The overall response rate was 36 percent (476 completed questionnaires). The data provided in the report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.9 percent with 95 percent confidence. In general, the sample aligns with the demographic patterns in the 2000 Census data. In short, the sample accurately represents the opinions of the residents and non-resident land owners of the Town of Osceola.

Respondents were asked to identify the three most important reasons they chose to live in the Town of Osceola. Over half of the respondents included the small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle in their top three reasons, while the natural beauty and surroundings of the Town was in the top three for nearly half of the respondents. In the middle were the quality of the schools, nearness to their jobs and proximity to the

amenities offered by the Twin Cities. Fewer than 5% indicated that the appearance of homes and cultural/community events were among the most important reasons.

Table 1.15: Reasons for choosing to live in the Town of Osceola

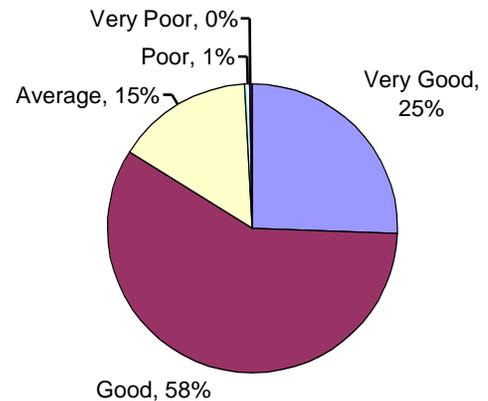
Reason	Percentage
Small town atmosphere/Rural Lifestyle	55%
Natural beauty/Surroundings	46%
Near family and friends	34%
Quality of schools	29%
Near job (employment opportunity)	28%
Proximity to Twin Cites (amenities, etc.)	27%
Cost of home	22%
Low crime rate	18%
Recreational opportunities	16%
Property taxes	15%
Appearance of homes	4%
Cultural/Community events	3%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

There were few significant differences of opinion among the demographic groups with respect to the reasons for choosing to live in the Town. Respondents from households with less than \$50,000 annual income were more likely to include the natural beauty and surroundings as their third choice, while those from households with incomes above \$50,000 more frequently chose proximity to the Twin Cities as their third choice.

Overall, respondents gave a positive rating to the quality of life in the Town (Figure 1.2). The highest proportion rated the Town’s quality of life as good (58%), and another 25 percent said it was very good. Fewer than one in six said it was average. Only one percent rated the Town’s quality of life as poor, and none said it was very poor. This generally positive assessment of the Town’s overall quality of life was similar across all demographic groups.

Figure 1.2: Town of Osceola quality of life



Source: 2008 Osceola Community Planning Survey

Respondents were asked to rate the level of importance of four specific issues. The results are presented in Table 1.16. Majorities said that all four issues were important or very important, but there were variations among the levels of importance for each. There was near unanimity (95%) among the respondents that contamination of well water is an important or very important issue.

A substantial majority of respondents said that loss of productive farmland (85%) and rural residential development (83%) were important or very important issues.

Land annexation by the Village of Dresser and the Village of Osceola is an issue of importance to respondents, with two-thirds rating it as important or very important. Noticeably more respondents said they had no opinion (16%) to this issue than said they had no opinion regarding the previous issues on the list. Retired respondents and those from households with annual income under \$50,000 were more likely to have no opinion about the annexation issue.

Aside from the two groups who had a higher proportion of no opinion responses noted above, there were no substantial differences in the responses to any of the listed issues among the demographic groups.

Annexation was the subject of a question in the 1997 survey, in which respondents were asked whether the Town should work to stop annexation by the Villages of Dresser and Osceola. Their choices were yes, no, and no opinion. If we assume that the very important and important response categories in the 2008 survey are the same as a yes response on the 1997 survey, the collective opinion of Osceola respondents has shifted in the past 11 years. Respondents have become more opinionated on this topic, and the shift has been toward viewing annexation as an issue of concern. Forty-one percent said yes in 1997, and an equal percentage had no opinion. In this survey, 63 percent said annexation by the Villages of Osceola and Dresser is a very important or important issue. The percentage of those without an opinion dropped to 16 percent. Since the percentage of those saying annexation is not an important issue was the same as those who responded no in the 1997 survey, the increase in those who see this issue as important came from the shift away from the no opinion responses.

Table 1.16: Opinions about specific planning issues in the Town of Osceola

	Count	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
Well water contamination	461	68%	27%	2%	0%	3%
Rural residential development	460	38%	45%	10%	2%	5%
Loss of productive farmland	462	44%	41%	11%	0%	4%
Land annexation by Villages of Osceola and Dresser	455	29%	37%	15%	4%	16%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

SWOT Analysis: Issues and Opportunities

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive Board members • Town Hall/Shop • Previous Comp Plan • Open Space • Low crime • Neighborhood Watch programs 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undesirable/Incompatible land uses • Loss of agriculture • Lack of local jobs • Town road maintenance • Infrastructure costs
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve River area • Preserve small town atmosphere • Adopt road program • Enhance trail system • Clustered development • Amery to Dresser trail 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village annexations • Retaining local control • Population growth • Increased traffic as a result of more development

Goals, Objectives, Implementation

Goal: Retain the rural character of the Town of Osceola by preserving open space and protecting farmland.

Objectives:

- Encourage residential development in areas with public utilities.
- Ensure that newly developed areas are compatible with existing land uses.
- Encourage use of conservation/cluster developments.
- Encourage the development of parks and recreation areas.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Establish a formal volunteer Parks and Recreation Planning Committee.
- Publish a newsletter.
- Update background information within one year after decennial Census is available.

HOUSING

Introduction

Housing is the single largest expenditure for most Wisconsin residents. According to *Consumer Expenditure Survey*, prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics/U.S. Department of Labor (2000), households in the Midwest spent an average of 27% of their annual income on housing. Housing helps drive the economy and is a major source of employment and revenue for Wisconsin residents.

The current housing market situation has seen a flattening of appreciation rates compared to previous years, which means in some cases a homeowner might struggle to sell at the price they purchased. Home sales have decreased despite the surge in construction; as a result there are plenty of open lots available.

Housing Stock Assessment

Age Characteristics

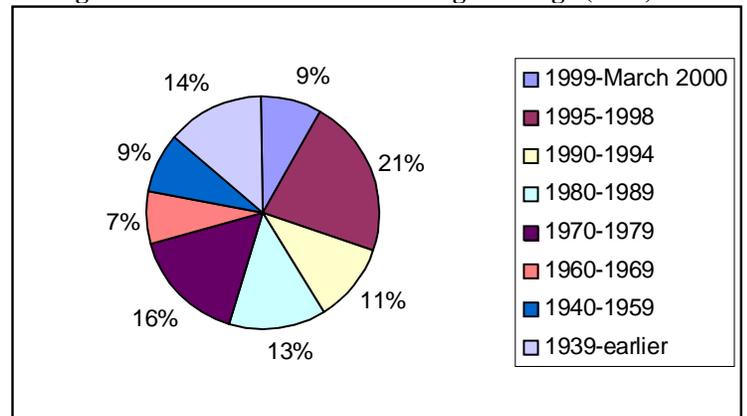
Considering the age of the existing housing stock is important when evaluating a community's housing options. The age of a house does not always determine its condition; a properly maintained house can last hundreds of years. Houses that lack proper care, however, can become run-down and dilapidated; blighting a neighborhood and potentially reducing property values in close proximity. Figure 2.1 shows that approximately 41% of the Town's housing stock were built between 1990 and 2000. Approximately 30% of the existing housing stock was built before 1970. As a result, those homes may require some added attention over the next 20 years in order to ensure against some of the negative impacts associated with aging homes.

Housing Element Requirements:

A compilation of objective, policies, goals, maps, and programs of the local governmental unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the age, structural value, and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental unit's housing stock. The element shall also identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs, policies and programs that promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing, and policies and programs to maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit's existing housing stock.

§ 66.1001(2)(b), Wis. Stat.

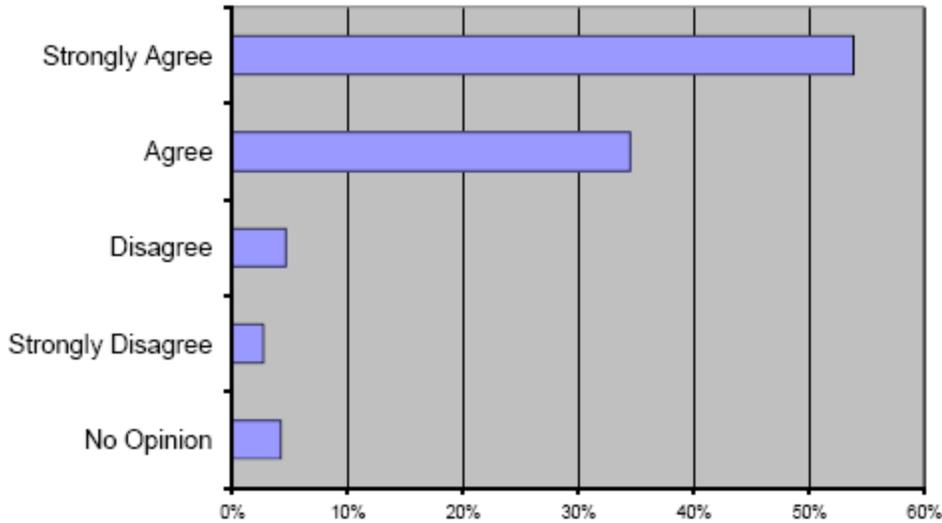
Figure 2.1: Town of Osceola housing stock age (2000)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Aesthetics are important to residents of the Town (see Figure 2.2). A very large majority of respondents said they strongly agree (54%) or agree (35%) that the external appearance of residences in their neighborhoods is important. There were no statistically significant differences in the responses to this question among the demographic groups.

Figure 2.2: External appearance of houses in neighborhood is important



Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Structural Characteristics

Single-family homes continue to be the main component of housing units in the Town of Osceola, as shown in the table below.

Table 2.1: Town of Osceola housing units (1990-2000)

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Total Housing Units	582	817	40.4%
1-unit, detached	491	700	42.6%
1-unit, attached	4	23	4.8%
2 to 4 units	16	36	125.0%
5 to 9 units	6	5	-16.7%
10 or more	0	3	(X)
Mobile home, trailer, boat, RV, other	65	50	-23.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

As shown in Table 2.2, a majority of respondents said that there is a need for more senior housing, single-family housing, and affordable housing. The strength of agreement was particularly strong in regard to senior housing and single-family housing: nearly three of four respondents agreed or strongly agreed there is a need for more housing of these types.

1-Unit, Detached:

This is a 1-unit structure detached from any other house; that is, with open space on all four sides. Such structures are considered detached even if they have an adjoining shed or garage. A one-family house that contains a business is considered detached as long as the building has open space on all four sides. Mobile homes or trailers to which one or more permanent rooms have been added or built also are included.

Housing

Respondents were less sure, however, about the need for additional seasonal or recreational housing, with a plurality (43%) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing and nearly as many (38%) agreeing or strongly agreeing. An additional 18 percent had no opinion.

Respondents were definitive regarding their opinions about the need for housing subdivisions, various types of multiple-family housing, and mobile homes. Majorities were opposed to housing subdivisions, multiple-family units (condominiums, apartments, and duplexes), and mobile homes. Respondents were most strongly opposed to mobile homes, either freestanding units or mobile home parks; over 80% disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Town needs more of these housing units.

Women and renters were slightly more likely to see a need for more affordable housing in the Town. Renters were also more likely to agree or strongly agree that more single-family housing is needed. A higher proportion of younger respondents (under age 45) see a need for more housing subdivisions.

Table 2.2: Town of Osceola opinions about the need for additional housing types

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Senior housing	457	18%	55%	12%	6%	10%
Single family housing	455	18%	55%	12%	5%	10%
Affordable housing	457	12%	45%	20%	12%	11%
Seasonal/Recreational housing	459	2%	35%	29%	15%	18%
Housing subdivisions	457	2%	32%	30%	22%	14%
Duplexes	451	2%	25%	41%	19%	13%
Condominiums/Apartments	457	3%	23%	40%	22%	12%
Freestanding mobile homes	457	1%	5%	36%	47%	10%
Mobile home parks	457	1%	7%	33%	49%	9%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

According to Table 2.3, the type of heating fuel used by homes in the Town of Osceola changed significantly from 1990 to 2000. People are switching from wood and fuel oil to utility gas and liquid propane because they are easier to transport and handle.

Table 2.3: Town of Osceola heating fuel (1990-2000)

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Utility gas	18	118	555.6%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	175	416	137.7%
Electricity	59	54	-8.5%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	140	105	-25.0%
Coal or coke	0	0	0%
Wood	77	51	-33.8%
Solar energy	0	0	0%
Other fuel	2	4	-100.0%
No fuel used	1	0	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Value Characteristics

As shown in Table 2.4, the number of homes valued between \$100,000 and \$199,000 increased dramatically between 1990 and 2000. Also worth noting is the sizeable increase in median home values from \$68,300 in 1990 to \$138,200 in 2000. In 2000, the median owner-occupied home value in the Town (\$138,200) was higher than the median value for Polk County (\$100,200).

Table 2.4: Town of Osceola home values (1990-2000)

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Specified owner-occupied units	218	421	93.1%
Less than \$50,000	48	6	-87.5%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	144	66	-54.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	22	186	745.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3	109	35.3%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	1	48	4700.0%
\$300,000 or more	0	6	(X)
Median Value (dollars)	\$68,300	\$138,200	102.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Housing Affordability

It is important for the Town of Osceola to work with developers to ensure that a mixture of housing types are available to offer more options to buyers, especially residents with fixed incomes and new families.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines affordable housing as housing in which the occupant is paying no more than 30% of their yearly income in gross housing costs, including utilities. Table 2.5 shows that approximately 87% of homeowners in the Town of Osceola spend less than 30% of their annual household income on housing costs.

Table 2.5: Town of Osceola selected monthly costs as a percentage of household income (1999)

	Number	Percent of Total
Less than 15 percent	135	32.1%
15 to 19 percent	102	24.2%
20 to 24 percent	72	17.1%
25 to 29 percent	59	14.0%
30 to 34 percent	23	5.5%
35 percent or more	28	6.7%
Not computed	2	0.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Rental housing is a necessary aspect of the Town’s ability to offer affordable and available housing choices for existing and potential residents. As shown in Table 2.6, the number of rental units offered in the Town in 1999 was relatively low, and the median rent per month was \$590.00, compared to \$440.00 for the entire County.

Table 2.6: Town of Osceola gross rent characteristics (1999)

	Number	Percent of Total
Specified renter-occupied units in 1999	61	100.0%
Less than \$200	0	0.0%
\$200 to \$299	2	3.3%
\$300 to \$499	19	31.1%
\$500 to \$749	19	31.1%
\$750 to \$999	15	24.6%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	0	0.0%
\$1,500 or more	3	4.9%
No cash rent	3	4.9%
Median (dollars)	\$590.00	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Table 2.7 depicts the rent as a percentage of household income in 1999. Despite a median rent of approximately \$150.00 more the County-wide median, approximately 69% of households in the Town pay less than 30% of their monthly income in rent.

Table 2.7: Town of Osceola gross rent as a percentage of household income (1999)

	Number	Percent of Total
Specified renter-occupied units in 1999	61	100.0%
Less than 15 percent	21	34.4%
15 to 19 percent	10	16.4%
20 to 24 percent	7	11.5%
25 to 29 percent	4	6.6%
30 to 34 percent	6	9.8%
35 percent or more	10	16.4%
Not computed	3	4.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Occupancy Characteristics

Table 2.8 shows the breakdown of households in the Town of Osceola in 2000. Family households dominate the overall percentage with approximately 80% of the total.

Table 2.8: Town of Osceola household characteristics (2000)

	2000	Percent of Total
Total households	744	100.0%
Family households (families)	597	80.2%
With own children under 18 years	311	41.8%
Married-couple family	516	69.4%
With own children under 18 years	256	34.4%
Female householder, no husband present	53	7.1%
With own children under 18 years	38	5.1%
Nonfamily households	147	19.8%
Householder living alone	114	15.3%
Householder 65 years and over	25	3.4%
Households with individuals under 18 years	320	(X)
Households with individuals 65 years and over	114	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Table 2.9 shows the number of occupied and vacant housing units in 2000. Vacant housing units can have negative impacts on surrounding property values due to disrepair and can be targets for crime. The recent foreclosure crisis warrants special attention to vacant properties by neighbors and the Town.

Table 2.9: Town of Osceola occupancy characteristics (1990-2000)

Occupancy and Tenure	1990	2000	Percent Change
Total Housing Units	582	829	42.4%
Occupied Housing Units	472	744	57.6%
Owner occupied	414	669	61.6%
Renter occupied	58	75	29.3%
Vacant housing units	110	85	-22.7%
For Seasonal/Recreational Use	84	64	-23.8%
Persons per owner-occupied unit	2.90	2.90	0.0%
Persons per renter-occupied unit	2.34	1.97	-15.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Predicting Housing Needs

There are numerous factors involved in the housing market that are difficult to predict or control, such as preferences and consumer income. But a simple model using estimates can be used to forecast the housing needs.

The total number of housing units in the Town increased 42.4% from 582 in 1990 to 829 in 2000 (see Table 2.1). Table 2.10 shows the projected number of households in the Town up to 2030. The projected number of future housing units needed is calculated by subtracting the projected number of households from the number of existing households according to the 2000 Census information. The table does not take into consideration the number of vacant houses that will become occupied in future years or a prolonged stagnate housing market.

Table 2.10: Town of Osceola households (2000-2030)

	Census 2000	Estimated 2005	Projected 2010	Projected 2015	Projected 2020	Projected 2025	Projected 2030
Town of Osceola	744	974	1,154	1,342	1,529	1,704	1,864
Polk County	16,254	17,876	19,507	21,221	22,866	24,284	25,506

Source: Prepared by Demographic Services Center, Wisconsin Department of Administration (2008)

Table 2.11 shows the number of estimated additional housing units in the Town of Osceola over the next 20 years.

Table 2.11: Town of Osceola estimated additional number of housing units (2005-2030)

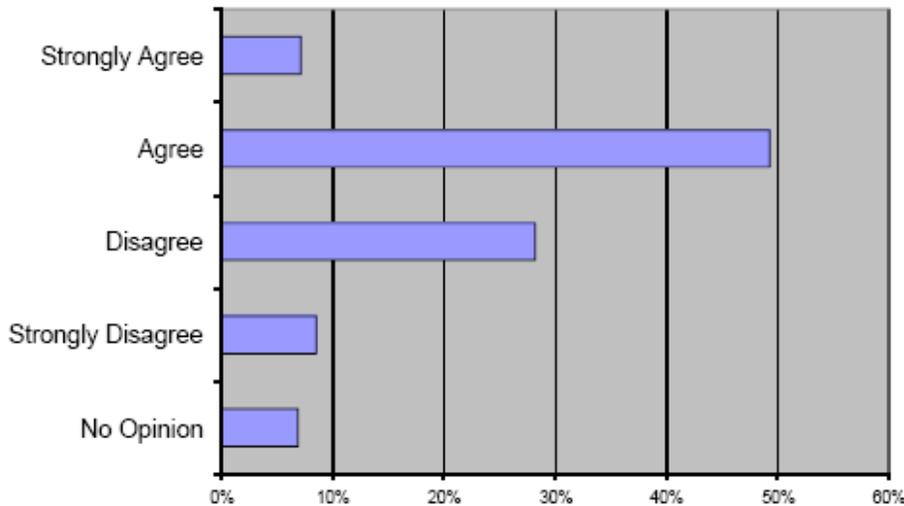
	Census 2000	Estimated 2005	Projected 2010	Projected 2015	Projected 2020	Projected 2025	Projected 2030
Population	2,085	2,681	3,078	3,506	3,934	4,338	4,700
Households	744	974	1,154	1,342	1,529	1,704	1,864
Persons per Household	2.80	2.75	2.68	2.61	2.57	2.55	2.52
Additional Housing Units Needed	(X)	230	180	188	187	175	160

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000 and Stevens Engineers, Inc.

The survey indicated a majority of respondents said that residential growth is desirable in the Town, with 56% agreeing or strongly agreeing (see Figure 2.3). At the same time, however, a substantial minority did not believe residential growth is a positive for the Town (37% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing).

Renters were more likely to agree or strongly agree that residential growth is desirable. Farmland owners and longer-term residents (greater than 15 years) are more likely to disagree or strongly disagree.

Figure 2.3: Residential development in the Town of Osceola is desirable



Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Building Permits

Table 2.12 and Figure 2.4 summarize building permit activity from 2001-2007. Building permits for single-family and all other permits have steadily decreased since 2001. However, the Town did process 7 new multi-family permits since 2005. If the housing market continues to struggle, the Town may see an increase in other building permits

Housing

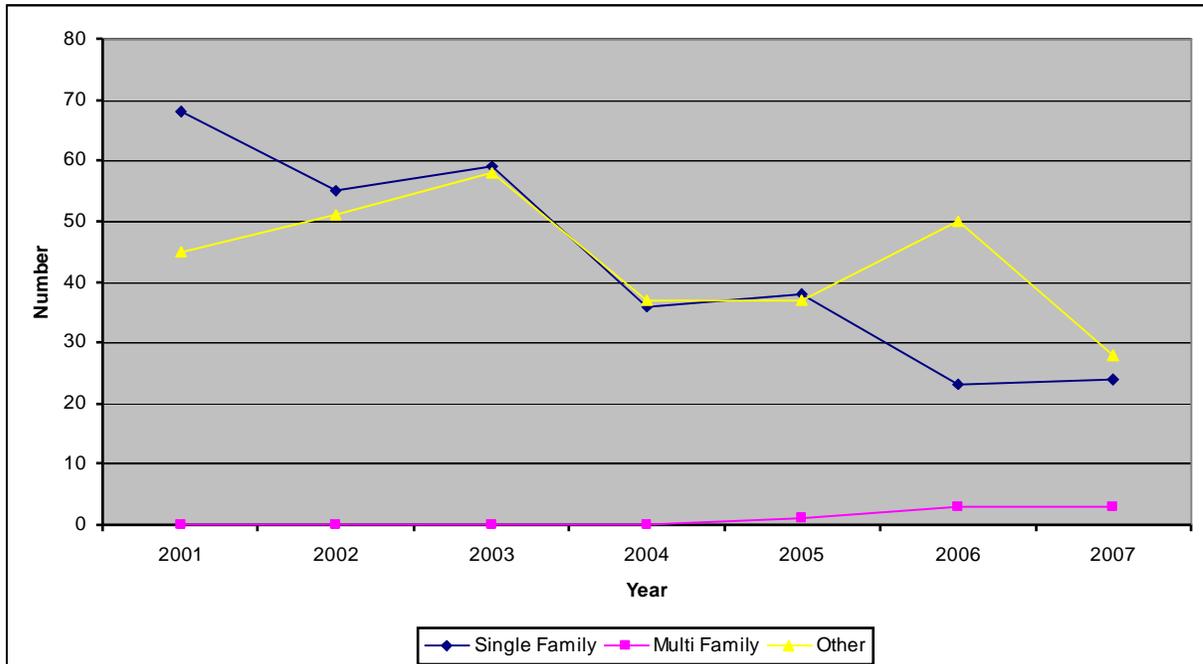
such as interior remodels and additions because most homeowners are more likely to reinvest in their homes rather than sell.

Table 2.12: Town of Osceola building permit activity (2001-2007)

Permits Issued	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<i>Multi-Family</i>	0	0	0	0	1	3	3
<i>Single-Family</i>							
Site Built	52	50	57	36	35	18	17
Manufactured	15	5	2	0	1	2	4
Moved House	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
<i>Other</i>							
Garage Only	23	27	22	7	9	16	10
Deck Only	10	7	15	7	3	9	7
Addition	2	3	11	5	11	9	2
Garage and Deck	2	2	0	2	1	1	0
Garage and Pool	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Garage and Porch	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
Addition and Deck	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Addition and Garage	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
3-Season Porch	2	5	2	1	2	0	0
Interior Remodel	1	3	2	2	3	5	2
Commercial Bldg.	2	1	3	3	2	2	1
Shed	0	2	3	10	5	8	2

Source: Town of Osceola

Figure 2.4: Town of Osceola building permit trends (2001-2007)



Source: Town of Osceola (2008)

Housing Assistance Programs and Agencies

Federal

- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Primary responsibility includes housing programs and community development. The agency provides subsidized housing through low-income public housing and subsidies for private property owners renting to low-income households. The following table shows the HUD income limits for its housing programs in Polk County. The limits are broken up by family size.

Table 2.13: Polk County median family income (all families) \$57,200

Program	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
30 % of Median	\$12,000	\$13,700	\$15,450	\$17,150	\$18,500	\$19,900	\$21,250	\$22,650
Very Low Income	\$20,000	\$22,900	\$25,750	\$28,600	\$30,900	\$33,200	\$35,450	\$37,750
Low-Income	\$32,050	\$36,600	\$41,200	\$45,750	\$49,400	\$53,050	\$56,750	\$60,400

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2006)

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

The USDA provides a variety of housing and community development programs for rural areas. These are generally areas with population of 10,000 or less. It also provides support for rental housing development, direct and guaranteed mortgage loans for home buyers, and support for self-help and cooperative housing development.

State

- Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR)

This is one of two state agencies that administer housing programs. It administers several programs that are funded by the state and others funded by HUD. These funds are used to help organizations develop the capacity to develop housing or to provide various types of financial assistance to homebuyers or renters through grants to local governments or non-profit agencies.

- Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

The WHEDA Foundation, Inc. and WHEDA make available annually grant funds through the Housing Grant Program competition, financing to purchase or refinance and rehabilitate a home, to assist in the improvement of the state's housing for low income and special needs populations, serving Barron, Burnett, Polk, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, and Washburn counties.

Local Programs

- Housing Trust Funds

These are financial resources available for housing projects targeting the needs of mid or low-income households. Such funds can be used to fill financial gaps to make projects feasible. Trust funds may be replenished yearly or they may be designed to be perpetual and self-sustaining.

- Housing Linkage Programs

These programs encourage developers of office, commercial, retail, or institutional development to construct or make financial contributions towards affordable housing. The rationale behind these voluntary programs is that new non-residential development creates a need for housing by attracting employees to an area.

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

This is a planning tool available to cities, villages, and towns in Wisconsin under section 66.1105 of Wisconsin Statutes for development and redevelopment of blighted areas. TIF can be used to cover costs of public works or improvements including costs of demolition, land assembly, public improvements, and new buildings. Under TIF, new private development creates higher property values, thus creating an increased tax base over time. This increment, or a portion of the increment, is set aside for reinvestment in the area. Tax increment financing may assist in the building or rehabilitating of affordable housing for middle and lower income households.

Private Programs

- West Central Wisconsin Community Action Agency (West CAP)

The HomeWorks program constructs and manages new housing and provides a variety of renovation, weatherization, and energy efficiency services for existing homes and apartments. West CAP will purchase and remodel good housing structures in suitable locations and re-market them through Ideal Realty to low-income families at affordable prices, housing counseling is also available. It serves Barron, Chippewa, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk and St. Croix Counties.

- Movin' Out, Inc.

Movin' Out, Inc. is a housing organization providing information and assistance, housing counseling, and gap financing for purchase and rehabilitation to Wisconsin households with a member who has a permanent disability.

Housing

- Non-Profit Housing Development Corporations

These organizations may qualify for tax-deductible donations, foundations grants, and public funds. To be eligible, the organizations must apply for and receive non-profit status from the IRS. Non-profits build and maintain housing projects in many areas of Wisconsin. Their projects help communities improve their range of housing opportunities.

SWOT Analysis: Housing

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good school districts • Proximity to Twin Cities • Rental units available in surrounding communities • Well maintained homes • Affordable housing 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local jobs not available • Lack of nursing home
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Croix River Crossing • Housing and lot stock available allows time to plan for future 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annexations • Proximity to Twin Cities and the preservation of agriculture and rural character • St. Croix River Crossing

Goals, Objectives, Implementation

Goal#1: Promote a high-quality rural residential environment.

Objectives:

- Promote the continued maintenance of the Town’s housing stock.
- Identify and develop methods and funding options to encourage the rehabilitation or redevelopment of substandard housing.
- Encourage infill housing development were appropriate.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Schedule review of housing stock and administer notices to enforce Town’s Public Nuisance Ordinance.
- Monitor lot availability.

Goal #2: Promote a variety of housing types in the Town for citizens of all income levels, ages and needs.

Objectives:

- Plan housing developments in desirable locations.
- Provide housing that meets the physical and financial needs of residents.
- Examine zoning and other development standards to ensure they don't negatively impact affordable housing.
- Provide incentives for developers that incorporate low to middle-income homes into subdivisions.
- Encourage use of multiple housing designs in a subdivision.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Review Town Subdivision Ordinance for possible incorporation of conservation subdivision development standards.

TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

The Transportation Element, among others, is one that greatly affects all other elements. Land use and transportation have a complicated relationship that can work both ways. Roads create “nodes of development” that new businesses and industries build around. Other examples could include the by-pass of a main road through a city which can have negative impacts on the local economy. Where land is developed and how it is used is critical to a municipality’s transportation element.

Demographics also play a role in the transportation element. Wisconsin is currently experiencing an increase in population, an increase in commuting distance, a decrease in persons per household, and increase in vehicles per household. These are all putting more pressure on the state’s transportation system. In addition, the cost of constructing and maintaining roads and highways has greatly increased due to increase in petroleum and other raw materials. The choice is not whether to fix the transportation system, but how to fix it efficiently and cost effectively.

Town of Osceola Road System

The Town of Osceola is served by approximately 4 miles of State highways, 21 miles of County highways, and 59 miles of Town roads. The Town’s total road miles include approximately 81 miles of asphalt and approximately 3 miles of graveled roads. As listed in Table 3.1, in 2000, many of the area residents commute to work alone with an average commute time of 28.7 minutes. Figure 3.1 illustrates the survey results showing that the commute time has actually increased since the census with over half (55%) of employed respondents drive at least 30 minutes to their place of work, and more than one in three travel 45 or more minutes to work. The survey data indicates that commute times were slightly longer than reported in the 2000 Census, although the Census data is not directly comparable since it includes teenage workers who were not part of the survey sample. Travel times to work were less for younger respondents (under age 45) and for respondents from households without children.

Transportation Element Requirements:

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

§ 66.1001(2)(c), Wis. Stat

Transportation System:

- *Transportation options used to move people and products*
- *Levels of jurisdictional authority*
- *Facilities that a user might access to begin, change or switch, and end a trip*
- *Includes:*
 - *roads*
 - *transit services*
 - *rail services*
 - *bike lanes, paths, and trails*
 - *air travel*
 - *pedestrian accommodations*
 - *water travel*

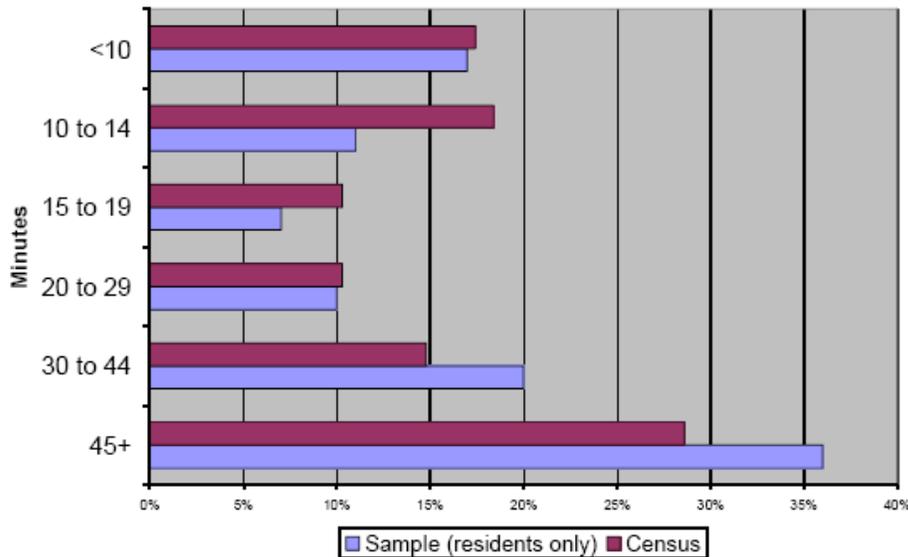
Transportation

Table 3.1: Town of Osceola commute characteristics (2000)

	2000	Percent
Workers 16 years and over	1,146	100.0%
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	912	79.6%
Car, truck, or van -- carpoled	140	12.2%
Public transportation (including taxicab)	3	0.3%
Walked	21	1.8%
Other means	16	1.4%
Worked at home	54	4.7%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	28.7	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990 and 2000

Figure 3.1: Town of Osceola survey respondent commute times



Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

While the commute times are longer, the Town of Osceola residents are largely satisfied with the overall road network in the Town and the condition of its roads. As shown in Table 3.2, 87% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the Town’s road network meets citizen needs, and four of five respondents said that the condition of the Town’s roads is acceptable. Unlike some earlier questions in the survey that elicited a substantial percentage of no opinion responses, nearly every respondent had an opinion about the condition of the Town’s roads.

Table 3.2: Town of Osceola opinions about transportation issues

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Overall road network in the Town meets citizen needs	464	12%	75%	8%	3%	3%
Overall condition of roads in the Town is acceptable	465	9%	67%	17%	5%	2%
Additional biking & walking lanes needed along public roadways in Town	465	21%	35%	27%	9%	8%

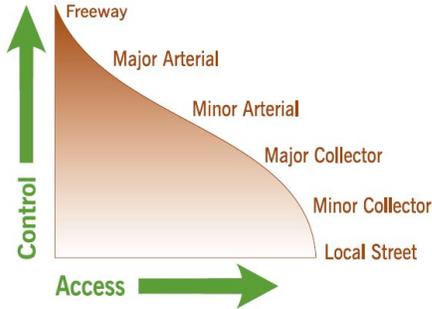
Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Given that the majority of residents are satisfied with the present roadway system but continued population growth from both new residents and commuters will continue to add demands, the following paragraphs describe in more detail the Town’s road network (both present and future) and how other forms of transportation will impact the area.

Roads and Highways

Functional Classification

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



Source: WisDOT

Table 3.3: Town of Osceola road classifications

Road Classification	Road Name
Principal Arterials: Serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban areas with a population greater than 5,000.	None
Minor Arterials: In conjunction with the principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intraregional and inter-area traffic movements.	State Highway 35
Major Collectors: Provide service to moderate-sized communities, and other intra-area traffic generators, and link those generators to nearby larger population centers or higher function routes.	County Road F County Road K County Road M County Road MM County Road Y
Minor Collectors: Provide service to all remaining smaller communities, link the locally important traffic generators with their rural hinterland, and are spaced consistent with population density so as to collect traffic from local roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a collector road.	County Road S 240 th Street (S. of STH 35) 90 th Avenue (E. of County Road MM and W. of 210 th Street) 210 th St (north of 90 th Avenue and south of 120 th Avenue)
Local Roads: Local roads provide access to adjacent land and provide for travel over relatively short distances on an inter-township or intra-township basis.	All other roads not listed above

Source: WisDOT (2007)

Traffic Growth and Volume

Since 1998, the Town of Osceola has experienced significant growth in the number of residential subdivisions and consequentially, traffic volume on its roadways. The traffic volume is measured as the number of vehicles expected to pass a given location on an average day of the year. These values are called the “annual average daily traffic” or AADT and are represented on traffic count or traffic volume maps. The AADT is based on a short-term traffic count, usually 48 hours, taken at the location. This count is then adjusted for the variation in traffic volume throughout the year and the average number of

axles per vehicle. The Functional Classification map shows a summary of the traffic counts based on 2006 data from WisDOT for State and County roads.

Road Maintenance

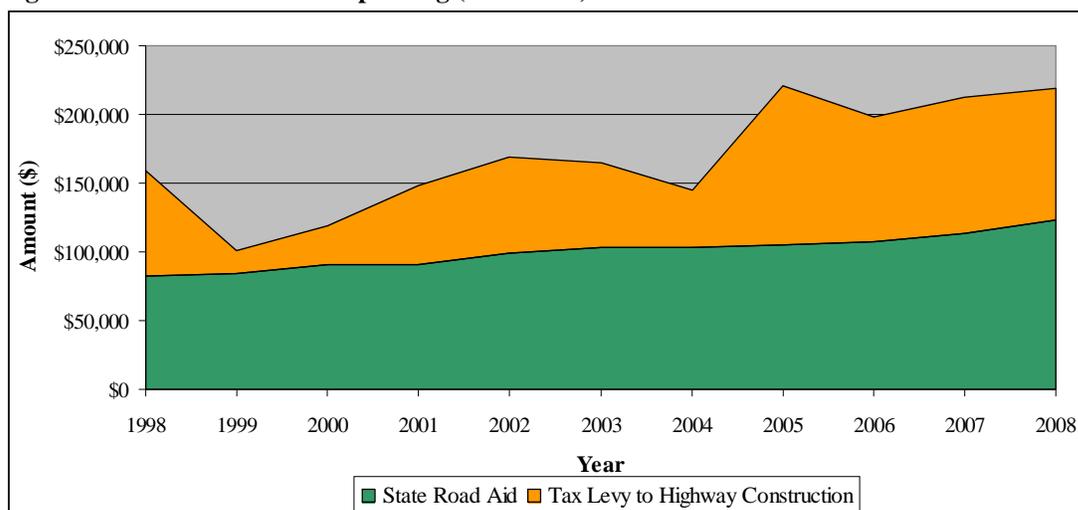
The subdivision growth has resulted in more miles of road dedicated to the Town, more roads to maintain, and more overall traffic. The total miles of road maintained by the Town are illustrated in Table 3.4. Once a road is accepted by the municipality, it is then responsible for its maintenance (snow plowing), repair (crack filling, seal coating, and reconditioning (overlay/repave). According to the survey, ratings for street and road maintenance were average. While 44% rated this item as very good (10%) or good (34%), nearly four in ten said maintenance was only average.

Table 3.4: Summary of miles of road and highway construction funding (1998-2008)

Year	Mile of Road	State Aid/Mile	State Road Aid	Tax Levy to Highway Construction	Highway Construction
1998	51.42	\$1,596	\$82,066	\$77,603	\$159,669
1999	53.16	\$1,596	\$84,843	\$16,273	\$101,116
2000	53.16	\$1,704	\$90,585	\$28,537	\$119,122
2001	55.18	\$1,641	\$90,550	\$57,043	\$147,593
2002	56.55	\$1,755	\$99,245	\$69,590	\$168,835
2003	56.35	\$1,825	\$102,839	\$61,781	\$164,620
2004	56.70	\$1,825	\$103,478	\$41,095	\$144,572
2005	57.90	\$1,825	\$105,668	\$114,953	\$220,620
2006	57.69	\$1,862	\$107,419	\$90,746	\$198,165
2007	57.79	\$1,899	\$113,541	\$99,291	\$212,832
2008	62.63	\$1,956	\$122,504	\$96,496	\$219,000
% Change	22%	23%	49%	24%	37%
% Growth/Yr	1.99%	2.05%	4.09%	2.20%	3.21%

Source: Town of Osceola (2008)

Figure 3.2: Road construction spending (1998-2008)

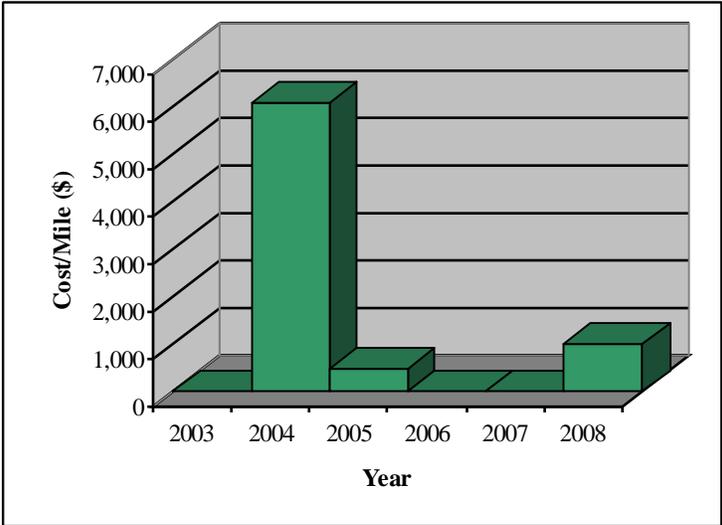


Source: Town of Osceola (2008)

Transportation

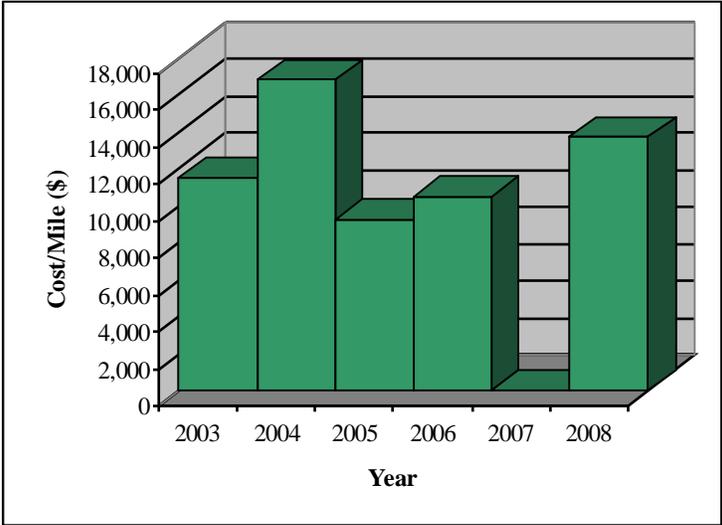
A typical, asphalt road has a 20-30 year life between major reconditioning depending upon traffic levels. The new roads accepted by the Town of Osceola beginning in 1998 are now reaching a point where minor repairs such as crack filling and seal coating are required. The challenge into the future is to ensure that roadway quality is maintained given that construction expenses are increasing at a rate greater than State Road Aid or the Tax Levy available for roadway construction. Figures 3.3-3.5 show the Town’s road maintenance costs for crack filling, seal coating, and mill and repave.

Figure 3.3: Town of Osceola crack filling cost (2003-2008)



Source: Town of Osceola (2008)

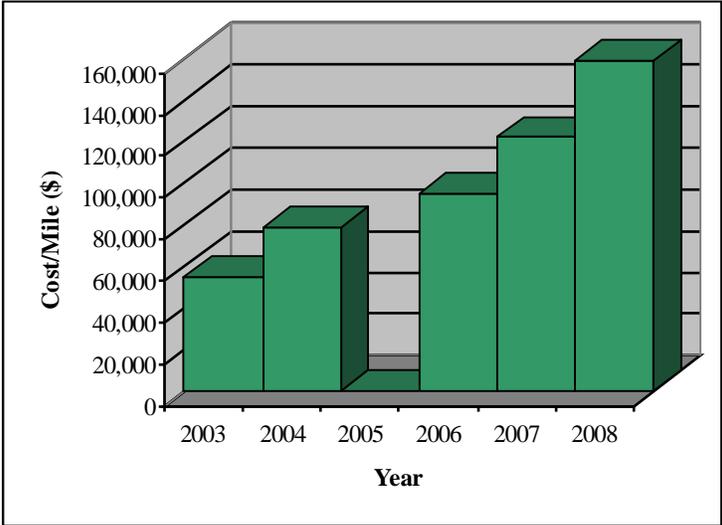
Figure 3.4: Town of Osceola seal coating costs (2003-2008)



Source: Town of Osceola (2008)

Transportation

Figure 3.5: Town of Osceola mill and repave (2003-2008)



Source: Town of Osceola (2008)

As the aforementioned graphs show, the price of fuel and raw materials are having a significant impact on the amount of road construction that can be completed in a given year. The Town of Osceola needs to analyze and ensure that the investments in a given roadway are prioritized and spent judiciously. Road maintenance activities are tracked using the WISLR and PASER software packages. The roads are rated on a scale of 1-10 for asphalt roads and 1-5 for gravel roads. The following tables summarize the miles of road by rating for asphalt and gravel roads. As of 2008, the total length of all asphalt and gravel County and Town roads in the Town of Osceola was 443,671 lineal feet or approximately 84 miles.

Table 3.5: Town of Osceola asphalt road rating and length

Rating	Length (LF)	Percent of Total (by surface)
10	42,181	9.9%
9	67,998	15.9%
8	111,443	26.0%
7	77,640	18.1%
6	50,372	11.8%
5	16,368	3.8%
4	26,556	6.2%
3	14,838	3.5%
2	20,434	4.8%
TOTAL	427,830	100.0%

Source: WISLR/PASER data

Transportation

Table 3.6: Town of Osceola gravel road rating and length

Rating	Length (LF)	Percent of Total (by surface)
5	4,805	30.3%
4	7,024	44.3%
3	4,012	25.3%
TOTAL	15,841	100.0%

Source: WISLR/PASER data

Transit

The closest municipality that offers public transportation is New Richmond, which has a shared-ride taxi service. It is funded by WisDOT and is run by Pape Taxi Service, Inc. out of New Richmond. This taxi service only operates within the city limits of New Richmond.

Transportation Services for the Disabled

Transportation services for the elderly and handicapped are coordinated through the Polk County Transportation for Disabled and Elderly, Inc. This organization provides about 18,000 rides a year with a fleet of six wheelchair-accessible vehicles. Approximately 20% of the rides are provided to Town of Osceola residents. This organization also provides contracted transportation services to the Department of Aging in Polk County, which utilizes about 40 volunteers. The Department of Aging in Polk County offers rides to citizens 55 years and older who cannot find a ride. Any individual, regardless of handicap, can call this free service for a ride to an appointment, the grocery store, or any other reasonable destination. This program relies on local volunteers to drive.

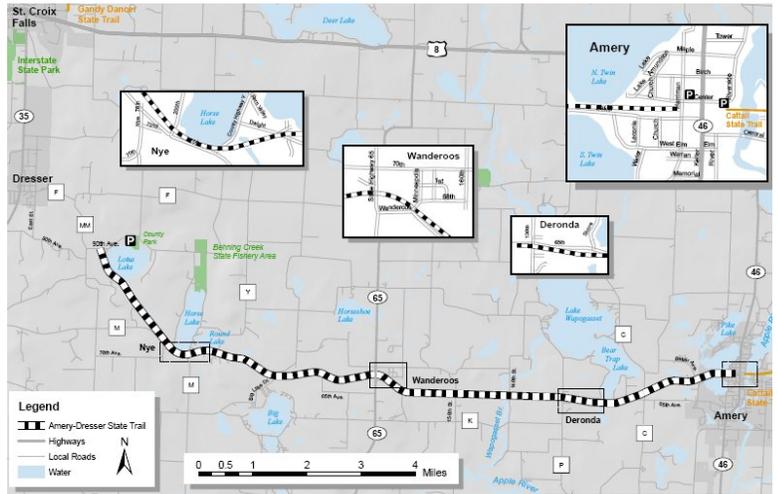
Bicycles and Pedestrians

Gandy Dancer Trail

According to WisDOT, 39% of all Americans use bicycles. One of the most popular bike trails in western Wisconsin is the Gandy Dancer Trail, which runs through the western side of Polk County. This 98-mile trail follows the old Minneapolis-St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie railroad from St. Croix Falls to Superior. After it was abandoned, part of it was purchased by Burnett County and the State of Wisconsin for use as a recreational trail. “Gandy Dancers” were coined from the workers who used to build and maintain the railroad tracks. In Polk County, the trail starts in St. Croix Falls and passes through Centuria, Milltown, Luck, Frederic, and Lewis. Parking, picnic shelters, and restrooms are available on the trail. While ATV use is permitted on most of the trail, it is not in the Polk County section. Snowmobile use, however, is permitted on this trail.

Amery to Dresser Trail

Polk County operates this 14-mile trail on an old railroad bed from Amery to 90th Avenue in the Town of Osceola, approximately one-mile southeast of Dresser. After much discussion through 2004, a decision was made by the County Board for the trail to have two surfaces (motorized and non-motorized). However, a subsequent court ruling has limited its use to non-motorized applications. The trail has been brushed and graded and its surface is a combination of grass, ballast, and gravel. Eventually the trail will be developed for bicycling.

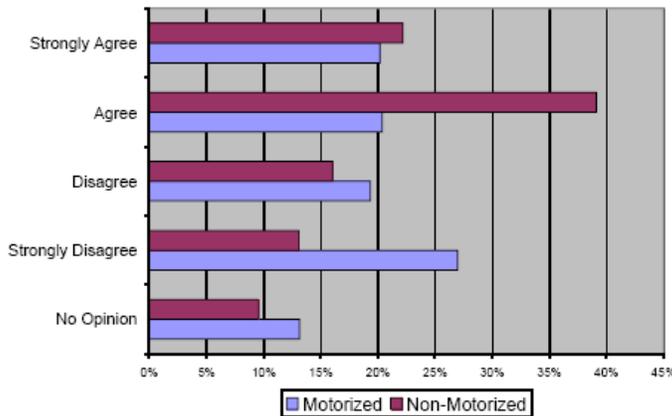


Source: WDNR

As noted in the Town’s 1998 Comprehensive Plan, the Town would like to see the trail connect from its current terminus, at 90th Ave., north through Dresser and into St. Croix Falls to the Gandy Dancer Trail.

When asked about the need for additional off-road trails, a majority (61%) favored more trails for non-motorized vehicles (see Figure 3.6). However, their opinions about additional trails for motorized vehicles were mixed. The percentage that agreed or strongly agreed equaled the percentage that disagreed or strongly disagreed. The strength of feeling is somewhat stronger among those who disagree with the suggestion that more motorized trails are needed (more than 1 in 4 strongly disagrees). Respondents under age 45 and those from households with annual incomes over \$50,000 were more likely to agree or strongly agree that more trails for motorized vehicles are needed. With regard to the need for more trails for non-motorized uses, women and those from households with children were in stronger agreement that these types of trails are needed.

Figure 3.6: Town of Osceola opinions about the need for additional off-road trails



Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Transportation

According to the Community Survey, a majority (56%) agreed or strongly agreed that additional biking and walking lanes are needed along public roadways. Compared to the earlier question about the need for more off-road trails for non-motorized uses, the percentage of respondents who see a need for off-road trails (61%) is similar to those who see a need for additional biking and walking lanes along roadways (56%). Respondents with children in the household were more likely to agree or strongly agree that more biking and walking lanes are needed along public roadways, while a higher proportion of retirees disagree or strongly disagree.

ATV and Snowmobile Trails

The Polk County snowmobile trails are open from December 11 to March 31 as long as there is a 6 inch snow base. Polk County has over 360 miles of groomed trails that run through numerous communities promoting friendly hospitality to snowmobilers. Out-of-state snowmobile passes are \$18 and are good from July 1 to June 31 of each year. These passes can be purchased at the Polk County Clerk Office or from any DNR licensing station.

Cattail Trail

The Cattail State Trail consists of 17.8 miles of old railroad tracks from Amery to Alma that is now owned by Polk County. This trail is available for a wide variety of uses; including horseback riding, snowmobiling, mountain biking and walking. All-terrain vehicles are allowed on the trail year-round. Off-road motorcycles are allowed on the trail year-round in Polk County only. Restrooms and picnic areas are available at the trailhead.



Source: WDNR

Railroads

The Canadian National (CN) Railroad comes through Polk County; connecting Osceola and Dresser with Minneapolis-St. Paul. The track has three, “at grade” crossings on the Town of Osceola roadway system: 248th Street, 240th Street, and 90th Avenue. Each of the crossings is at an oblique angle where it is difficult for the drivers to view oncoming trains. While the three crossings exist, the actual train volume is small with an estimated four trains per week to the Dresser Traprock plant and one train on Saturday and Sunday for sight-seeing. The tracks are designed to allow rail cars to travel 40 miles/hour, but most travel through the Town at approximately 20 miles/hour. There are no other active rail carriers in Polk County. The crossings are further detailed in Table 3.7:

Transportation

Table 3.7: Town of Osceola railroad crossings

Crossing	Signalized	Accident History
248 th Street	Yield Signs	2004
240 th Street	Lights and Arms	None
90 th Avenue	Yield Signs	None

Source: Town of Osceola

The West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition is a voluntary group that has been working towards the development of a passenger rail service across west central Wisconsin along the I-94 corridor or along the Mississippi River.

Air Transportation

The Village of Osceola and the City of Amery have the only two publicly-owned airports located in Polk County. The New Richmond Airport, located in St. Croix County is an alternative to Town of Osceola residents.

Table 3.8: Regional Airport characteristics

Airport	Classification	Runway Length
Amery	General Utility	4,000 feet
Osceola	Transport/Corporate	5,005 feet
New Richmond	Transport/Corporate	5,507 feet

Source: Village of Osceola, Cities of Amery, New Richmond

L.O. Simenstad Airport

The airport was founded in 1948 and extended its runway to 5,005 feet in 2006. The airport is administered by the Osceola Airport Commission, which consists of five commissioners serving six year terms. The Commission has jurisdiction for the construction, improvement, equipment, maintenance and operation of the airport under § 114.14(2) and (3), Wis. Stats. Their goal is to “ensure reliable, safe and nondiscretionary aeronautical services, facilities and air transportation and to foster the economic health and orderly development of the airport...” The airport’s zoning and land use implications on the Town of Osceola are discussed in the land use element.

Amery Airport

According to the WisDOT, a \$315,790 project was approved by Governor Doyle for the Amery Municipality Airport. The project includes land acquisition, engineering services for developing a future hanger site north of the airport, and other reimbursements. The funds would be also be used to resurface the existing runway and replace and add new taxiways throughout the airport. The airport does have the space available to expand the runway to 5,000 feet if demand exceeds 250 flights per year that cannot land on the current 4,000 foot runway.

New Richmond Regional Airport

The New Richmond Regional Airport was officially established in 1964 and is considered one of the fastest growing airports in the Midwest. Over 180 aircraft reside in privately-owned hangars, and it is home to ten aviation-related businesses and business aircraft. According to the New Richmond Area Economic Development Corporation, the airport contributes over nine million dollars to the New Richmond area economy. It is about 20 miles (30 minutes) away from the Town of Osceola. The airport has its maximum runway length and made significant improvements to the runway and lighting fixtures in 2008. They also have land available for adding hangars and other aircraft-related buildings.

Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport

The Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) is the main airport used by the region’s residents and is about 50 miles (60 minutes) away from the Town. This airport has about 500,000 landings and takes-offs in a given year and will continue to be available to residents of the Town of Osceola.

State, Regional, and County Transportation Plans

According to the Polk County Highway Department, the following projects are planned for County roads in the Town of Osceola:

County Road Y (from County Road F to approximately 75th Avenue): In 2011 it is scheduled to be reconstructed to 3R standard; right of way will be purchased and the road will be widened.

County Road M (from the Village of Osceola to Nye): By 2010 it is scheduled to be milled and repaved.

County Road S (from the Village of Osceola to north of the Village of Dresser): By 2012 it is scheduled to be overlaid.

Transportation

The following table is a list of current and future state and regional transportation plans that may impact the Town of Osceola.

Table 3.9: State and Regional Transportation Plans

Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020	This plan determines the number and type of airport facilities around Wisconsin that are needed to meet aviation needs through the year 2020.
West Central Regional Freeway System (2005)	This was a comprehensive study done by WisDOT of the west central freeway system consisting of St. Croix, Pierce, Dunn, Polk, Chippewa, and Eau Claire counties.
WisDOT six year highway improvement program	One of the subprograms under this is the State Highway rehabilitation program which consists of three parts; existing highways, state bridges, and backbone rehabilitation.
Rustic Roads	The Wisconsin legislature created the rustic road system in 1973 to, "preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic, lightly traveled country roads for the leisurely enjoyment of bikers, hikers and motorists."
Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report	This report gives an over view of the status of the rail system in Wisconsin and addresses issues that will be faced in the future.
Midwest Regional Rail System	This is a massive proposal for creating passenger rail connections across the Midwest; connecting all the major cities.
Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020	Under part of Translinks 21, WisDOT committed to creating a comprehensive bicycle plan.
Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020	The purpose of this plan was to outline statewide and local measure to increase walking and promote pedestrian safety.
Translinks 21	The study developed goals which include the following: Mobility, Choice, Safety, Connectivity, and Efficiency
Connections 2030 (WisDOT)	WisDOT is currently working on this plan that will cover all forms of transportation; including highways, local roads, railroad, air, water, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian, through the year 2030.
Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020	A strategic plan which addresses current conditions of state highways, future plans, financial tools, and other strategies to use to maintain the State's 12,000 miles of highway.

Source: WisDOT (2008)

St. Croix River Crossing Project

The Stillwater Lift Bridge was built in 1931 and is currently near the end of its useful life where significant amounts of funding are needed for maintenance. The bridge spans the St. Croix River and enters the City of Stillwater in its downtown district. As a result, traffic congestion and delays are frequent, especially during the summer travel and boating season. A planned bridge replacement south of its present location would relieve the downtown congestion and provide for four lane travel on the Wisconsin side of the river up to the City of New Richmond.



Source: MnDOT

However, lawsuits over the expansion and its impact on the riverway have delayed the project. The four lane highway and approach on the Wisconsin side have been completed and is only waiting for the bridge to be constructed. The actual construction date is dependent on funding but would not occur earlier than 2013. The completion of the project could have a significant impact on the Town of Osceola as it would provide for a faster commute which could result in greater population growth to the area and a greater demand on the road network.

State Highway 35 Bypass

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is currently studying the realignment options for the intersection of Hwy. 243, County Road M and Hwy. 35 along with the bypass of Hwy. 35 in the areas of the Village of Osceola and the Village of Dresser. Within 10 years, these roadways will be at a very low level of service. A public meeting was held to discuss the intersection alternatives. Additional meetings are planned to begin discussions regarding the alignment of the Hwy. 35 bypass. At this time, no alternates have been approved; however, it would be in the Town's best interest to protect the 240th Street corridor. This includes considerations such as access control and setbacks. The recommended access control would allow ½ mile public access roadways rather than private drives, and the setbacks suggested would be 100' from the centerline of the roadway. These are only suggested considerations. The projects must still go through environmental reviews, public hearings, and mapping of right-of-way. This is anticipated to occur sometime in 2010. The actual construction of this project has not been scheduled and no funding exists at this time.

SWOT Analysis: Transportation

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good road conditions • Major County roads • Highway access • St. Croix River crossing proximity 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate/unsafe road shoulders • Lack of public transportation • Lack of park and ride facilities
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STH 35 Osceola bypass • Additional ATV trails • Additional walking/biking trails • Setting speed limits on all new roads • Future reuse of rail lines for transit • Determine if any roads should be converted into “Rustic Roads” 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High cost of materials • Loss of funding sources • ATV’s on Town roads • Increased traffic as a result of development • Long commute times for residents • Safety of non-signalized railroad crossings

Goals, Objectives, Implementation

Goal #1: Provide a safe, efficient, and cost effective local transportation system

Objectives:

- Ensure transportation system improvements are coordinated with land development plans.
- Maintain a cost-effective level of service.
- Coordinate multi-jurisdictional transportation system improvements and maintenance.
- Consider the development of transportation system improvements for walking, biking and other transportation modes.
- Control access through the road system to ensure the access, mobility and safety of affected road systems.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Require turn lanes into subdivisions and explore opportunities to lower speed limits.
- Limit access on major arterial roads.
- Separate local and through traffic wherever possible.
- Study cost/benefits of increasing shoulder widths on roadways with higher AADT levels.
- Make roadway design consistent with speed limits.
- Improve visibility at existing railroad crossings.
- Ensure developments are interconnected with roadways.

Transportation

- Perform ADT measurements on all Town roadways as a means to prioritize projects.

Goal #2: Encourage and support transit and ride-sharing opportunities in the Town.

Objectives:

- Provide residents with employment and recreational commuting opportunities.
- Work with the County and State to identify potential corridors and funding opportunities.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Protect and preserve rail corridors for future uses including mass transit.
- Establish park and ride and ride-sharing facilities.
- Survey area residents to determine if sufficient interest exists.

Goal #3: Make considerations for the future Osceola Bypass.

Objectives:

- Prepare and plan for the traffic changes that will result from the Hwy 35 bypass.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Review any request for access with the Wisconsin DOT.
- Officially map the route once determined.
- Coordinate land use with adjacent municipalities.

Goal #4: Develop and interconnect trails (funding dependent)

Objectives:

- To address the need for additional trails for both motorized and non-motorized use.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Determine if funding sources are available to increase roadway/shoulder width.
- Promote the extension of shoulders to newly paved roads for walking/bike trails.
- Work with adjacent municipalities on a long range trail plan.
- Consider additional ATV routes as opportunities arise.
- Continue to work with the DNR and Polk County to encourage the connection of the Amery-Dresser Trail to the Gandy Dancer Trail.

UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Introduction

One of the main duties of local government is to provide services to its citizens. Such services include police and fire protection, education, water, and sewer services among others. The purpose of this element is to inventory existing utilities and community facilities within the Town of Osceola. The location, use, capacity, and future needs of these utilities and facilities will be analyzed as well as timetables for the rehabilitation or construction of related projects.

Town of Osceola respondents indicated a relatively high level of satisfaction with most local facilities and services. As shown in Table 4.2, the school system received the highest rating and was rated very good or good by nearly three-fourths of respondents.

A majority gave very good or good ratings to fire protection, ambulance service, park/recreation facilities, and the library. A plurality gave very good or good ratings to public facilities (49%) and recycling programs (48%).

The two technology items on the list received the highest proportion of low ratings. While a third gave very good or good ratings to their high-speed internet service, one in five said it was poor or very poor. Wireless (cell) telephone coverage received the lowest marks, with 38% rating their coverage as poor or very poor.

Substantial numbers of respondents said they had no opinion about several of the items on the list, particularly ambulance service (28%), fire protection (25%), high-speed internet (19%), library (17%) and public facilities (16%). This is not surprising since many respondents are not likely to have had occasion to use ambulance or fire protection services and may not have access to high-speed internet service.

There was one noteworthy difference among the ratings by the demographic groups. Respondents from households with children gave a higher rating to the school system than those from households without children. Given that they likely have more direct contact with the schools, this is a quite positive outcome.

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Requirements:

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, storm water 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.

§ 66.1001(2)(d), Wis. Stat.

Although there were several other statistically significant differences among the ratings from the various demographic groups, the most frequent difference was in the percentage who said they had no opinion about a particular item on the list. For example, those under age 45 and those who have lived in the Town 15 years or less were more likely to have no opinion about the ambulance service and fire protection. Farmland owners, single adult households, households without children, and those who are retired were more likely to have no opinion about the quality of high speed internet access.

Table 4.1: Town of Osceola opinions about the quality of local facilities and services

	Count	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	No Opinion
Public school system	469	34%	39%	13%	1%	1%	12%
Fire protection	471	24%	35%	14%	1%	0%	25%
Ambulance service	468	23%	34%	15%	1%	0%	28%
Park & recreation facilities	470	17%	37%	32%	7%	2%	4%
Police protection	468	16%	38%	29%	7%	1%	9%
Public facilities (e.g. Town Hall)	465	15%	34%	29%	5%	1%	16%
Library	463	14%	37%	25%	6%	1%	17%
Recycling programs	471	12%	36%	32%	7%	3%	9%
High-speed internet	466	11%	22%	28%	15%	5%	19%
Street/road maintenance	472	10%	34%	39%	12%	3%	1%
Mobile (cell) phone coverage	469	6%	20%	31%	26%	12%	6%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

The aesthetic impact of cell phone towers and windmills used for generating electricity does not seem to be a concern for residents of the Town of Osceola. Residents also do not seem to be opposed to windmills because of their potential noise. More than seven in ten said that they do not oppose cell phone towers because of their aesthetic impact on the landscape. Similar majorities said that they are not opposed to electricity-generating windmills because of their visual impact (71%) or the noise they generate (75%). Responses to these questions did not vary by demographic group (men versus women, young versus old, etc.).

Sanitary Sewer

The majority of residents in the Town rely on privately-owned wastewater treatment system (POWTS). In 1990, there were 12,292 private sewage systems in Polk County. This number has risen dramatically in the past decade and will continue to rise in the foreseeable future.

Long term impacts that POWTS have on groundwater resources are a concern and have been discussed at the regional level including neighboring counties. More dense development, such as cluster or conservation developments, with centralized sewer systems will assist in relieving the pressure on the groundwater sources. With any centralized sewer system, land application of the treated effluent will be necessary and will likely be a topic of discussion as the Town continues to develop.

Septic tank absorption fields are subsurface systems of perforated pipe which distribute sewage from the tank into the soil. The main soil properties that affect absorption are permeability, depth to bedrock, depth to water table, and flood susceptibility. The layout and construction of a system is affected by soil conditions related to slope, erosion potential, lateral seepage, and downslope flow of sewage. The State requirements for septic system siting are specified in Chapter ILHR 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, there have been 721 new sanitary hookups in the Town of Osceola since 1988.

Water Supply

The residents in the Town rely on private wells for their domestic water source. The water quality of these private wells can vary depending on the area of the Town that they are located. According to the Polk County Land Use Plan, the principal sources of potable water supplies are the sand and gravel aquifer and the sandstone aquifer. Due to the abundance of water and depth of the sandstone, the aquifer is typically used for wells that require large amounts of water. See the groundwater section of the Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resources Element for maps and discussion of bedrock and water table depths in the Town. Several recent subdivisions occurred in areas not suitable for wells. Future planning may want to consider the impact a subdivision may have on the ability to obtain a well.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities

Waterman Sanitation and Waste Management are available for individuals to contract for waste disposal services. These services are paid for by the individuals who use them. The Town of Osceola does not operate any public, solid waste disposal. Waste Management operates a transfer station at 2312 Oak Drive for both its residential waste collection trucks and area residents who wish to drop off their items. The Polk County Recycling Center is located on State Trunk Highway 8 in St. Croix Falls, WI. The center operates with its recycleable materials as a multiple stream (not allow the items to be co-mingled).

Similar to solid waste disposal, the Town of Osceola does not provide recycling pick-up or drop-off services, but Waste Management does offer the service. In addition, drop-off service is available at the town halls of Alden, Farmington, and Garfield, as well as the Osceola Village Shop and Polk County Recycling Center on Highway 8.

Parks, Trails, and Recreation

Having park facilities can be the deciding factor when tourists decide where to stay. Besides tourism, homeowners can take parks into consideration. Living nearby a public park can increase property taxes and supply a homeowner with open space that will not be developed. Furthermore, parks allow the opportunity for citizens to enjoy a healthier

lifestyle. The following park and recreation facilities are available to Town of Osceola residents:

Sand Lake Boat Landing/Beach

The Sand Lake Boat Landing/Beach is jointly maintained with the Town of St. Croix Falls. The lake is one of the most popular in the Town with 187 acres of surface, an average depth of 25 feet, and a maximum depth of 67 feet. The landing's use has changed throughout the years. In 1998, a major upgrade occurred with a 20 foot wide concrete ramp installed, blacktop approach to the ramp, and a large, gravel parking area established. A dock and picnic tables were also installed. The beach area was not upgraded. The site no longer contains running water or public restrooms, but does contain a portable restroom.

Dwight Lake Boat Landing/Beach

Dwight Lake is 67 acres with an average depth of 15 feet and a maximum depth of 26 feet. The site presently has a small beach and a boat landing. The boat motor size is restricted to no greater than 20 hp. The site also contains a portable restroom and picnic tables. In addition, the Dresser-Osceola-Garfield Fire department has a dry hydrant at the site.

Horse Lake Boat Landing

Horse Lake is 228 acres with an average depth of 6 feet and a maximum depth of 11 feet. The Polk County Land Information Office conducted a survey of land around public lakes in Polk County. The survey's goal was to identify sites for public access. A parcel owned by the Town of Osceola was discovered along Horse Lake and a boat ramp was added in 2005. There is another small lot within the Horse Lake Hideaway subdivision recently vacated to the Town on the east side of the lake. Due to its shallowness, the lake serves primarily its residents with significant non-resident activity not expected.

Poplar Lake Boat Landing

With an average depth of 12 feet and a maximum depth of 34 feet, this 125 acre lake is serviced by a boat ramp with parking for up to 5 trailers. The public access is located primarily within the Town of Osceola but it originates in the Town of St. Croix Falls. The lake is a popular for fishing both in summer and winter. The boat landing and parking area were upgraded in 2007. A dock does not exist.

Lotus Lake Trail Access

Creation of a subdivision along the east side of Lotus Lake resulted in the Town of Osceola being granted ownership of a parcel with lake access. Since Lotus Lake is already served by a well-maintained County Park containing a boat launch and adequate parking, the Town Board chose not to further develop the access. However, the Town

Board did grant local residents that wanted access to the lake from the subdivision, the right to perform minor construction on the site to create a path to the lake.

Timber Ridge Subdivision – Green Space

Located within the Timber Ridge Subdivision is an area, deeded to the Town of Osceola by the developer, for use as green space. The subdivision is located north of 90th Avenue and east of Highway 35.

Amery to Dresser Trail

Polk County operates this 14-mile trail on an old railroad bed from Amery to 90th Avenue in the Town of Osceola, approximately one-mile southeast of Dresser. After much discussion through 2004, a decision was made by the County Board for the trail to have two surfaces (motorized and non-motorized). However, a subsequent court ruling has limited its use to non-motorized applications. The trail has been brushed and graded and its surface is a combination of grass, ballast, and gravel. Eventually the trail will be developed for bicycling.

Lotus Park

Lotus (East) Lake has an average depth of 7 feet, a maximum depth of 15 feet, and a surface area of 246 acres. The lake is shallow and has "frozen out" in recent years. In 2003, an aerator was installed and fish were re-stocked into the lake. The local residents are active in promoting the lake's use. The 18-acre park is located along the shore of Lotus Lake located southeast of Dresser. The park is owned and maintained by Polk County and features fishing, boat access, hiking trails, picnic area with grills, a playground, shelter, and restrooms. Lotus Park gives view of American Lotus beds in Lotus Lake.

Interstate State Park

Established in 1900, it is Wisconsin's oldest state park. The 1,378 acres were part of a joint venture in 1895 with the Minnesota Interstate Park directly across the St. Croix River forming the first interstate park in the nation. On the Wisconsin side, a deep gorge called the "Dalles of the St. Croix" is the scenic focus of the park. The park features 85 campsites, showers, a dumping station, handicap-accessible picnic area and campsites with grills, interpretive center, naturalist programs, vistas, shoreline with marked beach area, canoeing, boating, fishing, 1.7 miles of nature trails, 7.2 miles of hiking trails, 10.6 miles of cross-country ski trails. There is an excellent swimming beach and Beach House at scenic Lake O' The Dalles. A new two-mile snowshoe trail starting at the Ice Age Center leads to an area of the park not easily accessible other times of the year.



Source: WDNR

St. Croix National Scenic Riverway

This 252-mile area is protected and managed by the National Park Service, but has various state-owned facilities located along the river and lies along the western border of the Town. It is one of the eight original rivers designated as “scenic” and is one of the largest east of the Mississippi. The riverway provides numerous recreational opportunities, such as boating, canoeing, camping, and fishing. The St. Croix River Visitor Center is located in St. Croix Falls.

Lotus Lake Fishery Area

This state-owned management area consists of 30.5 acres located south and west of the intersection of 90th Ave. and 210th St. It consists of marshy lake shore, lotus beds, wooded uplands, and open field areas. The following recreational opportunities include: hunting, trapping, hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing, bird watching, lotus bed viewing.



Source: WDNR

Behning Creek Fishery Area

This state-owned management area consists of 171 acres located 4 miles southeast of St. Croix Falls. It consists of a stream with lowland brush and upland forest. Principal wildlife on the property includes pheasants, deer, grouse, waterfowl, rabbits, and furbearers. Public recreation includes hunting, trapping, fishing, bird watching, hiking, berry picking, and wildlife viewing.

Osceola Trout Hatchery

The Osceola Trout Hatchery, which is owned and operated by the Wisconsin DNR, is located directly north of the Village of Osceola. Like other state fish hatcheries, tours are available for school groups, scouts, and other groups by appointment. The Osceola Hatchery raises Rainbow and Brown Trout. There are no public restrooms at the hatchery. Nearby camping and picnic facilities are located at Interstate State Park.

Trollhaugen Ski Resort

The Trollhaugen Ski Resort offers winter recreational activities such as downhill skiing, snow boarding, cross-country skiing, and has recently added a snow tubing hill. The area is located within the Village of Dresser municipal limits

Krooked Kreek Golf Course

The privately-owned, eighteen-hole golf course is located one mile east of Osceola on County Road M. It serves the Osceola High School golf classes, as well as tourists and Osceola residents.

St. Croix Valley Golf Course

The privately-owned, eighteen-hole golf course is located within the City of St. Croix Falls, just north of the Greater Osceola Area.

Community Survey Results

Respondents to the survey were presented with a list of nine items related to recreation and asked whether the Town should use public funds to support each item. The results are presented in Table 4.2. Of the nine items, a majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that six of them should be supported with public funds: parks, boat landing/beach enhancements, bicycle routes, hunting/fishing access, ballfields, and trails for hiking and skiing. Support for parks (80% agree or strongly agree) was substantially higher than the next highest rated item (enhanced boat landings/beaches – 66%). Opinions were about evenly split regarding snowmobile/ATV trails, and a plurality disagreed or strongly disagreed with the use of funds for public campgrounds. A majority disagreed or strongly disagreed that public funds should be used for horse trails.

In most respects, these numbers are consistent with the results of the previous questions that asked about the need for more trails. As noted above, 40% of respondents said there is a need for more trails for motorized uses, and a similar percentage (44%) said that public funds should be used for snowmobile/ATV trails. Sixty-one percent agreed that additional trails for non-motorized uses are needed and similar percentages agreed that public funds should be used for bicycle routes (60%) and hiking/skiing trails (56%). Horse trails was the exception to this pattern; only 27% were in agreement with using public funds for this particular type of trail.

Respondents from households with children, respondents who have lived in the Town 15 years or less, and those from households with over \$50,000 annual income were more likely to agree or strongly agree that public funds should be used for ball fields and active recreation areas. Those over age 45 were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree to use public funds for ballfields and active recreation areas.

Not surprisingly, there was greater support for public funds for bike routes among households with children, but those who are age 45 and over were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree. Similarly, households with children were more likely to support public funds for boat launch and beach enhancements, while respondents who are age 45 and over had a higher percentage of those who disagree.

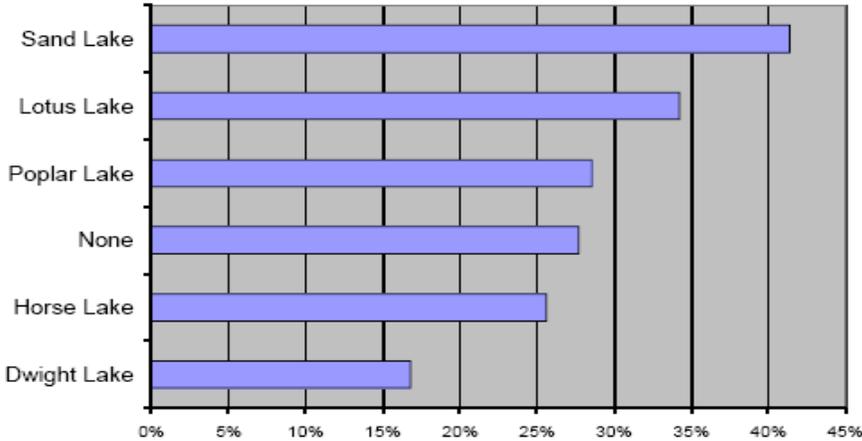
Table 4.2: Town of Osceola opinions about use of public funds for recreation

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Parks	464	16%	64%	9%	6%	4%
Enhance boat landings/beaches	459	12%	55%	19%	7%	8%
Bicycle routes	461	14%	46%	20%	14%	6%
Hunting/fishing access	460	13%	45%	23%	10%	9%
Ballfields, active recreation areas	452	9%	49%	21%	12%	8%
Hiking and skiing trails	466	9%	47%	24%	12%	8%
Snowmobile/ATV trails	459	15%	29%	28%	19%	10%
Publicly owned-campgrounds	462	6%	34%	32%	14%	13%
Horse trails	458	5%	22%	38%	20%	16%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

When asked which lakes/beaches they have visited during the past year, Sand Lake was the most frequently mentioned among the five choices, with over 40% of respondents indicating at least one visit. Lotus Lake was visited by a third of respondents, while Poplar Lake and Horse Lake were mentioned by 29% and 26% respectively. Dwight Lake was visited by about one in six. Over a quarter of respondents said they did not visit any of the lakes in the past year (see Figure 4.2). A smaller proportion of single-adult households reported visiting Poplar Lake than households with two or more adults.

Figure 4.1: Town of Osceola lakes visited in past year

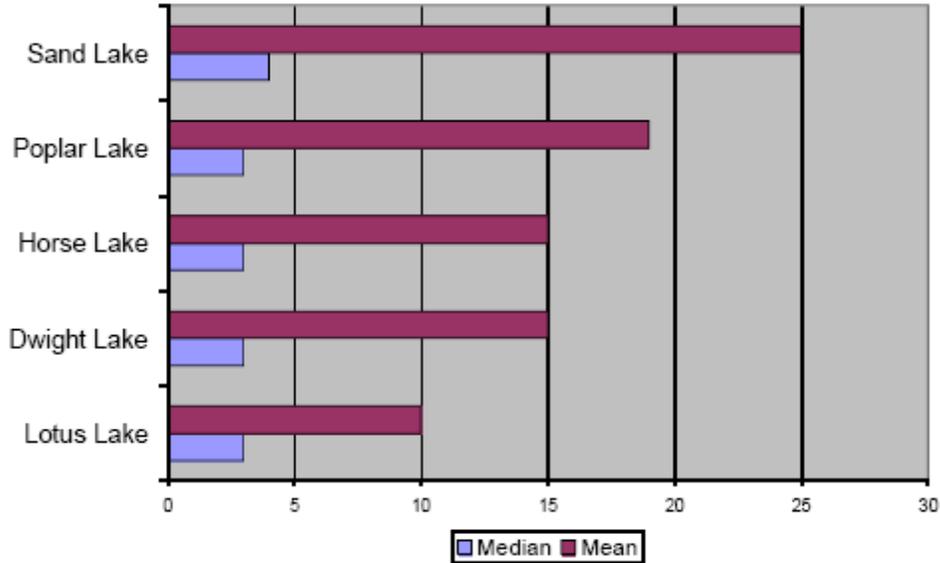


Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Respondents who reported lake visits during the past year were then asked how many times they visited each lake. As shown in Figure 4.3 the mean number of visits ranges from 25 (Sand Lake) to 10 (Lotus Lake). However, the use of the mean to analyze usage patterns of these lakes may not present an accurate view of the frequency of lake visits. For all lakes, there were a relatively small number of respondents who reported very high number of visits per year, which markedly increases the calculated mean number of visits and skews the results. For example, eight respondents reported visiting Sand Lake 365 times (daily); an additional three respondents reported visiting between 100 and 250 times per year. This phenomenon was not confined to Sand Lake. All of the other four

lakes had a small number of respondents who reported at least 100 visits per year. An analysis of the frequency distribution of visits for each lake reveals that the “typical” number of visits was considerably less than the mean and confirms that the mean is skewed upward by the small number of respondents whose annual visits number in the hundreds. The SRC calculated the median number of visits, which is the number which splits the frequency distribution in half. The median is less sensitive to extreme scores than the mean. When the median is used, a different picture of lake visits emerges. As shown in Figure 4.2, the median number of visits to each lake is much lower than its mean. The median number of visits to Sand Lake is four times per year, while the median for each of the other lakes is three. The use of the median gives a much more realistic view of the number of lake visits by the “typical” respondent.

Figure 4.2: Town of Osceola lake visits - mean and median



Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Telecommunications Facilities

Amerytel and Centurytel provide telecommunication services to the Town of Osceola. Charter Communications provides some limited cable and high-speed internet service to areas within the Town that have adequate density to justify infrastructure investment. The survey did indicate that only 33% of the respondents considered the high-speed internet service to be above average, while only 26% of the respondents considered the mobile (cell) phone coverage to be above average. Due to the low satisfaction, additional follow-up with the providers should be considered to determine if the Town can encourage any improvements.

Electric Supply

Transmission

Dairyland Power Cooperative and Xcel Energy operate several transmission lines and substations within the Town of Osceola. In 2009-2010, Dairyland Power Cooperative will be constructing a new transmission substation along 110th Avenue east of 210th Street. The substation facilitates construction of a new high-voltage line needed to accommodate the growth in northwest Wisconsin.

Distribution

The Town of Osceola has two suppliers of electricity to households; Xcel Energy and Polk-Burnett Cooperative. Both utilities provide a reliable level of service to the residents in the area. The Town does not have any substantial requirements of the utilities that would restrict their electric operations, other than requesting notification of when work is to be completed within the road rights-of-ways.

Windmill Co-Generation

Presently, there is not any wind generating equipment installed within the Town of Osceola. Any such installation would be subject to county zoning in either the Small Wind Energy Ordinance or the Tower Ordinance. Positive responses were received from 70% of the respondents during the survey where they are not opposed to the view or the noise from wind generating equipment. Given the only moderate availability of wind resources in western Wisconsin, it is unlikely that large wind generating equipment will be located within the Town; the potential exists for smaller, residential wind-generating systems.

The aesthetic impact of cell phone towers and windmills used for generating electricity does not seem to be a concern for residents of the Town of Osceola. Residents also do not seem to be opposed to windmills because of their potential noise. More than seven in ten said that they do not oppose cell phone towers because of their aesthetic impact on the landscape. Similar majorities said that they are not opposed to electricity-generating windmills because of their visual impact (71%) or the noise they generate (75%).

Table 4.3: Opinions about mobile telephone towers and electricity-generating windmills

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Opposed to mobile phone towers-visual impact	469	5%	16%	38%	33%	4%
Not concerned about visual impacts of windmills for electrical	471	30%	41%	16%	8%	5%
Opposed to electricity generating windmills- noise	471	2%	8%	41%	34%	15%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Survey (2008)

Solar Co-Generation

The Town is aware of two grid, interconnected photovoltaic systems. The only municipal regulation related to the installation of a system is the requirement to obtain a building permit. Both electric utilities serving the Town allow interconnecting of photovoltaic systems, and the County does not have requirements or regulations for their installation or operation.

Churches and Cemeteries

There are four churches in the Town of Osceola: Hope Evangelical Free Church located at 933 248th Street; Grace Lutheran Church located at 2098 70th Avenue; Peace Lutheran Church located at 2355 Clark Road; and Bethesda Lutheran Church ELCA located at 1947 110th Avenue.

There are four cemeteries in the Town of Osceola: Bethesda Cemetery located at the Church; Pleasant Prairie Cemetery located at 75th Avenue and Simons Drive; Peace Lutheran Cemetery located at the Church; and Sand Lake Cemetery on the south bank of Sand Lake at Birch Lane (see Community Facilities map).

Health Care Facilities

Osceola Medical Center

The Osceola Medical Center is a non-profit facility which includes a clinic, hospital, and nursing home in one independent facility. In 2008, a new 75,000 square foot facility was constructed. The new facility features more clinic rooms, expanded emergency and surgery departments, an emergency helipad, improved patient privacy, and improved accessibility and parking.

St. Croix Falls Regional Medical Center

The St. Croix Regional Medical Center opened a new facility in 2002 and is a non-profit facility providing a wide range of physician services to the residents of the St. Croix Valley area. It also features a clinic and 24-hour emergency care unit.

Child Care Facilities

Child care services are provided by a combination of family (in-home) service and the larger day care centers. Group centers may care for 9 or more children. The licensed family homes may care for up to 8 children. The following table lists area day care providers licensed by the State as of 2008; the Polk County Human Services should be contacted to obtain the latest licensure status for any child care facility:

Table 4.4: Licensed area child care providers

Provider	Type	Licensed	Location
Above-All Beginnings Day Care		State	Village of Osceola
Busy Bees Child Care	Group Center	State	Village of Osceola
Corrine’s Day Care		State	Village of Osceola
Country Care		State	Town of Osceola
Creative Kids Day Care		State	Village of Osceola
Grace for Kids	Preschool	State	Town of Osceola
Hilltop Day Care		State	Town of Osceola
Osceola School Kids Klub		State	Village of Osceola
Qualle Bear Day Care	Group Center	State	Village of Dresser

Source: Polk County Human Services Department (2008)

Police and Municipal Court Services

The Polk County Sheriffs Department is responsible for emergency response and patrol activities in the Town of Osceola. In 2007, the Town of Osceola contracted with the Village of Osceola to have an officer patrol into the Town to supplement activities of the Polk County Sheriff. The shared police protection agreement with the Village of Osceola has resulted in better enforcement of speed limits on heavily traveled roads. In addition, the Town joined the Village of Osceola Municipal court system in 2007 to assist as a means to utilize the shared police services and a more efficient means of processing normal, town-issued citations.

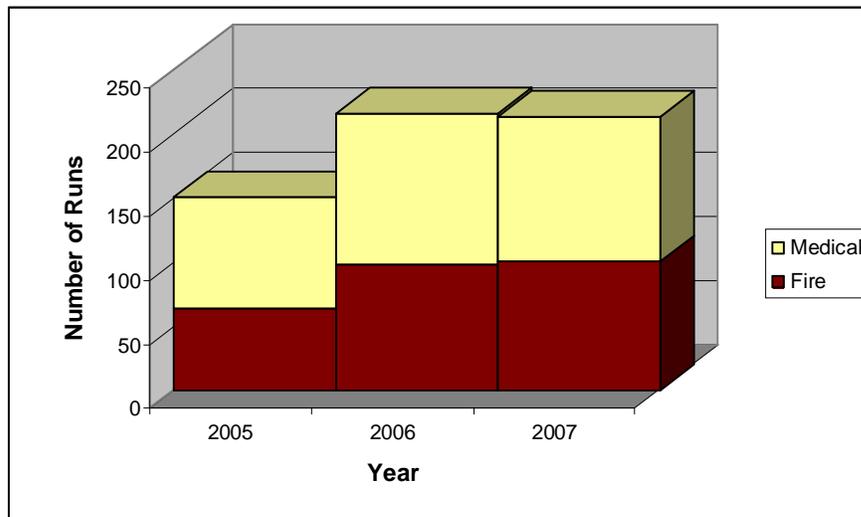
Fire Response Services

The Dresser-Osceola-Garfield Fire Association (DOG Fire) was created in 1960 under the mutual ownership of the Town of Osceola, the Town of Garfield, and the Village of Dresser. In addition, coverage to part of the Town of Alden is provided under a contract for service.

The DOG Fire Association consists of two fire stations. The Dresser Fire Station is located on County Road F, west of the Trollhaugen ski area. The building was constructed in 2005 and houses six response vehicles. The Wanderoos Fire Station is located ¼ mile east of the intersection of State Highway 65 and 70th Avenue in the unincorporated town of Wanderoos. The station was built in 1979 and an addition was added in the late 1990’s to house seven trucks.

The DOG Fire Association provides not only fire suppression services, but also emergency medical first responders. The growth in the new residents served within the municipalities has resulted in a significant increase in run volume in recent years. Figure 4.3 illustrates the number of runs per year. The majority of the fire runs were for vehicle accidents.

Figure 4.3: DOG activity (2005-2007)



Source: DOG Fire Association, Town of Osceola

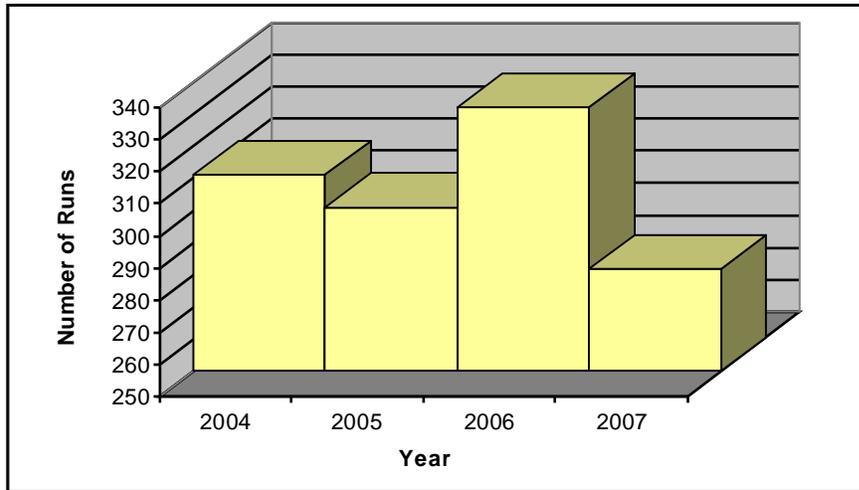
Operation of the DOG Fire Department is extremely capital intensive. Recent commodities price increases has substantially increased the price of new fire response vehicles. The department is presently completing a capital improvement plan to identify and prioritize equipment replacement. In addition, mutual response agreements exists with the adjacent departments of Amery, Osceola, and St. Croix Falls.

Ambulance Service

The Town of Osceola is served by two ambulance services. The St. Croix Valley EMS (SCV EMS) is owned by Lifelink III and is a paramedic rated service. SCV EMS services the northern 1/3 of the Town down to County Road F and is based at the St. Croix Regional Medical Center. It operates three ambulances and its employees are on duty 24/7.

The Osceola Area Ambulance Services (OAAS) is a jointly-owned service between the Village of Dresser, Village of Osceola, Town of Farmington, Town of Osceola, and Town of Alden. The Osceola Area Ambulance is based in the Village of Osceola at the Fire Department and is an EMT IV Tech service. The OAAS serves the southern 2/3 of the Town. The OAAS is a volunteer service and operates one ambulance with its volunteers on-call as needed. Presently, the service is in good financial standing but is in the process of constructing its own building for ambulance storage, office, and crew quarters which will be capital intensive.

Figure 4.4: Ambulance run history



Source: DOG Fire Association, Town of Osceola

Libraries

The Community Survey indicated that 51% of the residents responded that the libraries were above average while 17% did not have an opinion. Town of Osceola residents typically access three area libraries: Osceola; Dresser; and St. Croix Falls. While the Town of Osceola does not directly fund area libraries, it does so indirectly through the libraries access to Act 150 funds.

The Osceola Public Library is located in the Village of Osceola. This library is open six days a week and offers internet access, books and audio books, DVD’s and videos, magazines and newspapers, interlibrary loans, special programs, local history collections, and special collections.

The Dresser Public Library is located in the Village of Dresser. The library is open 4 days a week and offers internet access, copy fax services, books, DVD’s and videos, magazines and newspapers, local history collections, and interlibrary loans.

The St. Croix Falls Public Library is located in the City of St. Croix Falls. The library is open six days a week and offers computer and internet access, books and audio books, DVD’s and videos, magazines and newspapers, interlibrary loans, and special programs.

Schools

The Town of Osceola is split into two school districts: Osceola School District; and St. Croix Falls School District in the north (see School District map). The community survey indicated that 73% of the respondents stated the public school system was good or very good. Only 2% indicated it was below average. In general, the aforementioned school districts are commonly referred to as the “best” in Polk County.

Osceola School District

Enrollment in the Osceola School District towards the end of 2007 was 1,815, but because of open enrollment, there are actually 1,878 students in the district. This is an increase of approximately 350 students since 1995. The district recently initiated a 4 year-old kindergarten program which has been well received by the community. The possibility of a new facility within 5 to 10 years had been discussed within the district. The Town of Osceola contributes 24.6% to the district’s total property tax funding source.

St. Croix Falls School District

Total enrollment in the St. Croix Falls School District for the 2007/08 school year was 1,086; the maximum capacity of the district is about 1,200. The district recently expanded the elementary and middle schools complexes. Similar to Osceola, the district is initiating a 4 year-old kindergarten program. Approximately 100 students from the Town of Osceola attended school in the district in 2008.

Secondary Education Institutions

There are also a handful of distinct higher education facilities in close proximity including the University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in New Richmond and Rice Lake, Chippewa Valley Technical College in River Falls and Menomonie, and University of Wisconsin - Stout.

Other Government Facilities

Town Hall and Garage

The Osceola Town Hall was built in 1996. It contains a meeting room, heated garage/storage, and a cold storage building. According to the Community Survey, 49% of respondents rated the public facilities in the Town as very good or good, 29% as average, 6% as very poor or poor, while 16% had no opinion.



Source: Town of Osceola

SWOT Analysis: Utilities and Community Facilities

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent sharing of resources between municipalities • Emergency service training and response • Local school systems • Recreational opportunities • Health care facilities • Libraries 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtaining a well on certain properties • Osceola Area Ambulance at EMT basic level • Telecommunication services • Child Care • Library space
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote small wind generation • Encourage underground, electric utility road crossings • Shared sewer with Village of Osceola to increase lot density 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital requirements for Fire and Ambulance services • Continued growth placing further demand on resources (public works, emergency services)

Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs

Goal #1: Maintain and improve the Town’s park and open space areas.

Objectives:

- Continue to devote resources to maintain and improve existing park and open space areas.
- Use parks and open space as buffers between incompatible land uses, as delineators or constraints on urban development, or as necessary complementary uses for other land development.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Develop more parks and open space as needed.
- Upgrade existing boating facilities dependent on use and available funding.

Goal #2: Improve Emergency Response

Objectives:

- To provide area residents with the best possible police, fire, and ambulance service fiscally possible.
- Meet the fiscal challenges of funding the emergency response services.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Examine service area maps to determine the emergency service that can provide the fastest response time.
- Work with emergency response units to analyze capital needs and ensure the capital needs do not exceed the Town's limits.
- Support the Osceola Area Ambulance upgrade to a higher level of service.

Goal #3: Maintain an Adequate Library System**Objectives:**

- Ensure residents have access to sufficient library services.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Analyze Town's contribution from circulation and Act 150 funds to the Osceola, St. Croix and Dresser Libraries.
- Determine if a joint library would be beneficial to the community.
- Determine what can be done to assist the local libraries in upgrading their level of service.

Goal #4: Upgrade Utilities Level of Service**Objectives:**

- To ensure residents have access to electric and telecommunication services
- Encourage utilities to convert from overhead to underground any road crossings
- Encourage mobile phone service providers to increase coverage throughout the Town.
- Encourage collocation of mobile phone antennas on any new towers.
- Encourage the implementation of solar, wind, and other renewable energy sources.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Create a road crossing permit process charging a fee for any new overhead road crossing.

AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Agricultural, natural and cultural resources may interact with other elements in the comprehensive plan. Natural resources are often a defining feature of a given place. Many municipalities or areas are named after their surrounding geography or natural resources. Humans rely on natural resources for purifying our environment, growing food, raw materials, and recreation. In areas of high growth, such as western Wisconsin, natural resources are being threatened from sprawl and increased demand. Planning for the future of the Town’s natural resources is important in order to preserve the high quality of life they provide.

Ecological Landscape

According to the Wisconsin DNR, the northeastern portion of the Town lies inside of the Forest Transition Ecological Landscape while the southwestern portion lies in the Western Prairie Ecological Landscape. These are two of 17 ecological landscapes in Wisconsin which differ in ecological attributes and management opportunities. Areas considered Forest Transition Landscapes exist on moraines of the Wisconsin glaciation. The historic vegetation of this area was primarily northern hardwood forest. These forests were dominated by sugar maple, hemlock, yellow birch, red pine, and white pine. Areas which are within the Western Prairie Landscape are characterized by its glaciated, rolling topography and primarily open landscape with rich prairie soils and pothole lakes, ponds, and wet depressions. The climate and growing season are favorable for agricultural crops. Sandstone underlies a mosaic of soils. Silty loams that can be shallow and stony cover most of the area. Alluvial sands and peats are found in stream valleys.

Groundwater

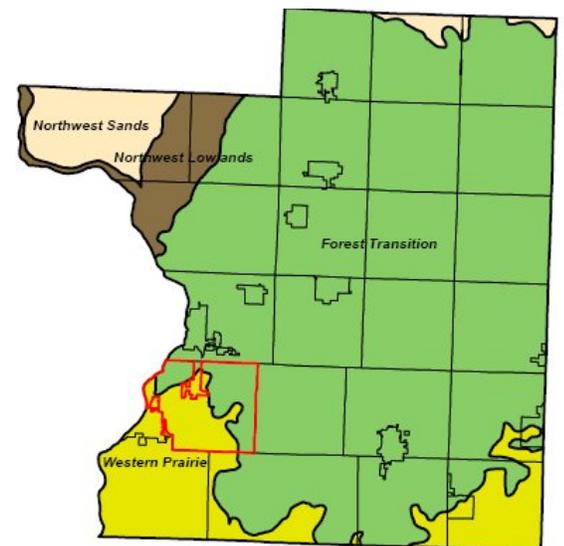
Groundwater is an important resource for Wisconsin as about 75% of Wisconsin residents rely on it for their source of drinking water. About fifteen to thirty percent of all precipitation in Wisconsin ends up as groundwater. There is documentation in some

Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element Requirements:

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

§ 66.1001(2)(e), Wis. Stat.

Figure 5.1: Polk County Ecological Landscapes



Source: WDNR

parts of the state of reduction in groundwater recharge due to increases in impervious surfaces and increases in demand. Also, the quality of groundwater has been of concern in parts of Wisconsin where high levels of nitrates and other contaminants have been found.

About 97% of all the water used in Polk County is groundwater, while 3% is surface water. The principal sources of potable water in Polk County are the sand and gravel aquifers and the sandstone aquifer. The depth to the water table is the distance from the land surface to the water table. Most of the Town's water table depth is greater than 50 feet (see Depth to Water Table map). The shallowest depths (less than 20 feet) are located along the St. Croix River and in the southeast portion of the Town. The distance the water must flow to the groundwater and the ease of its movement combine to play a significant role in determining the susceptibility of an area to contamination.

Depth to bedrock is the distance to the top of the bedrock, which is the uppermost consolidated deposit. Where the depth to bedrock is shallow, contaminants generally have less contact time with the earth's natural pollutant removal processes found in the unconsolidated surficial deposits; the greater the depth to bedrock, the more likely that the water table is located above the bedrock layer. The majority of the bedrock in the Town is between 50-100 feet deep (see Depth to Bedrock map). The shallowest bedrock depths (5-50 feet) are located along the St. Croix River, while the deepest (greater than 100 feet) are located in portions in the north and southeast portion of the Town.

One issue that applies to a rural municipality with plentiful water resources such as the Town of Osceola is non-point pollution from run-off. Non-point pollution does not come from one identifiable source. Usually this refers to run-off from agricultural practices. Wisconsin's runoff rules went into effect on October 1, 2002. The DNR rule NR 151 sets standards to control construction site erosion, manage runoff from streets, and manage large scale fertilizer use. Some of the main parts relating to agriculture are listed below:

- Farmers that grow crops need to follow a nutrient management plan that is designed to limit nutrients from flowing into state waters. This plan also applies to manure applications
- Farmers that raise, feed, or house livestock must limit livestock access to state waters and must prevent direct runoff into state waters
- Farmers that have, use, or plan on building a manure storage structure must comply with state standards

Forests

Managed Forest Law

The Managed Forest Law (MFL) is a landowner incentive program that encourages sustainable forestry on private woodlands by reducing and deferring property taxes. It was enacted in 1985 and replaced the Woodland Tax Law and the Forest Crop Law. It is

the only forest tax law that is open to enrollment. The following are the eligibility requirements:

- 10 or more acres of contiguous forestland under the same ownership
- Minimum of 80% of the land in forest cover
- No more than 20% of each parcel may be unsuitable for producing merchantable timber, including water, bog, rock outcrops, sand dunes, vacant farmland, roadway, utility right-of-way or railroad right-of-way
- Eligible land used primarily for growing forest products; it may not be used for any other industry or for uses such as cropland, pasture, orchards, etc.
- Not have land in a recorded plat (assessor’s and vacated plats are allowed)
- Not have recreational uses that interfere with forest management
- Have all current and delinquent property taxes paid

Land enrolled in the MFL program must be managed to a plan agreed to by the landowner. The management plan addresses items such as landowner objectives, timber management, wildlife management, and water quality. Table 5.1 provides data concerning MFL lands in the Town of Osceola and in Polk County (see MFL map).

Table 5.1: Managed Forest Law data

Statistic	Town of Osceola	Polk County
Total acres enrolled (as of 2008)	1,747	34,021
MFL acres open to the public	183	7,349
MFL acres closed to the public	1,564	26,672

Source: WDNR (2008)

According to the Wisconsin DNR, unless withdrawn early or re-enrolled, 20% will expire in the next 10 years, 71% will expire in the next 11-20 years, and 9% will expire in 21+ years in the Town of Osceola.

There are 17,149 acres of county-owned forest land in Polk County. County forests across the state sustain over 30,000 full-time jobs from logging, transporting, and manufacturing logs to lumber and paper. County forests are also open to the public and provide vast recreation opportunities. No county forests exist in the Town of Osceola. In Wisconsin, the majority of forestland is owned by private landowners. Harvesting timber for saw logs or pulp has been common in the past and is still in practice today.

Soils

According to the Polk County soil survey, the land surface is strongly affected by thick glacial deposits. Sandstone or limestone bedrock is at or near the surface in only a few places. During the last major glacial advance, ice covered all of Polk County. The ice lowered the pre-glacial relief because it eroded the tops of the bedrock hills more severely than the valley bottoms. Polk County generally has a young drainage pattern and many closed depressions and pothole lakes. A wide range of soil types exist in the

Town of Osceola; some are agriculturally productive while others are not. According to Polk County, the soils have been derived largely from the weathering of the glacial drift deposits and show a great variation within relatively short distances. Since the glacial period, the soils have been modified by water action, wind, and the accumulation and incorporation of organic material. Detailed soils information is found in the Polk County Soil Survey.

The five general soil associations found in the Town are listed below:

- **Amery-Santiago-Magnor**
- **Rosholt-Cromwell-Menahga**
- **Antigo-Rosholt**
- **Burkhardt-Dakota**
- **Cushing-Rifle**

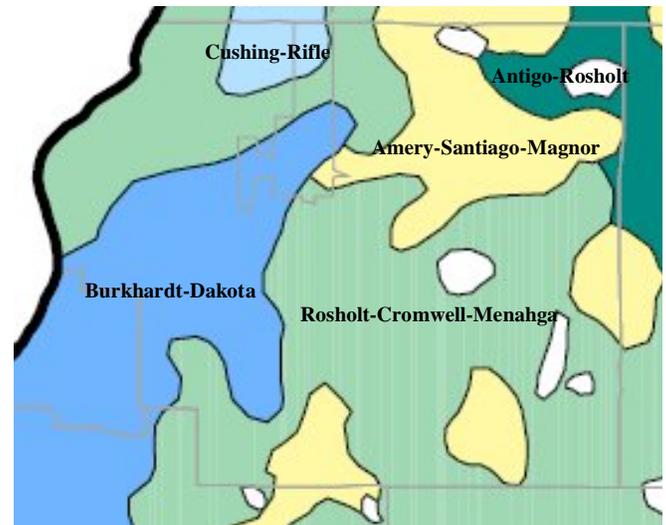
Soil Maps

The Natural Resource Conservation Service has established a soil capability classification system in order to evaluate the potential suitability of soils for agricultural production (see Soil Capabilities map). The map includes a description of each classification and is intended to assist the Town in evaluating areas for continued agricultural productivity. It does this by considering characteristics and suitability for supporting various crops and is based on the limitations of the soil.

Soil properties influence the development of building sites, including the selection of the site, the design of the structure, construction, performance after construction, and maintenance. The USDA Polk County Soil Survey identifies soil limitations for various types of buildings. These limitations are labeled as slight, moderate, and severe. The ratings for dwellings are based on the soil properties that affect the capacity of the soil to support a load without movement and on the properties that affect excavation and construction costs. The properties that affect the load-supporting capacity include depth the water table, ponding, flooding, subsidence, linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential), and compressibility. The properties that affect the ease and amount of excavation include depth to the water table, ponding, flooding, slope, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or cemented pan, and the amount and size of rock fragments. The Soil Limitations map identifies areas in the Town that have limitations to the construction of dwellings with basements.

The natural drainage class is a group of soils defined as having a specific range in relative wetness under natural conditions as it pertains to wetness due to a water table under conditions similar to those under which the soil developed. The drainage classes of the majority of soils in the Town are excessively drained and well drained. These soils

Figure 5.2: Town of Osceola Soil Associations



Source: Polk County Land Use Plan (2003)

remove water rapidly and are commonly coarse-textured and have high saturated hydraulic conductivity or are shallow (see Drainage Class map). The Towns contains a few small areas of somewhat drained soils which remain wet at shallow depths for periods during the growing season, and they are mostly concentrated near lakes and wetlands.

- ❖ The data used to create the maps for this section are derived from generalized statewide information at small scales, and cannot be used for any site-specific purposes or analysis.

Agriculture

Farmland has been the subject of much concern in the past twenty years mainly from the conversion of farmland to development. Urban sprawl continues to utilize prime farmland. This trend has combined with some of the other trends in agriculture, including a decreasing number of farms, greater industrialization, and decreasing reliance on immediate family members for farm labor and management.

Farm:

Any operation that sells at least one thousand dollars of agricultural commodities or that would have sold that amount of produce under normal circumstances.

Source: USDA

The Program on Agricultural Studies (PATs) is an applied research and extension service created by Wisconsin Legislature in 1990 to gather and interpret data. The following information summarizes agriculture in the Town of Osceola:

- The Town was estimated to have 57 farms in 1990 and 69 in 1997, a 21.1% change. In comparison, the Town of St. Croix Falls had a -51.7% change. The number of farms in all Towns in Polk County decreased 3.0%.
- The Town of Osceola had 9 dairy farms in 1997, which dropped to 5 in 2002.
- Between 1990 and 1997, the Town had 1,100 acres sold out of agriculture, or 8.9% of the Town's farmland. The average value of an acre continuing in agriculture was \$1,589. Surprisingly, the average value of an acre converted out of agriculture was \$1,289 (While this seems odd, land was traditionally valued by its agricultural capabilities).
- In 2000, 81 people in the Town of Osceola lived on a farm (3.9%).
- In 2000, 41 people were employed adults on a farm in the Town of Osceola, or 3.5% of the population.
- In Polk County 2000-2002, the average value of an acre continuing in agriculture was \$1,771 while an acre sold out of agriculture was \$2,331; this equals a 132% premium for non-agricultural used land. This premium is actually 1% less than the premium 1995-1999 and 2% less than the premium 1990-1994. This means that the gap between the value of farmland and developed land is closing.
- Between 2000 and 2002, the average total farmland sold annually was 3,981 acres in Polk County. Of these, 2,877 acres were returned to agriculture annually. The remaining 1,104 acres were converted to non-agricultural uses annually, or 28% of land converted.

According to the Polk County Land and Water Resources Department, Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Law provides tax credits to landowners who have signed a Farmland Preservation Agreement or a Transition Area Agreement. The Exclusive Agricultural Zoning Program uses the Farmland Preservation Program standards to implement its program. The three purposes of the program are:

1. To help local government preserve farmland through local planning and zoning.
2. To provide tax relief to farmland owners who sign a contract agreeing not to develop their land during the contract period, or if their land is zoned for exclusive agricultural use. (Only Alden and McKinley Townships have Exclusive Ag Zoning)
3. To encourage conservation practices on farmland.

An Exclusive Agricultural District can be created to protect areas where agricultural production is the dominant land use and where a continuation of such use is in the interest of farm operators and beneficial to the interests of the general public in terms of production of food, fiber and environmental quality. Except for continuation of pre-existing uses, the district would allow very few non-agricultural uses or development. This policy is intended to avoid conflicts which occur when farm and non-farm uses are mixed and to reduce the adverse pressures upon farming caused by speculative land values and consequent increases in property taxes on farmlands. The Polk County Comprehensive Land Use Ordinance contains a list of permitted uses in the district.

Town of Osceola respondents were nearly unanimous (97%) in their agreement that productive farmland should be used for agricultural use (see Table 5.2). A majority was opposed to the use of productive farmland for residential use (58%) and nearly two of three were opposed to allowing productive farmland to be put to any use. There were no substantial differences in the response patterns among demographic groups.

Table 5.2: Town of Osceola opinions about uses of productive agricultural land

Use	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Agricultural use	449	60%	37%	1%	0%	2%
Residential use	427	7%	27%	38%	20%	7%
Any use	428	9%	16%	36%	28%	11%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

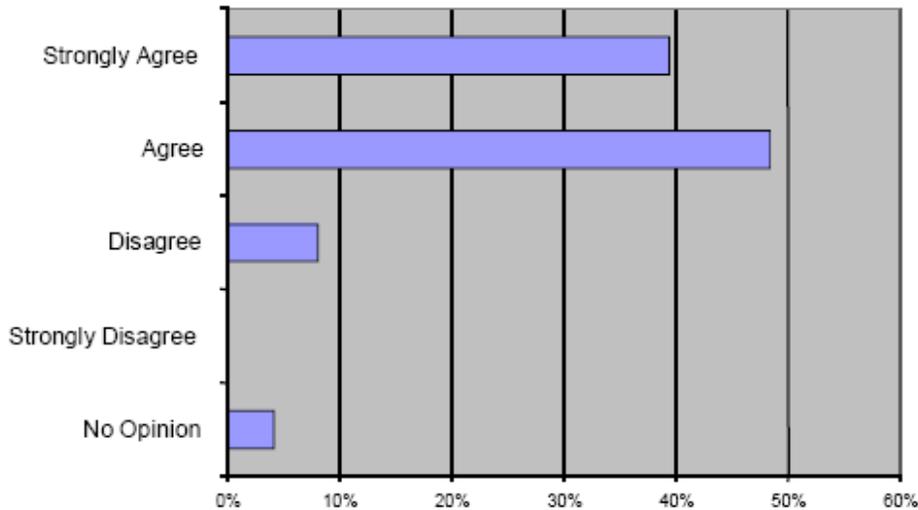
Environmentally Sensitive Areas

The Town of Osceola is abundant in wetlands, which provide the Town with exceptional water resources (see Land Cover map). These sensitive areas are easy to disrupt by draining or filling them in; a practice that continues to go on today. Other sensitive areas in the Town are areas of high slope. These hillsides can face serious erosion if managed improperly. Polk County has identified a list of sensitive lands which have been identified based on their significance as a valued land in the County:

- Wetlands
- Shorelands
- Floodplains
- Closed Depressions
- Steep slopes
- Woodlands
- Grasslands
- Wildlife, Fishery, Natural and Scientific Areas

Respondents were asked whether environmentally sensitive areas should be protected by the use of regulations. As shown in Figure 5.3, nearly nine in ten respondents agree (48%) or strongly agree (39%) with the use of regulations to protect such areas. Taken together with the responses to the earlier questions about the protection of natural resources, Osceola respondents indicated a consistent concern about the protection of the natural resources and environment of their Town and a willingness to use taxes and regulations to protect them. There were no substantial differences in the response patterns among demographic groups.

Figure 5.3: Use regulations to protect environmentally sensitive areas



Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Threatened and Endangered Species

According to State Statute 29.415 and Administrative Rule NR 27, it is illegal to take, transport, possess, process or sell any wild animal that is included on the Wisconsin Endangered and Threatened Species List without a valid permit. No one may process or sell any wild plant that is a listed species without a valid permit.

According to the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI), the Town of Osceola has known occurrences of rare aquatic species, terrestrial species, and natural communities. In order to protect these species and communities, the exact locations are rarely given out by the DNR. A detailed list of known occurrences of rare species and natural communities in the Town of Osceola, compiled by the NHI, is included in the Appendix.

Exotic and Invasive Species

Exotic and invasive species pose a significant threat to the State of Wisconsin. Invasive species can damage the economy, health, ecology, and recreation opportunities of Wisconsin. Some associated impacts from the Wisconsin Council of Invasive Species are as follows:

Agriculture:

- cost of controls and loss of production
- pastures degraded

Fisheries:

- fish habitat degraded
- fishing access disrupted

Forestry:

- limits tree regeneration in forests
- long-term forest production declines due to tree seedlings being out-competed

Recreation:

- recreational boating and fishing disrupted
- hunting/hiking land rendered impassable by invasive shrubs

Tourism:

- decreased aesthetics resulting in loss of tourism
- human health concerns from toxic and allergenic plants

Native Ecosystems:

- displaces native vegetation
- degrades wildlife habitat
- contributes to endangerment of rare plants and animals
- homogenizes the landscape

There are seven plants that have been labeled exotic to Polk County. These include Canada Thistle, Leafy Spurge, Purple Loosestrife, Spotted Knapweed, Curly Leaf Pond Weed, Eurasian Water milfoil, and Reed Canary Grass.

Of these, efforts have recently targeted control of Purple Loosestrife. An inventory was conducted in 2000 to monitor Purple Loosestrife in Polk County and inhibit further spreading. Different methods of control were used on these sites and then checked again in 2005 for evaluation of control methods and re-attempts to control the weeds were made.

Threatened Species:

Any species which appears likely, within the foreseeable future, on the basis of scientific evidence to become endangered.

Exotic Species:

A non-native species; one that has been accidentally or deliberately moved by human activity to an area which it is not native to. Exotic species can have damaging effects on the environment since they may lack natural competition.

Invasive Species:

A non-native species whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

Source: Wis. State Statute

Of these sites checked, two were noted in Dresser with having purple loosestrife. One is located in a garden at 240th St and 100th Ave. This site was found in 2001. Rodeo (herbicide) was applied, but the site remains active. The second site near Dresser is the acreage north of Lotus Lake on the DNR state property. Biocontrol was used there in 2002. However, the area of infestation and density remains large, 4888 square meters with a density of 36 stems per square meter (2003 data). Purple loosestrife was noted at Lotus Lake on all sides of the lake in 2005, but the density was not enumerated. These two sites were further investigated in 2006. The DNR lists the following steps to prevent further spread of Purple Loosestrife:

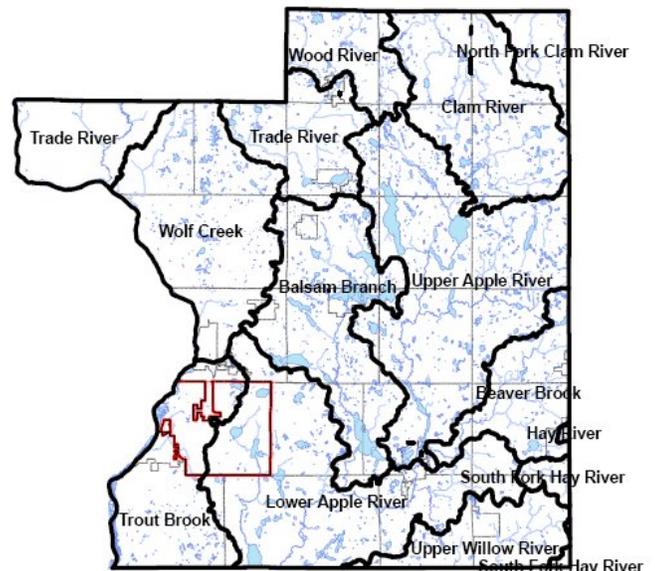
- Be on the lookout for pioneering plants or isolated small colonies, especially in areas otherwise free of purple loosestrife. Remove pioneering plants immediately.
- Rinse off equipment, boats and trailers, clothing, and footwear used in infested areas before moving into uninfested areas.
- Remove and destroy purple loosestrife planted in lawns and gardens. It is illegal to cultivate purple loosestrife in Wisconsin.

Common Buckthorn is an invasive species increasingly found in Polk County. They are tall shrubs or small trees reaching 20-25 feet in height and 10 inches in diameter and grow in large shrub growth forms. It was introduced from Europe and planted in Wisconsin as hedgerows as early as 1849. The seeds can be spread long distances by birds; once established buckthorn spreads aggressively, invading forests and dominating understory vegetation, replacing native species by forming dense thickets, and shading out native plants. The cost per acre for removal ranges from \$50-\$1,500/acre, depending on density, terrain, and method. For more information regarding identification and control measures, contact the Wisconsin DNR or the Wisconsin Council of Invasive Species.

Figure 5.4: Polk County Watersheds

Watersheds

A watershed is an area of land that drains its water into a stream, lake, or wetland. The size of a watershed can range from several hundred square miles to only a few square miles. There are 13 watersheds in Polk County. The Town of Osceola is entirely in the St. Croix River Basin, as with most of Polk County. There are 13 watersheds in Polk County (see Figure 5.4); there are two watersheds that divide the Town; the Lower Apple River watershed on the east side and the Trout Brook watershed on the west side (see Watersheds map). As stated in Section 3 of the Polk County Land Use Plan:



Source: WDNR

- The Lower Apple River watershed should be considered a high priority for protection from water quality degradation by non-point source water pollution.
- The St. Croix River is classified as an outstanding resource water for 14 miles within this watershed, and as an exceptional resource water for 7 miles.

Surface Water

There are an abundance of surface water resources in the Town of Osceola. The following list, compiled by the DNR, includes the named lakes that data was gathered for in the Town.

Table 5.3: Town of Osceola lakes inventory

Lake	Surface Area (acres)	Max. Depth (feet)	Shoreline Length (miles)	Public Access
Dwight	67	26	1.6	Boat ramp
Horse	228	11	3.0	Boat ramp
Lotus (East)	246	15	3.3	Boat ramp
Poplar	125	34	2.1	Boat ramp
Sand	187	58	2.6	Boat ramp

Source: Polk County Land Use Plan (2003)

Lotus Lake

The Lotus Lake Association was incorporated in November of 2002. The purpose of the Lotus Lake Association is to ensure that the lake is well-maintained and preserved for current and future residents. The lake’s recreational sports include fishing with small motor boats, canoeing and swimming. Lotus Lake is considered a shallow lake because its maximum depth is about 15 feet. The lake has many characteristics of a marshland, but has 246 acres of open water. Lotus Lake is fed by Horse Creek, which enters the northeast corner of the lake and produces productive wetlands upstream. This water eventually flows south into Cedar Lake and the Apple River. The lake is considered eutrophic and experiences algae blooms during the summer months.

The Lotus Lake Final Report was developed by the Polk County Land and Water Resources Department in 2005. The report is a summary of the water quality monitored in Lotus Lake during 2005. The management recommendations for Lotus Lake are included in the Appendix.

St. Croix River Close Slough

The St. Croix River close slough connects the river with Rice Lake, Peaslee Lake, and Lower Lake. It contains wetlands and forested wetlands which filters the surface water and groundwater that make their way into the River. See the Wetlands section below for more information.

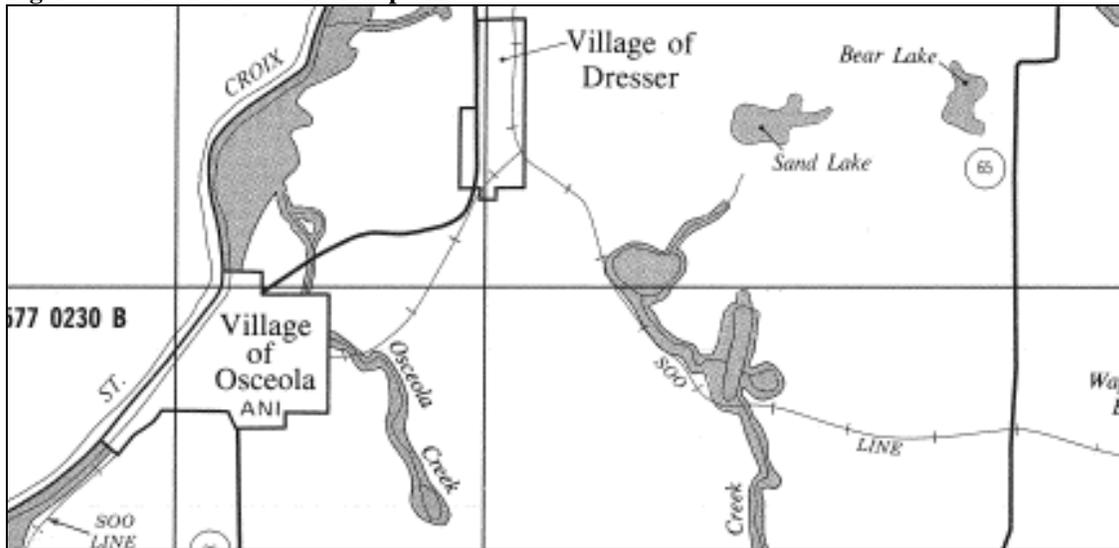
St. Croix River

Considered to be one of America’s last “wild rivers,” the St. Croix River is a tributary of the Mississippi River originating in northwest Wisconsin. It flows approximately 165 miles and much of it forms the border between Wisconsin and Minnesota. The river is a National Scenic Riverway under protection of the National Park Service and is a precious amenity associated with the Town of Osceola and the surrounding area. The river is a popular recreational attraction for boating, fishing, camping, and canoeing.

Floodplains

Floodplains have many important functions to flood and erosion control. Floodplains are natural extensions of waterways and are part of the natural flooding process. They can help retain floodwater, which reduces the flood peak. Floodplains also lower water velocity rates, which give more time for humans to react to floods. They also play a role in groundwater recharge as well as provide natural habitat to countless species. Displacing floodplains only reduces the floodplains capacity and makes the following floods worse; often pushing the flood outside of its historic area. Floodplains consist of any land which may be covered with water during the regional flood, also known as a 100-year flood. The 100-year flood is land that has a 1% chance of flooding in any year. Figure 5.5 is the Flood Insurance Rate map from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This is the official map of the Town of Osceola on which FEMA has delineated both the special hazard areas and the risk premium zones applicable to the Town.

Figure 5.5: Town of Osceola floodplains



Source: FEMA

Wetlands

The Town of Osceola contains an abundance of wetlands. From the Survey, a small amount of residents were in strong favor for the protection of wetlands. These wetlands have often been labeled as “swamps” or “wasteland” because they were impossible or unproductive to farm, forest, or develop. In the past, wetlands were filled in or drained in an effort to make better use of the land. These practices have drastically reduced the amount of wetlands today. However, more people today are realizing the critical roles that wetlands have in the natural water cycle as well as the numerous benefits that humans gain by them. Wetlands are home to a number of species since they provide such an abundance of food and habitat. Some species spend their whole lives in a wetland; some spend only a portion of their life, while others rely on wetlands to complete their life cycle. Wetlands also act like sponges. They can take on massive amounts of water during a flood while retaining water during a drought. Most of the flooding in urban areas is from the loss of wetlands in favor of impervious surfaces. Finally, wetlands help clean and filter surface water in order to replenish groundwater from which humans rely on. Wetland locations are detailed on the Land Cover map.

Wetland:

Areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

Source: EPA

Wildlife Habitat

Wisconsin has an abundance of natural resources. Early explorers noted the abundance of wildlife and wildlife habitat as they explored the forests, wetlands, and grasslands of the State. Because of this, people from other states come to Wisconsin to experience them, especially when it comes to hunting. Species that are hunted include white-tailed deer, black bear, duck, geese, wild turkey, pheasant, mourning dove, ruffed grouse, and sharp-tailed grouse. The Town of Osceola also offers a variety of habitat through its forests, wetlands, and grasslands.

Metallic/Non-Metallic Mineral Resources

All counties in Wisconsin were required to adopt an ordinance by June 1, 2001, that establishes a non-metallic mine reclamation program to promote compliance with state reclamation standards contained in Chapter NR 135 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. In addition, the Town also adopted a Non-metallic Mineral Extraction Permit and Regulation Ordinance (Chapter 14 of the Code of Ordinances).

There are currently three operational mines/pits in the Town of Osceola:

- Dresser Trap Rock
- Haas and Sons Sand and Gravel
- Rightway Gravel

The Polk County Lime Quarry is located in Alden and provides a range of products for landscape, construction, and agricultural purposes. The quarry was started in the 1950's for the farming industry. It now serves the public and the county with products such as lime, slag, rip rap, boulders, flat rock, and deco rock.

Parks and Open Space

Parks and open space can have many functions for a community. They can be used for recreation, education, flood control, habitat preservation, protection of groundwater recharge areas, air and surface water quality improvement, buffers, and can even increase neighboring property values. Please refer to the Utilities and Community Facilities element for parks and open space located within the Town of Osceola.

Historical and Cultural Resources

Historic preservation is protection, preservation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of cultural resources. Cultural resources can include a structure, area, site, object, or community that has historic, archeological, architectural, cultural, or social significance. Preservation gives character, pride, and a sense of meaning to communities and citizens. There are also economic reasons for preservation, such as an increase in tourism, increase in property values, and it can be cheaper than building new.

There are no state registered historic sites currently within the Town of Osceola. There are, however, numerous sites identified by Polk County as historical. Most of these sites have been marked by the Polk County Historical Site Program. The Polk County Historical Society was founded in 1937 and has been marking hundreds of historical sites all across Polk County. As of February of 2000, the Polk County Historical Society had listed 33 historical sites in the Town of Osceola. Most of these included locations of post offices and schools which no longer exist as well as century farms. Of these sites, about 19 have been marked with signs since 2000. A list is included in the Appendix.

Recreational Resources

Because of its abundance of natural resources, the Town of Osceola has numerous outdoor recreational opportunities available (see Recreational Opportunities map). Boating, camping, skiing, hiking, hunting, biking, snowmobile, and running can all be experienced in the Town. For a complete list of active recreational resources, refer to the Transportation Element. For a complete list of parks within the Town, refer to the Utilities and Community Facilities Element. Table 5.3 lists the recreational resources found in Polk County:

Table 5.4: Polk County recreation resources

Attraction	Size/Number
Water Acres as Percent of Land Area	4.7%
Swimming Areas	10
Fishing Lakes	391
Canoe Trails	91 miles
Camping Sites	838
Trout Streams	89.9 miles
Hiking Trails	117.3 miles
Bicycle Trails	50 miles
Snowmobile Trails	373 miles
ATV Trails	27.8 miles
Downhill Skiing Sites	1
Cross-Country Ski Trails	69.9 miles
Golf Courses	7
County/Township Parks	11
Hunting Areas (public acres)	54.7

Source: Polk County (2006)

Community Survey Results

Respondents were presented with a list of six natural resource items and asked how important it is to protect each resource. As shown in Table 5.5, Town of Osceola respondents gave a high level of importance to the protection of all natural resources on the list; large majorities said that it is important to protect every resource listed. Lake protection was supported particularly strongly (93%). This substantial level of agreement was uniform across all demographic groups. There were only minor variations in the high level of importance that each group placed on the protection of these natural resources in the Town.

Table 5.5: Importance for Town of Osceola to protect natural resources

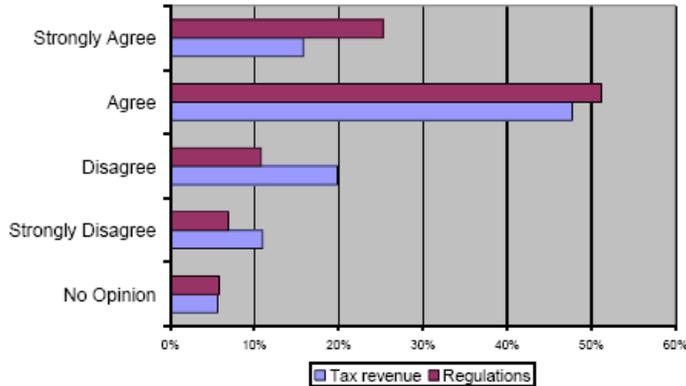
	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Lakes	461	62%	31%	4%	2%	2%
River corridors	465	47%	40%	7%	2%	4%
Wildlife corridors	461	46%	39%	9%	3%	3%
Woodlands	463	45%	41%	8%	3%	3%
Wetlands	463	42%	39%	12%	3%	4%
Prairie land/grasslands	462	38%	40%	13%	4%	4%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

As shown in Figure 5.6, a majority of respondents agree or strongly agree with using Town tax revenue and regulatory authority for natural resource protection. Agreement for the use of regulations was somewhat stronger (75% strongly agree or agree) than for the use of tax revenue (64% strongly agree or agree). Female respondents indicated a slightly higher level of agreement with using taxes and regulations to protect the Town’s natural resources than did males. The level of agreement for the use of taxes and

regulations was slightly higher among residents who have lived in the Town for 15 or fewer years.

Figure 5.6: Use of Town taxes and regulations for natural resource protection



Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

SWOT Analysis: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resources valued by residents • Willingness to conserve areas through taxes and regulations • National Scenic Riverway • Interstate Park • Productive farmland • Vast open spaces • Right to farm 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor shallow water quality • Presence of invasive species • Deer overpopulation
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amery to Dresser Trail • Natural resource educational opportunities • Revision of ordinances to reflect results of the community survey regarding natural resource conservation • Identify areas of interest for conserving natural resources • Working Lands Initiatives • DNR project areas 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incompatible development and its impacts on natural resources • Loss of farmland • Mining operations • Water quality degradation • Loss of wildlife corridors and habitat • Restrictions due to threatened/endangered species • Development impacts on the St. Croix River • Invasive species

Goals, Objectives, Implementation

Goal: Maintain the Town of Osceola as one of the most beautiful areas in the state.

Objectives:

- Consider the impacts on wetlands, lakes, and waterways when making land use determinations.
- Consider the impacts on watershed areas according to the watershed plans that are available.
- Preserve the recreational opportunities that are currently available in the Town and explore areas for expansion and preservation.
- Improve water quality in the Town’s lakes, rivers, and streams.
- Promote educational opportunities concerning the Town’s natural resources through the neighboring school districts.
- Coordinate with the DNR and other organizations on conservation opportunities and issues in the Town.
- Promote Working Lands Initiatives.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Revise the Town’s ordinances to reflect the results of the Community Survey concerning natural resource conservation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Economic development is important to the well-being in all communities. Money spent in a community increases profit for local businesses, which in turn creates more local job openings, which increases wages and brings in more people to the community; the cycle goes on. Increased personal income increases the local tax base, which helps the state, county, or community provide the services which residents expect. Also, the economic expenses of a community are investments towards the future. Economic investments allow communities to decide which direction to take for the future according to their own values and characteristics. The Town of Osceola is going to experience economic changes irrelevant of any plans that are made. Comprehensive planning allows for the Town to anticipate these changes and guide development to reflect the community’s unique goals and needs. According to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), a comprehensive economic development framework “...is fundamentally about enhancing the factors of productive capacity - land, labor, capital, and technology - of a national, state or local economy.” This element will look at the current inventory of businesses and industries as well as trends in the labor force and economic base.

Economic Development Element Requirements:

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 the local governmental unit, including an analysis of the labor force and economic base of the local governmental unit. The element shall assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the local governmental unit’s strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, and shall designate an adequate number of sites for such businesses and industries. The element shall also evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The element shall also identify county, regional and state economic development programs that apply to the local governmental unit.

Sec. 66.1001(2)(f), Wis. Stats.

Economic Development Components

There are five economic development components which have been accepted as essential for community economic development to be effective (adapted from “Learning to Lead: A Primer on Economic Development Strategies,” by Maury Forman & Jim Mooney, Washington State, Office of Trade and Economic Development, www.oted.wa.gov/ed/cea/publications/learningtolead/default.htm):

Organizational Development

To start the process, a community or region needs to have an economic development organization which is in place, involved and inclusive. Communities lay the groundwork for economic development activities by undertaking a process to determine a common future vision. By conducting an analysis of current economic conditions and completing a strategic planning process, a community can determine goals and objectives that will address local needs while working to achieve its vision. During this process, a

community must also evaluate and identify the most effective organizational structure and potential resources available for carrying out its economic development activities.

Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure, provided by both government and private business, is the support system needed for producing and delivering goods and services. Traditionally, infrastructure has included all forms of utilities (e.g. water, sewer, gas, electric, telephone), transportation services (e.g. roads, parking, airports, ports, rail), schools, hospitals and other public services sometimes referred to as “social infrastructure.” Communications infrastructure is becoming increasingly important as businesses and residents rely on advanced data, voice and video transmissions. In addition, communities need to consider infrastructure investments in business and industrial parks and to develop an inventory of sites and buildings, including brownfields, suitable for development. Communities must identify both current and future needs and work with both public and private sector providers to ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure.

Business Development

Business development is the cornerstone of a community’s economic development program. Typically, a community’s business development program includes a mix of three primary strategies: retention and expansion of existing businesses, entrepreneurial development, and business attraction. Within these strategies, a community may seek to target certain types of businesses after conducting an evaluation of the current economic base. Business cluster strategies, working with companies based on various inter-relationships, has become a standard practice in recent years. A community may also focus its efforts on the development or redevelopment of its downtown and/or neighborhood business districts. Increasingly, communities are also directing efforts toward the development of capital resources to support local businesses including revolving loan funds, angel networks and venture capital opportunities.

Workforce Development

Communities need a quality workforce development program in place to stay competitive, to keep existing businesses strong, to keep young people in the community, and to raise residents’ standard of living. Workforce development strategies include developing approaches to enhance the skills of workers so that all residents can become contributing members of the local economy. These strategies involve partnerships with educational institutions, employers, unions and state and local workforce development agencies and organizations. It is helpful to begin

Types of Workforce Development Programs:

- 1. School-to-Work Programs*
- 2. Apprenticeships/Job-shadowing*
- 3. Cooperative Education Programs*
- 4. Youth Entrepreneurship Program*
- 5. High School Curriculum Development*
- 6. Mentoring programs*
- 7. On-the-job Training*
- 8. Training Workshops*
- 9. Customized Labor Training*
- 10. Pre-employment Training for Grants*
- 11. Degreed/Credit Educational Programs*
- 12. Job Search and Job Placement*
- 13. Adults with Barriers: Life Skills*
- 14. Language Training*
- 15. Literacy/Numeracy Training*
- 16. Academic Upgrading*
- 17. Job Training and Retaining*
- 18. Assistance in removing other barriers such as childcare, transportation, health-related costs, disability-related costs, and skills acceleration*

looking at this component by completing an analysis of the local labor market. Such an analysis will help to identify significant workforce issues that need to be considered.

Community Cash Flow Development

Communities looking to bring new dollars in to ensure a balance of economic activity (or “community cash flow”) can look at two sources of new dollars: those brought in by individuals, and those brought in by entities (organizations, businesses, government). There are two types of new individual dollars that come into a community: earned income (wage and salary income) and transfer income (non-wage income or generated wealth). New dollars brought into a community by entities or institutions cover a wide range of sources, including tourism, expanding markets, pursuing outside investments, government contracts or grants, and developing support sectors. Many successful economic development strategies, which bring new dollars into a community, are the result of public-private partnerships that focus on serving growing sectors in the economy, and which bring in both individual and institutional dollars.

Labor Force and Economic Base

Economic Inventory

As discussed in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element, agricultural land uses are predominant throughout the Town. The close proximity to the Villages of Osceola and Dresser also limits the amount of commercial development in the Town. Some of the services provided within the Town limits are:

- public golf course
- auto dealership/mechanic
- fitness
- home builder/construction
- tax services
- lawn and yard equipment/landscaping materials
- bar/restaurants
- beauty salon
- cabinetry/woodworking
- veterinary services
- gravel/concrete supply
- sanitary and recycling services

Education

Educational institutions are vital for keeping a skilled and competitive labor force. Through increasing technology, many low-skilled jobs are moving out of the country; leaving high-skilled jobs. The greatest number of new job opportunities in Wisconsin will require some type of secondary education.

The Town of Osceola is split into two school districts: Osceola and St. Croix Falls (see School District map). There are also a handful of distinct higher education facilities in close proximity including the University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in New Richmond and Rice Lake,

University of Wisconsin-Stout, and University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Including college or graduate school, there were 79 students within the Town of Osceola in 2000.

Table 6.1: Town of Osceola school enrollment (2000)

	2000	Percent
Total (3 years and over enrolled in school)	610	100.0%
Nursery school, preschool	24	3.9%
Kindergarten	42	6.9%
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	306	50.2%
High school (grades 9-12)	159	26.1%
College or graduate school	79	13.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC)

WITC has campuses located in New Richmond and Rice Lake. WITC offers associate degrees and vocational education programs in the areas of agriculture, service, health and home economics, business and marketing, trade and industry, general education, and apprenticeship trades.

Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC)

CVTC aims to bring progressive technical education and meet the workforce needs of the region. Although there are campuses located across the state, the two closest to the Town of Osceola are the River Falls and Menomonie campuses. They maintain to be the state’s third largest transfer college to the University of Wisconsin System. CVTC offers a wide variety of programs, certificates, apprenticeships, and weekend and online courses.

Employment

The following statistics from the 2000 Census describe the labor force in the Town of Osceola. These figures represent the population 16 years of age or older and are either employed or unemployed but seeking employment. As shown in Table 6.2, the unemployment rate in the Town in 2000 was 2.3% which was below the Polk County rate of 3.9%. By 2004 the unemployment rate in Polk County climbed to 5.4%, which was above Wisconsin’s rate of 4.9% (Polk County Economic Profile; October 2005).

Table 6.2: Town of Osceola employment status

	2000	Percent
Population 16 years and over	1,563	100.0%
In labor force	1,192	76.3%
Civilian labor force	1,192	76.3%
Employed	1,156	74.0%
Unemployed	36	2.3%
Percent of civilian labor force	3.0	(X)
Armed Forces	0	0.0%
Not in labor force	371	23.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

The employment data listed in the following tables uses the North American Industry Classification System. According to Table 6.3, the largest percentage of Town residents had management and professional occupations (35.6%) in 2000, followed by sales and office occupations (21.6%) and production, transportation, and material moving occupations (19.9%). These types of occupations are also considered some of the fastest growing in western Wisconsin. They also usually require some level of secondary education.

Table 6.3: Town of Osceola occupation characteristics (2000)

	2000	Percent
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	1,156	100.0%
Management, professional, and related occupations	411	35.6%
Service occupations	140	12.1%
Sales and office occupations	250	21.6%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	12	1.0%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	113	9.8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	230	19.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

According to Table 6.4, the largest percentages of the Town’s labor force were employed in the manufacturing (25.6%) and educational, health and social service (22.5%) industries in 2000. According to the Wisconsin DOA, the largest manufacturers in Polk County include Polaris Industries in the Village of Osceola, Advanced Food Products, L.L.C. in Clear Lake, Cardinal DGP, LG in Amery, and Bishop Fixtures and Millwork in Balsam Lake. Table 6.6 shows that the majority of workers (78.8%) in the Town of Osceola are private wage and salary.

Table 6.4: Town of Osceola industry characteristics (2000)

	Number	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	49	4.2%
Construction	85	7.4%
Manufacturing	296	25.6%
Wholesale trade	28	2.4%
Retail trade	129	11.2%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	33	2.9%
Information	21	1.8%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	49	4.2%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	78	6.7%
Educational, health and social services	260	22.5%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	46	4.0%
Other services (except public administration)	50	4.3%
Public administration	32	2.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Table 6.5: Town of Osceola worker class (2000)

	Number	Percent
Private wage and salary workers	911	78.8%
Government workers	123	10.6%
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business	122	10.6%
Unpaid family workers	0	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

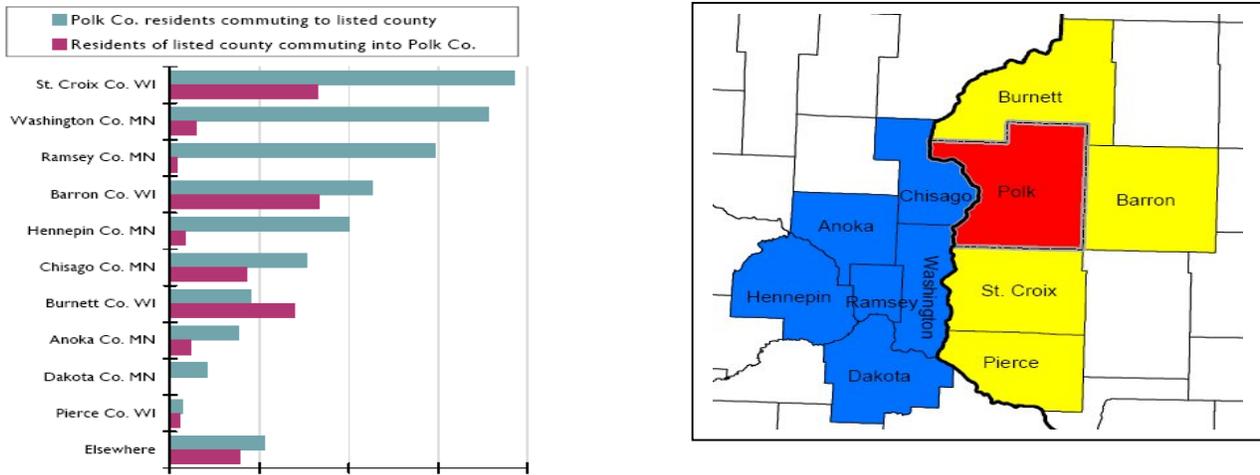
Table 6.6 shows the commute characteristics of the Town’s residents in 2000. Approximately 78% of workers drove alone to their employment destinations with a mean commute time of 28.9 minutes in 2000. In Polk County, almost 77% of workers drove alone to work with an average commute time of 28.7 minutes. Recent national trends show an increase in commute times despite the increase in gas prices. High commute times could be a result of the lack of high-paying jobs in the area required to support to the resident workforce. On the other hand, it shows that the quality of life is high enough in the Town of Osceola that residents are willing to make long commutes to employment destinations. Figure 6.1 shows that most of Polk County commuter’s employment destinations are in St. Croix, Washington, and Ramsey counties; while large numbers of workers commute to Polk County from St. Croix, Barron, and Burnett counties.

Table 6.6: Town of Osceola commute characteristics (2000)

	2000	Percent
Workers 16 years and over	1,146	100.0%
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	912	79.6%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	140	12.2%
Public transportation (including taxicab)	3	0.3%
Walked	21	1.8%
Other means	16	1.4%
Worked at home	54	4.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Figure 6.1: Polk County commute patterns (2000)



Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Income Levels

Table 6.7 shows the Town residents' household income in 1999. The largest percentage of households earned \$50,000-\$74,999 (35.1%). The median household income in the Town was \$55,509 and the per capita income was \$21,865; both of which were higher than in the County (\$41,183 and \$19,129).

Table 6.7: Town of Osceola household income (1999)

	Number	Percent
Households	755	100.0%
Less than \$10,000	22	2.9%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	21	2.8%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	55	7.3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	70	9.3%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	139	18.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	265	35.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	105	13.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	48	6.4%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	22	2.9%
\$200,000 or more	8	1.1%
Median Household Income (dollars)	\$55,509	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Table 6.8 shows the Town's median family income in 1999. The largest percentage of families earned \$50,000-\$74,999 (39.4%). The median family income in the Town was \$59,688, which was higher than the Polk County median (\$48,538) and the Wisconsin median (\$58,647).

Table 6.8: Town of Osceola family income (1999)

	Number	Percent
Families	606	100.0%
Less than \$10,000	9	1.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4	0.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	29	4.8%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	55	9.1%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	101	16.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	239	39.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	93	15.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	46	7.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	22	3.6%
\$200,000 or more	8	1.3%
Median Family Income (dollars)	\$59,688	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

In 1999, 1.5% of families and 2.2% of individuals were below the poverty level in the Town of Osceola.

Per Capita Income:

Historically there have been two different methods of determining personal income in the United States: The Bureau of Economic Analysis's (BEA) personal income and the Census Bureau's money income.

- The BEA personal income is the income received by persons from participation in production, from government and business transfer payments, and from government interest. BEA estimates personal income largely from administrative data sources.
- The Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement is the source of the Census Bureau's official national estimates of poverty. CPS money income is defined as total pre-tax cash income earned by persons, excluding certain lump sum payments and excluding capital gains.

Even though the data is not as recent, the Census Bureau estimates were used in this plan because BEA data for the Town of Osceola doesn't exist and because most of the other data used in this plan are from the Census Bureau.

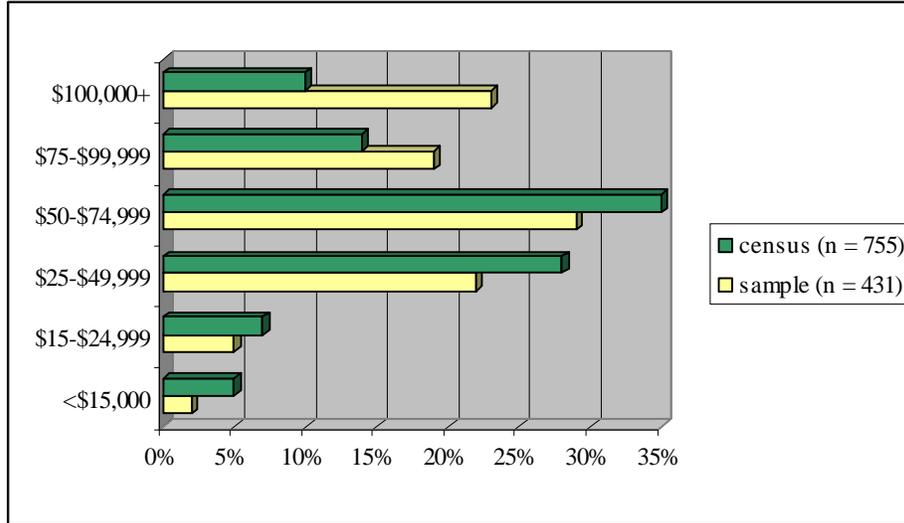
Poverty:

The Census Bureau bases poverty rates on annual poverty thresholds. In 2004 for example, they defined poverty on average for the following family sizes:

- 1 person = \$9,643
- 2 people = \$12,335
- 3 people = \$15,071
- 4 people = \$19,311

According to the Community Survey, the sample had more households in the higher income brackets, although comparisons to the 2000 Census data are tenuous due to the age of the data and the growth of incomes since the 2000 Census. Where comparable data was available from the 2000 Census, they were included to indicate the degree to which the sample represents the underlying adult population in the Town of Osceola.

Figure 6.2: Town of Osceola household income comparison



Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Residents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with the appropriateness of different types of businesses in the Town of Osceola. Their opinions are summarized in Table 6.9 and Figure 6.3. Over 90 percent said that agricultural production, agricultural service businesses and direct sales of farm products are appropriate businesses in the Town. Their support of agricultural production, however, does not extend to large farm operations (defined as over 700 dairy cows or 1,000 beef steers/cows). Compared to the 90 percent who agreed that farms and farm-related businesses are appropriate for the Town, fewer than 40 percent said that large-scale farm operations are acceptable.

A large majority (85%) believed that home-based businesses are appropriate and more than seven in ten said the following businesses were appropriate: electricity-generating windmills, composting sites, retail/commercial, and industrial/manufacturing. Golf courses, convenience stores/gas stations, privately-owned campgrounds, and dog boarding/kennels were viewed as appropriate by at least 60 percent of the respondents. Between 50 and 60 percent of respondents said storage businesses and gravel pits were appropriate in the Town.

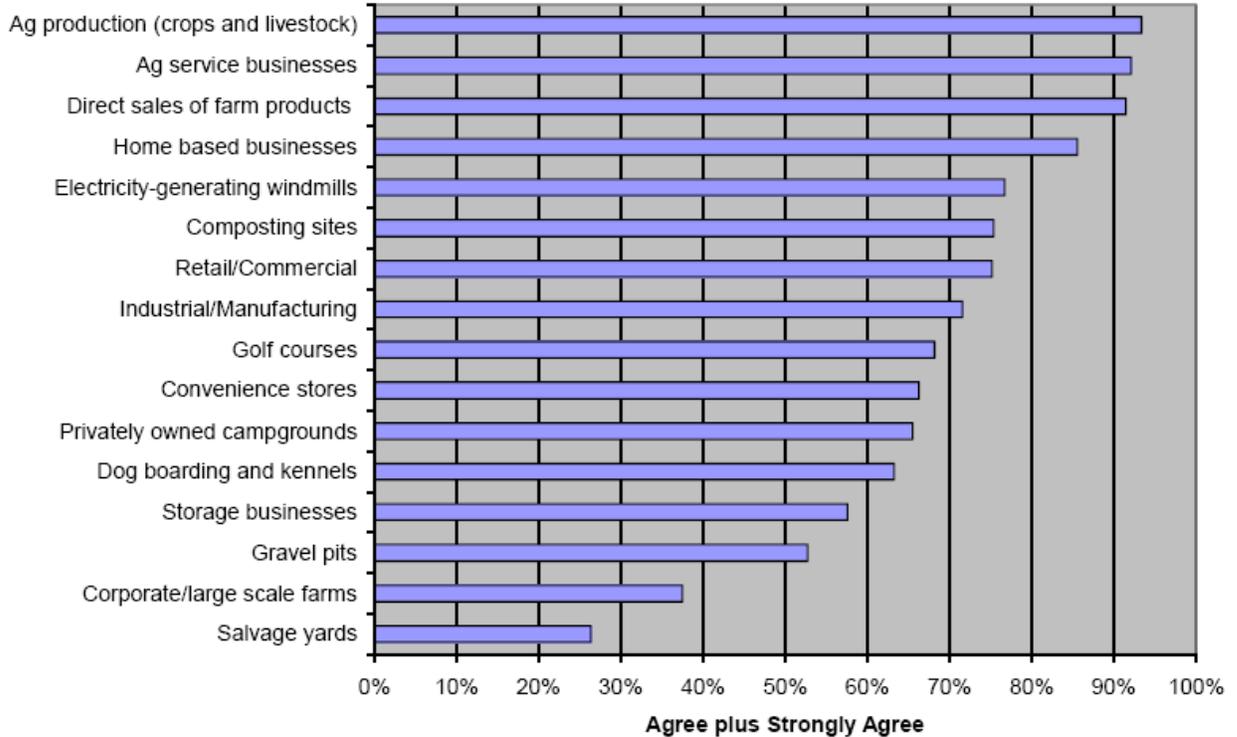
Salvage yards were decidedly unpopular; two-thirds of respondents said they disagree or strongly disagree that this type of business is appropriate for the Town of Osceola.

Table 6.9: Types of businesses appropriate for the Town of Osceola

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Ag production (crops and livestock)	453	39%	54%	2%	0%	4%
Ag service businesses	458	31%	61%	2%	0%	6%
Direct sales of farm products (vegetables, fruit, meat, trees)	459	29%	62%	4%	1%	3%
Electricity-generating windmills	455	25%	51%	10%	4%	9%
Composting sites	451	19%	56%	12%	2%	11%
Home based businesses	457	17%	68%	5%	0%	9%
Retail/Commercial	459	14%	61%	13%	4%	7%
Golf courses	459	13%	55%	17%	5%	9%
Industrial/Manufacturing	454	13%	59%	17%	5%	7%
Convenience stores/gas stations	451	12%	55%	22%	6%	5%
Privately owned campgrounds	458	10%	56%	19%	5%	11%
Dog boarding and kennels	457	7%	57%	19%	6%	12%
Storage businesses	455	7%	51%	26%	7%	10%
Corporate/large scale farms (Over 700 dairy cows or 1,000 beef steers/cows)	456	6%	32%	36%	14%	12%
Gravel pits	459	6%	47%	27%	8%	12%
Junk/Salvage yards	455	5%	21%	37%	28%	8%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Figure 6.3: Types of appropriate businesses for the Town of Osceola



Source: Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey (2008)

Future Development

As mentioned before, each element in a comprehensive plan is tied to other elements. In order to have a successful economic development plan, current and future patterns in land use need to be looked at. For example, Wisconsin relies heavily on its natural resources for an economic base, which can bring in a variety of businesses and industries along with employment opportunities. While this will be addressed in the Land Use Element, the following is a plan on how the Town of Osceola wants to address economic development for the next 20 years.

Desired Businesses and Industries

It is important for the Town of Osceola to know what types of businesses and industries are desired within the community. Because the Town is a rural community; farming, forestry, fishing, and other natural resource-based industries should be considered. Once these desired businesses and industries are decided upon, the Town needs to designate an adequate supply of land for the development of these.

Economic Impact of Tourism in Polk County – 2003

1. In 2003, travelers spent \$70 million in Polk County compared to \$29 million in 1993
2. Sixteen percent of all expenditures were made in the winter (\$11 million); twenty percent in the spring (\$14 million); 39 percent in the summer (\$27 million); and 25 percent in the fall (\$18 million)
3. Traveler spending supported 1,874 FTE's
4. Local taxes collected as a result of travelers amounted to \$3 million in revenue

Living Wage Jobs

Low-wage jobs can create hidden public costs that take advantage of the programs meant to help those that need it. According to the Center on Wisconsin Strategy, “these costs are both hidden and public because the community directly and indirectly pays in order to fill in the gap between what work pays and what families need (*When Work Doesn't Pay*, 2006).” Promoting living wage jobs is a nation-wide issue. There is mounting evidence that identifies the added costs that may have to be absorbed by local communities as a result of low-quality, low-wage jobs.

The following strategies are proposed by the Center on Wisconsin Strategy in order to create stronger jobs; refer to the SWOT analysis for specific measures the Town can take:

1. Raise and strengthen the labor market floor
 - Promote a strong minimum wage or more since this is often not enough income to keep above the poverty line
 - Enforce wage and hour standards
 - Identify employers that violate labor standards

2. Promote job quality at the state and local level
 - Consider job and benefit standards in tax increment financing and other economic development methods
 - Consider state grants and tax credits that support the creation of jobs that provide acceptable wage and benefit standards
3. Focus purchasing power on job quality
 - Public sector purchasing power should support job quality
 - Promote living wage laws that require government contracts go to firms that pay a specific level of wages

Redevelopment Opportunities

Redevelopment opportunities are parcels of land that had been previously developed and built upon, but are not abandoned or underutilized. Because the Town is mostly rural and undeveloped, there is little opportunity for redevelopment.

Brownfields

Brownfields are abandoned, idle or underused properties where expansion or redevelopment has not occurred due to known or perceived environmental contamination. Brownfield remediation is a special case, recently made feasible by the desire of governments to invest in these types of projects. Since communities pursue brownfield redevelopment to meet economic as well as social goals, programs should track economic benefits, which tend to be measured quantitatively, as well as important social and community benefits, which require additional and qualitative information. This is especially true since brownfield redevelopments usually cost more than undeveloped sites and because brownfield projects often take longer to implement. Successful brownfield remediation requires:

- managing the liabilities
- conducting the clean-up (including finding funding)
- implementing the redevelopment project

Remediation and Redevelopment Sites

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides information and data about contaminated properties and other activities related to the investigation and cleanup of contaminated soil or groundwater. The Remediation and Redevelopment map shows specific locations of closed sites, where cleanup has been completed, and open sites where cleanup is underway in the Town. The impacts of development on these sites are important to consider. The map includes the following contamination data:

- investigations and cleanups of contaminated soil and/or groundwater

- public registry of completed cleanups with residual contamination, including environmental land use controls
- cleanup of Superfund sites
- liability exemptions and clarifications at contaminated properties (brownfields)
- DNR funding assistance

Table 6.10: Town of Osceola documented brownfield sites

Site	Start Date	End Date	Impact	Substances
Mallin Godfrey Property	10/19/2000	-	Soil Contamination	Petroleum/Gasoline
Selzler Office and Garage	06/16/1994	04/05/2000	Soil Contamination	N/A
St. Croix River Valley Landfill	11/05/1993	10/16/1996	Soil Contamination	Diesel Fuel
St. Croix River Valley Landfill	01/01/1970	-	N/A	N/A
Trollhaugen Ski Area	04/07/1998	10/19/2000	Soil Contamination	Gasoline
Osceola Rod and Gun Club	12/10/2001	-	Surface Water Contamination	Lead (Pb)
Nye Store (former)	10/25/2000	-	Soil Contamination	Gasoline

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources

County, Regional and State Economic Development Programs

Local and Regional Sources	
Polk County Economic Development Corp.	Aims to support growth in Polk County. Offers financial assistance and a revolving loan program.
Polk County Revolving Loan Fund	The County consolidated the revolving loan fund with funds from other counties in western Wisconsin.
Micro Loan Program	Provides small loans to startup, newly established, or growing small businesses. The key objective is to assist business owners, who have traditionally had difficulty accessing debt financing, by affording them another alternative to obtaining credit.
West Central Regional Planning Commission	The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is statutorily charged with the responsibility of planning for the physical, social, and economic development of the region. Their services include economic development, community development, transportation, environment and recreation, and mapping and graphics among others.
The Center for Community and Economic Development, University of Wisconsin Extension (CCED)	Creates, applies and transfers multidisciplinary knowledge to help people understand community change and identify opportunities
State Sources	
Blight Elimination and Brownfield Redevelopment Program (CDBG-BEBR)	CDBG-BEBR program is designed to assist communities with assessing or remediating the environmental contamination of an abandoned, idle or underused industrial or commercial facility or site in a blighted area, or that qualifies as blighted.

<p>Business Employees Skills Training (BEST) Program</p>	<p>This program was established by the Wisconsin Legislature to help small businesses in industries that are facing severe labor shortages upgrade the skills of their workforce. Under the BEST program, Commerce can provide applicants with a tuition reimbursement grant to help cover a portion of the costs associated with training employees.</p>
<p>Community Based Economic Development (CBED)</p>	<p>CBED makes grants funds available to local governments for economic development planning, and to development organizations for development projects, business assistance grants and business incubator/technology based incubator grants.</p>
<p>Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-ED) Economic Development Program</p>	<p>This program provides grants to communities to loan to businesses for start-up, retention, and expansion projects based on the number of jobs created or retained. Communities can create community revolving loan funds from the loan repayments.</p>
<p>Community Development Zone Program</p>	<p>The program offers tax credits for creating new, full-time jobs, hiring disadvantaged workers and undertaking environmental remediation. Tax credits can be taken only on income generated by business activity in the zone. The maximum amount of tax credits per zone is \$3 million.</p>
<p>Customized Labor Training (CLT) Fund</p>	<p>This program provides training grants to businesses that are implementing new technology or production processes. The program can provide up to 50 percent of the cost of customized training.</p>
<p>Dairy 2020 Early Planning Grant Program</p>	<p>The Dairy 2020 Early Planning Grant program is designed to encourage and stimulate the start up, modernization, and expansion of Wisconsin dairy farms. Under the Dairy 2020 program, Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Network can provide applicants with a grant to help cover a portion of the cost of hiring an independent third party to develop a comprehensive business plan.</p>
<p>Early Planning Grant (EPG) Program</p>	<p>This program helps individual entrepreneurs and small businesses throughout Wisconsin obtain the professional services necessary to evaluate the feasibility of a proposed start up or expansion.</p>
<p>Economic Diversification Loan (EDL) Program</p>	<p>This program has a goal of diversifying a local community's economy such that it is less dependent upon revenue from Gaming. The EDL program is designed to help businesses establish and expand operations.</p>
<p>Economic Impact Loan (EIL) Program</p>	<p>The goal of this program is to help Wisconsin businesses that have been negatively impacted by Gaming. Recognizing that qualified businesses may have difficulty accessing capital, the EIL program is designed to cover a portion of the cost associated with modernizing and/or improving the businesses operations.</p>
<p>Employee Ownership Assistance Loan (EOP) Program</p>	<p>This program can help employees purchase a business by providing awards up to \$15,000 for feasibility studies or professional assistance.</p>

Entrepreneurial Training Grant (ETG) Program	Through this program, commerce can provide applicants with a grant to help cover a portion of the cost of attending Small Business Development Center's (SBDC) new Entrepreneurial Training Course. Contact your nearest SBDC to apply.
Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB)	These are municipal bonds whose proceeds are loaned to private persons or to businesses to finance capital investment projects. All Wisconsin municipalities, cities, villages, and towns are authorized to issue IRB's.
Major Economic Development (MED) Program	This program is designed to assist businesses that will invest private funds and create jobs as they expand in or relocate to Wisconsin.
Milk Volume Production (MVP) Program	This program is designed to assist dairy producers that are undertaking capital improvement projects that will result in a significant increase in Wisconsin's milk production. Only those projects that have a comprehensive business plan and can demonstrate that they will have a long term sustainable impact upon Wisconsin's milk production will be successful.
Minority Business Development Fund	This program offers low-interest loans for start-up, expansion or acquisition projects. To qualify for the fund, a business must be 51-percent controlled, owned, and actively managed by minority-group members, and the project must retain or increase employment.
Health Professions Loan Assistance Program (HPLAP)	The Health Professions Loan Assistance Program is designed to provide incentives for physicians, dentists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, registered dental hygienists and certified nurse midwives to practice in Wisconsin rural and urban medical shortage areas.
Public Facilities (CDBG-PF)	The Wisconsin CDBG-PF program provides grant funds to the States small cities. Eligible communities include all cities, villages, and townships with population of less than 50,000 and all counties except Milwaukee and Waukesha.
Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED)	Through this program, communities can access funds to help pay the costs of infrastructure improvements needed to provide for business expansions or start-ups that will result in job creation and substantial private investment in the area.
Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG Emergency Grants)	This program can assist communities of less than 50,000 population that are faced with emergency repairs and expenditures related to restoring use of its infrastructure that has suffered damages as a result of natural or other catastrophic events.
The Rural Economic Development (RED) Program	The program is designed to provide working capital or fixed asset financing for businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

Tax Incremental Financing (TIF)	Helps cities, villages, and towns in Wisconsin attract industrial and commercial growth in underdeveloped and blighted areas. A local government can designate a specific area within its boundaries as a TIF district and develop a plan to improve its property values. Taxes generated by the increased property values pay for land acquisition or needed public works.
Technology Development Fund (TDF) and Technology Development Loan (TDL)	These programs help Wisconsin businesses research and develop technological innovations that have the potential to provide significant economic benefit to the state.
Wisconsin CAPCO Program	This program is intended to increase investment of venture capital funds into small business enterprises which have traditionally had difficulty in attracting institutional venture capital.
Wisconsin Trade Project Program	This program can help small export-ready firms participate in international trade shows. The business covers its own travel and lodging expenses. Commerce can then provide up to \$5,000 in reimbursements to a business for costs associated with attending a trade show, such as booth rental, shipping displays or product brochure translation.

SWOT Analysis: Economic Development

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship/mentoring programs offered by local school districts • Quality school districts • Good highway and county roads • Tourism and recreational opportunities 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of sewer and water systems • Long commute times for residents • Few living wage jobs • Close proximity to business and industry in the Villages of Osceola and Dresser
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway 35 bypass • Opportunities to expand internship/mentoring programs 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annexation of land by the Villages of Osceola and Dresser • Loss of higher education graduates

Goals, Objectives, Implementation

Goal: Promote economic development that creates quality employment opportunities in the Town of Osceola that does not compromise the rural character.

Objectives:

- Increase agricultural employment.
- Promote tourism and recreational opportunities in the Town.

- Promote commercial development that supports the recreational opportunities in the Town.
- Identify current high-wage paying industries and help them expand.
- Promote fair wage and benefit standards for employees of businesses operating in the Town of Osceola.
- Promote financing tools to current and prospective businesses.
- Consider fair wage and benefit standards for any new businesses in the Town of Osceola that are seeking variances, TIF funding, or would use a significant amount of other Town resources.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Encourage development along transportation corridors.
- Work with adjacent municipalities to collaborate on new development.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Introduction

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the State ranks thirteenth nationwide in total number of governmental units and third nationwide in governmental units per capita. Having so many governmental units allows for greater local representation and means that Wisconsin residents have numerous opportunities to participate in local decision-making.

The benefits of intergovernmental cooperation include:

- **Cost savings**

Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Cooperation can enable some communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly.

- **Address regional issues**

By communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues which are regional in nature.

- **Identification of issues**

Cooperation enables jurisdictions to identify and resolve potential conflicts at an early stage, before affected interests have established rigid positions, before the political stakes have been raised, and before issues have become conflicts or crises.

- **Reduced litigation**

Communities that cooperate are able to resolve issues before they become mired in litigation. Reducing the possibility of costly litigation can save a community money.

- **Consistency**

Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.

- **Predictability**

Jurisdictions that cooperate provide greater predictability to residents, developers, businesses, and others. Lack of predictability can result in lost time, money, and opportunity.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Element Requirements:

A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school 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 and adjacent local governmental units, and to the region, the state and other governmental units. The element shall incorporate any plans or agreements to which the local governmental unit is a party under §66.0301, §66.0307, §66.0309. The element shall identify existing or potential conflicts between the local governmental unit and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.

§66.1001(2)(g), Wis. Stats.

• **Understanding**

As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another’s needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.

• **Trust**

Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions.

• **History of success**

When jurisdictions cooperate successfully in one area, the success creates positive feelings and an expectation that other issues can be resolved as well.

• **Service to citizens**

The biggest beneficiaries of intergovernmental cooperation are citizens for whom government was created in the first place. They may not understand, or even care about, the intricacies of a particular intergovernmental issue, but all Wisconsin residents can appreciate their benefits, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment and a strong economy.

Distinguishing between Intergovernmental Agreement Types

	General Agreements (§ 66.0301, Stats.)	Stipulations & Orders (§ 66.0225, Stats.)	Revenue Sharing Agreements (§66.0305, Stats.)	Cooperative Boundary Agreements (§66.0307, Stats.)
Used for?	Services	Boundaries	Revenue sharing	Boundaries, services, revenue sharing
Binding with boundaries?	No	Yes, so long as any party is willing to seek enforcement of the agreement	Yes, period fixed by participants (10 year minimum)	Yes, period fixed by participants (10 years or longer with MBR approval).
Notice required?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Public hearing required?	No	No	Yes	Yes
Referendum?	No	Binding referendum possible	Advisory referendum possible	Advisory referendum possible
Who decides?	Participating municipalities	• Municipalities involved in the lawsuit • Judge • Area residents (if they request a referendum)	Participating municipalities	• Participating municipalities • MBR
Who reviews or comments?	Participating municipalities	• Municipalities involved in the lawsuit • Judge • Area residents (if they request a referendum)	• Participating municipalities • Residents	• Participating municipalities • MBR • Area jurisdictions • State agencies • RPC • County • Residents

Source: Wisconsin DOA

Because the Town of Osceola is a smaller rural community, it relies heavily on other governmental units and neighboring municipalities to provide services, and therefore, intergovernmental cooperation is an important element to the Town.

Existing Agreements

Table 7.1: Town of Osceola existing agreements

Governmental Unit/Agency	Agreement
Osceola Area Ambulance	Share services with the Towns of Osceola, Alden, Farmington, and the Villages of Osceola and Dresser
Dresser-Osceola-Garfield Fire Department	Share services with the Towns of Osceola and Garfield and the Village of Dresser
Osceola Joint Municipal Court	Serves the Towns of Osceola and Farmington. Villages of Osceola and Dresser
Town of St. Croix Falls	Agreements to share public works equipment and staff, maintain Sand Lake Beach, and road maintenance agreement for Summit Street and Poplar Lane
Village of Dresser	Agreements to share public works equipment and staff
Village of Osceola	Road maintenance agreement for Cessna Drive, 248 th Street, and Simmons Drive

Source: Town of Osceola

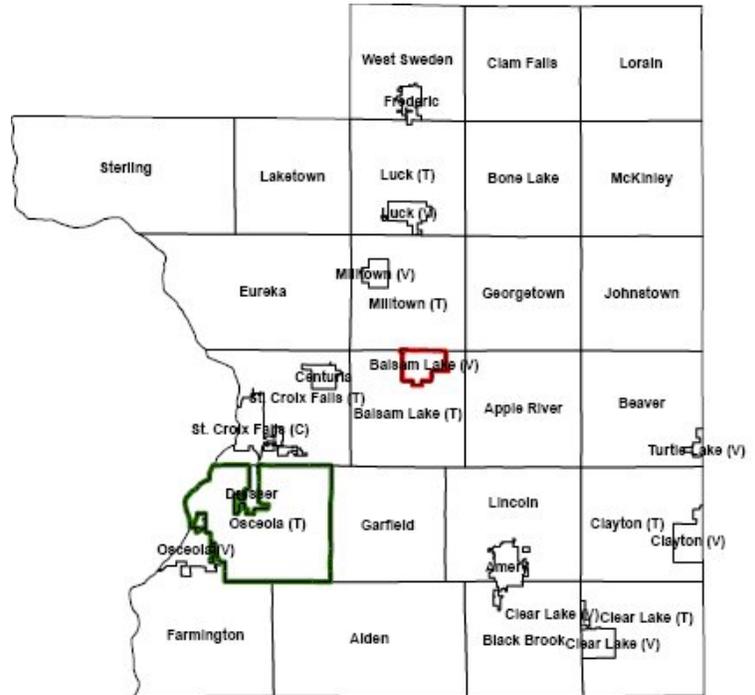
Adjacent Local Governments

The Town is located in southwestern Polk County and is bordered by the Towns of St. Croix Falls, Garfield, Farmington, Alden, and the Villages of Osceola and Dresser.

School Districts

The Town of Osceola is split into two school districts: Osceola School District and the St. Croix Falls School District (see School District map). A detailed discussion of each is included in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element. The Town is interested in assisting the school districts with facilitating educational opportunities concerning environmental and natural resources issues.

Figure 7.1: Polk County, Wisconsin



Source: Polk County (2008)

Libraries

No libraries exist within the Town of Osceola, but there are a number of resourceful libraries within a twenty minute drive from the Town of Osceola: Village of Osceola Public Library, Village of Dresser Public Library, Amery Public Library, and St. Croix Falls Public Library. Additional information about their location and services is included in the Utilities and Community Facilities element.

Road Maintenance

The Town contracts with private companies to complete major road maintenance on Town roads, but has the equipment to complete minor jobs such as patching and other repairs. The Town uses its own equipment to plow snow on Town roads.

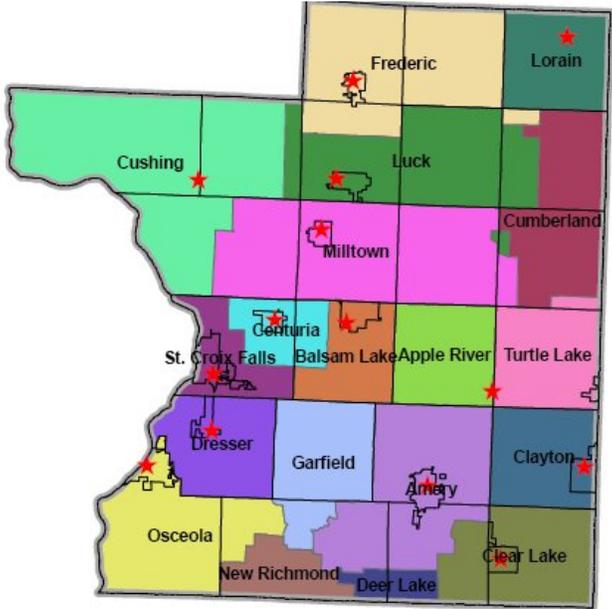
Police, Fire, and Rescue Services

The Polk County Sheriffs Department is responsible for emergency response and patrol activities in the Town of Osceola. In 2007, the Town of Osceola contracted with the Village of Osceola to have an officer patrol into the Town to supplement activities of the Polk County Sheriff. Additional information is included in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Dresser-Osceola-Garfield Fire Association (DOG) was created in 1960 under the mutual ownership of the Town of Osceola, the Town of Garfield, and the Village of Dresser. In addition, coverage to part of the Town of Alden is provided under a contract for service. Additional information is included in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element.

Figure 7.2: Polk County Fire Department coverage



Source: Polk County (2008)

Polk County

Polk County provides a number of services to the Town, including:

- Police protection
- Recycling services
- Completion of tax statements by County Treasurer
- Joint purchasing of supplies
- Economic Development
- Zoning/land use planning

Additional information on services that are offered by Polk County can be found on their website and on the Polk County Tourism website.

The County Board consists of 23 Supervisors; the county seat is located in the Village of Balsam Lake (see Figure 7.1). The Town of Osceola is included in sections of Districts 17, 18, and 20.

Regional and State Agencies

Table 7.2 provides information on the some of the most influential regional and state agencies that impact the way of life in the Town of Osceola:

Table 7.2: Regional and State Agencies

Level of Government	Agency/Department	Services Provided
Regional	West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)	economic and community development assistance; mapping
State	Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	environmental protection; recreation
State	Department of Commerce (DOC)	administers and enforces state laws regarding building construction, safety, and health
State	Department of Transportation (DOT)	planning and maintaining transportation systems; license renewal and vehicle registration
State	Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)	administer farmland preservation program and certain agricultural practices; has some regulatory power
State	Department of Revenue (DOR)	assess real estate

Intergovernmental Cooperation

State	Department of Administration (DOA)	provides numerous support services for planning purposes
Other	Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA)	non-partisan, non-profit organization to protect the interest's of Towns; provides training and publications
Other	1,000 Friends of Wisconsin	promotes policy development and advocacy through research and information sharing

Source: WCWRPC, State of Wisconsin, WTA

Ideas for how to combine and cooperate with services

- Voluntary assistance (mutual aid)
- Renting equipment
- Sharing municipal staff
- Trading services
- Contracting
- Consolidating services

Existing and Potential Conflicts

At this time the Town of Osceola does not have any existing conflicts relating to intergovernmental cooperation. Potential conflicts in the future include the following:

- Maintenance of adjoining roads
- Annexation issues with the Villages of Osceola and Dresser
- Extraterritorial Zoning and Cooperative Boundary Agreements
- Potential extension of municipal sewer and water
- Fire Department service area limits
- County acquisitions of Town roads

Conflict Resolution

The Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element address a process that the community can use to resolve conflicts.

Recommended methods for conflict resolution include:

- Mediation
- Binding arbitration
- Non-binding arbitration
- Early neutral evaluation
- Focus group
- Mini-trial
- Moderated settlement conference
- Summary jury-trial

SWOT Analysis: Intergovernmental Cooperation

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good working relationships with adjacent municipalities and other government units • Cost savings as a result of shared services, equipment 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough cooperation to share services • Communication with various agencies and government units • Duplication of services
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish more agreements to share services with neighboring municipalities • Shared sewer and water facilities • Shared park and recreation facilities and collaboration on future planning efforts • Implementation on broader issues 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition for tax base • Annexation • Land Use conflicts • Loss of local control • Liability of binding agreements

Goals, Objectives, Implementation

Goal: Establish a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationships with adjacent municipalities and governmental units.

Objectives:

- Work with other local governments, state agencies, school districts, lake associations, etc. on land use and community development issues of mutual concern.
- Maintain open communication.
- Minimize costs of services and facilities.
- Offer a forum for joint meetings.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Continue to meet with the Villages of Osceola and Dresser concerning land use planning issues.
- Inventory the Town’s Public Works equipment and distribute to adjacent municipalities.
- Work with the County and DNR to prepare more detailed inventories and locations of natural resources, wildlife habitats, and environmentally sensitive areas.

LAND USE

Introduction

The Land Use Element relates to all other elements and determines how the Town wants to grow in the next five, ten, fifteen, and twenty years. This element describes existing land use patterns and sets forth a plan for future land use that is consistent with the Town's vision. The identified future land use guides the Plan Commission, the Town Board, property owners, developers, and others in decisions relating to the type, location, and density of future development in the community. It also serves as the basis for updating the ordinances, regulations, and other implementation tools.

According to the *Guide to Community Planning in Wisconsin*, "planning is a way to improve local decisions that affect land." Sound land use planning can:

- Provide a way to make more informed decisions
- Coordinate individual decisions and actions so that development decisions complement each other rather than detract from one another
- Provide facts on current conditions and trends
- Assist communities in evaluating future development proposals in light of community objectives
- Explore alternatives
- Provide a common framework for dealing with community change

Community Survey

A majority (53%) of Osceola respondents have no opinion about how well land use regulations are being enforced in the Town. As shown in Figure 8.1, among those with an opinion, there is no clear pattern; 23 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they are dissatisfied, but a similar percentage indicated they were satisfied. The large proportion of those with no opinion is not surprising, since most people are unlikely to have had the need to be involved with the enforcement of land use regulations unless they have requested a variance or rezoning.

Respondents were also asked questions about the minimum lot size for residential development (see Figure 8.2). Half the respondents believe that the one acre minimum lot size should be uniform across the Town rather than be allowed to vary based the

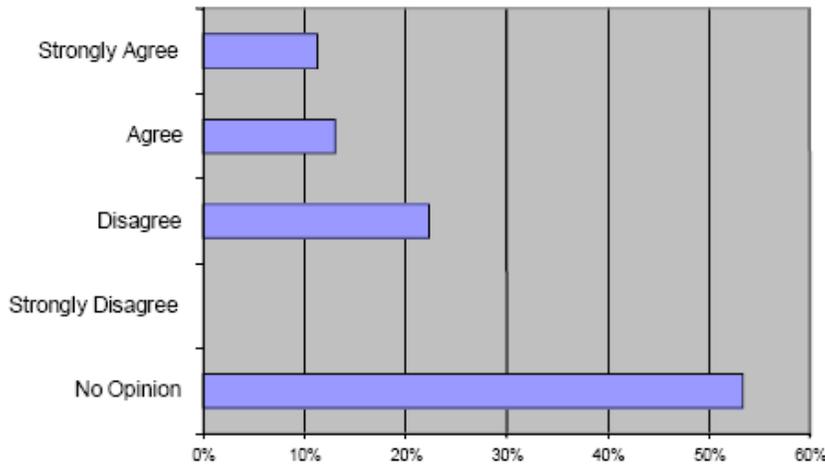
Land Use Element Requirements:

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, based on the background information specified in par. (a), 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. The element shall also include a series of maps that shows current land uses and future land uses that indicate productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for building site development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, the boundaries of areas to which services of public utilities and community facilities, as those terms are used in par. (d), will be provided in the future, consistent with the timetable described in par. (d), and the general location of future land uses by net density or other classifications.

§66.1001(2)(h), Wis Stats

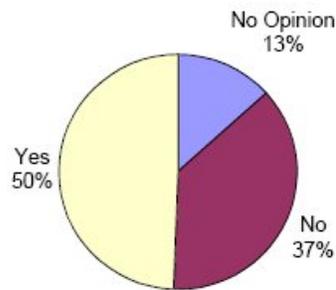
circumstances of the location. The other half consisted of a substantial minority (37%) who believe the minimum lot size should be variable and those with no opinion (13%).

Figure 8.1: Dissatisfied with enforcement of land use regulations in the town



Source: Town of Osceola Community Survey (2008)

Figure 8.2: Should one acre minimum lot size be uniform throughout the Town



Source: Town of Osceola Community Survey (2008)

The 37 percent of respondents who favored deviations from a uniform minimum lot size were asked a follow up question if they support a different lot size in four specific situations. Two situations were for reduced minimum lot sizes, while the other two called for increased lot sizes. Among those who favor varying the minimum lot size, the highest level of agreement was to increase the minimum lot size in environmentally sensitive areas and to preserve wildlife corridors; over 80 percent said they agreed or strongly agreed. There was substantial support for reducing lot sizes adjacent to higher density local communities such as Dresser and Osceola; two of three respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Respondents were less sure about reducing lot sizes if shared septic systems were used; slightly less than half agreed or strongly agreed. Thus it appears that Town of Osceola respondents who favor a variation of the minimum lot size were most interested in raising the requirement when doing so protects a natural resource and were lukewarm to reducing the lot size when they have concerns about potential negative environmental impact (see Table 8.1).

There were some demographic variations among those who favor a flexible minimum lot size. Retired respondents were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with varying the lot size adjacent to higher density communities, while those who have completed formal post-secondary education were more likely to agree or strongly agree. Non-resident land owners, those 45 plus years old, and respondents with post-secondary education were more likely to agree or strongly agree that minimum lot sizes should be reduced if shared septic systems were available. Single-adult households had a smaller proportion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with increasing the minimum lot size in environmentally sensitive areas. Retired respondents were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with increasing the minimum lot size to preserve wildlife corridors, while those from households with over \$50,000 annual income were more likely to agree or strongly agree with increasing the lot size to protect wildlife corridors.

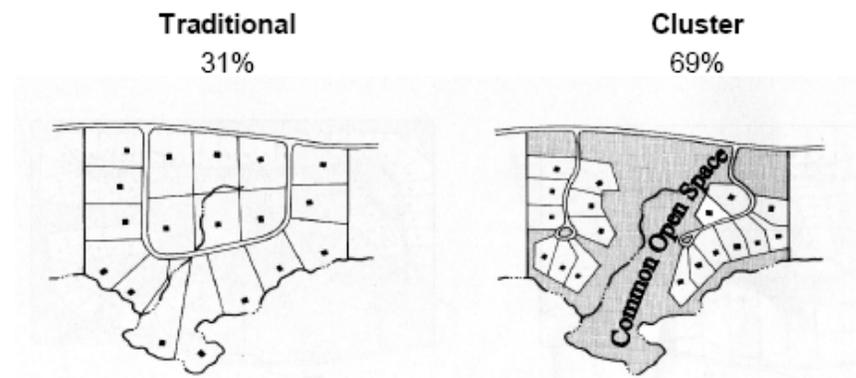
Table 8.1: Opinions about variations in the one acre minimum lot size

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Smaller lot sizes adjacent to higher density local communities	189	16%	49%	15%	14%	5%
Smaller lot sizes with shared septic	190	10%	38%	25%	16%	11%
Larger lot sizes in environmentally sensitive areas	190	34%	47%	8%	4%	6%
Larger lot sizes to preserve wildlife corridors	188	42%	40%	6%	5%	6%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Survey (2008)

Respondents also asked for their preference for the layout of rural housing lots. They were shown diagrams of a traditional rural housing development with large individual lots and a “cluster” development with smaller lots and preserved common open space. As shown in Figure 8.3, Town of Osceola respondents clearly prefer the cluster layout to the traditional design by a margin exceeding two-to-one. The following is a typical comment regarding this question: *“I am very strongly in favor of cluster housing. This is the best way to allow for residential developments while preserving open spaces for recreation, farming, and preservation of natural resources.”*

Figure 8.3: Preference for the layout of rural housing



Source: Town of Osceola Community Survey (2008)

Existing Land Use

Table 8.2 breaks down the number of assessed acres in the Town of Osceola according to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. The table shows changes in assessed land uses between 2000 and 2005.

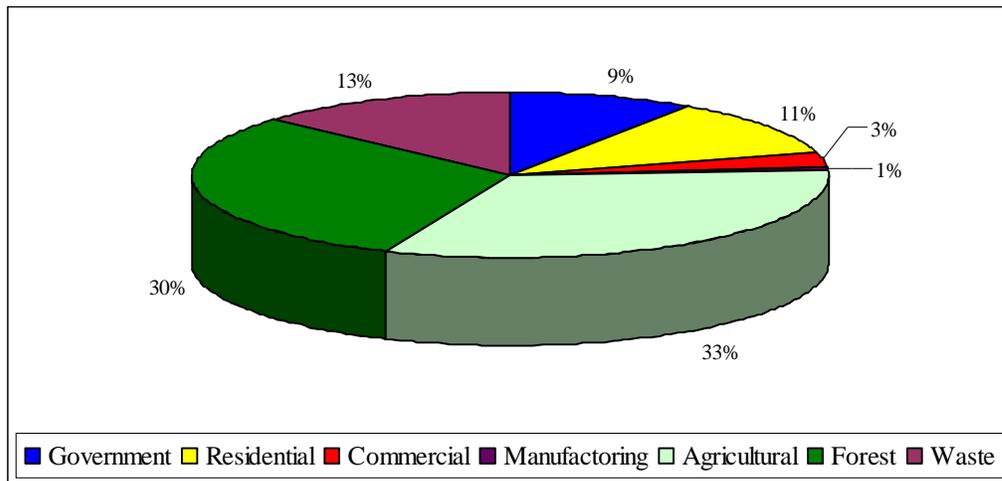
Table 8.2: Town of Osceola assessed land use acreage (2000-2005)

Use (assessed)	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Percent Change (2000-2005)
Government	0	0	0	2,026	2,076	2,076	(X)
Residential	3,108	3,214	3,461	3,722	2,413	2,526	-18.7%
Commercial	597	606	606	612	599	611	2.3%
Manufacturing	162	162	162	162	162	163	0.6%
Agricultural	8,395	7,985	7,800	7,543	7,246	7,161	-14.7%
Swamp/Waste	2,991	2,987	2,835	2,831	2,872	2,874	-3.9%
Forest	4,870	5,223	5,240	5,239	6,779	6,748	38.6%
Other	141	138	138	113	104	101	-28.4%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Figure 8.4 shows the breakdown of assessed land uses in the Town of Osceola for 2005. Agricultural (33%) and forest (30%) land uses dominated the total acreage for the Town, while residential land use occupied just 11% in 2005.

Figure 8.4: Town of Osceola assessed land use acreages (2005)



Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Land Use Classification

The Existing Land Use map was created using digital parcel data from the Polk County Land Information Department and 2007 tax roll data from the Polk County Treasurer and Town Assessor. The land use classifications are based on the assessment code given to each parcel in the tax roll data and are detailed in Wis. Stats. §70.32(2)a. Some parcels are not included in the tax roll and were not assessed, for those parcels aerial images were used to interpret the appropriate land use. The following land use classifications are included on the Existing and Future Land Use maps:

- **Residential:** Parcels of untilled land that is not suitable for the production of row crops, on which a dwelling or other form of human abode is located and which is not otherwise classified. Parcels of land that were assessed residential do not contain any land assessed as agricultural. Many of the larger parcels (over 4 acres) could also have a significant amount of forest or undeveloped assessed acres.
- **Commercial:** Parcels used for commercial purposes; including wholesale and general retail, financial institutions, indoor recreation and entertainment, and gravel pits and landscape materials operations. Parcels with any commercial assessed property were entirely identified as commercial in order to make their appearance well known on the map. This means that commercial assessed land does not necessarily comprise the majority use on some of the parcels.
- **Manufacturing/Industrial:** Parcels used in basalt mining, manufacturing, assembling, processing, fabricating, making or milling tangible personal property for profit. Manufacturing land uses also includes warehouses, storage facilities and office structures when the predominant use of the warehouses, storage facilities and offices is in support of the manufacturing property.
- **Agricultural:** Parcels, exclusive of buildings and improvements, which are devoted primarily to agricultural use. These areas include all land under cultivation for row crops and small grains, and livestock operations.
- **Farmstead:** Parcels that have both residential and agricultural assessed land. This category is meant to distinguish between large lot residential parcels and parcels that are primarily used for agriculture but also contain some residential assessed acreage; it is not a statutorily defined category.
- **Undeveloped:** Parcels of land that include bog, marsh, lowland brush, and uncultivated land zoned as shoreland. The undeveloped class replaced the “waste/swamp” category in 2004. It includes all wetlands and areas with soils of the type indentified on soil maps as mineral soils that are “somewhat poorly drained,” “poorly drained,” or “very poorly drained,” or “water,” and areas where aquatic or semi-aquatic vegetation is dominant. Undeveloped land also includes fallow tillable land, ponds, depleted gravel pits, and land that, because of soil or site conditions, is not producing or capable of producing commercial forest products. Parcels that are not assessed under any of the other categories and contain no structures were also labeled as undeveloped.

Land Use:

A representation of physical uses of land by categories such as residential, commercial, industrial, or agriculture.

Zoning:

A representation of the boundaries for which a certain set of standards applies, as adopted by the local governing body. Zoning districts are governed by the Zoning Code which outlines permitted uses, lot density, setbacks, design standards, etc.

- **Forest:** Parcels that have any amount of land assessed as forest and do not contain any land assessed as residential, commercial, or agricultural. This category combines agricultural forest and productive forest land, which are both statutorily defined categories.
- **Utility:** Parcels owned and used by utility companies. This is not a statutorily defined category.
- **Public/Institutional:** Parcels owned by the Town, County, School District, or churches and cemeteries.
- **Transportation:** Parcels owned by the Town, County, or DOT which are lands that are included in the right of way or apparent gaps abutting existing roadways.

Land Supply

According to the Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, farms and forests continue to dominate Wisconsin despite population growth and development pressures. In 2005, more than four out of every five acres of private land was either covered in forest or used for agricultural production. In contrast, developed lands, including residential, commercial, and manufacturing, accounted for only 9% of all private lands. Although farmland and forest lands are on the decline, development is not entirely making up the difference. Of the land that was taken from farmland and forest lands, about half was developed, leaving the other half as fallow, undeveloped ground. In recent years, Wisconsin has developed a number of policies in order to preserve these working lands. Use-value assessment or land-use taxation has been a main component of this. Over the past six years, farmland has been assessed by its value in production, and not its value on the open market.

The Town of Osceola, like most rural municipalities, has an abundance of available land. However, there are a handful natural and man-made factors that influence development.

Soil Limitations

Soil properties influence the development of building sites, including the selection of the site, the design of the structure, construction, performance after construction, and maintenance. The USDA Polk County Soil Survey identifies soil limitations for various types of buildings. These limitations are labeled as slight, moderate, and severe. The ratings for dwellings are based on the soil properties that affect the capacity of the soil to support a load without movement and on the properties that affect excavation and construction costs. The properties that affect the load-supporting capacity include depth to water table, ponding, flooding, subsidence, linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential), and compressibility. The properties that affect the ease and amount of excavation include depth to water table, ponding, flooding, slope, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, and the amount and size of rock fragments. Many of these features can be found on the maps included in the Appendix.

Land Cover

As described in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element; a great deal of land in the Town of Osceola is covered by surface water, wetland, or floodplain. These lands are not viable to develop, but contribute a great deal of financial, environmental, aesthetic, and recreational value to the Town.

Land Demand

Table 8.3 breaks down the number of acres per capita for each land use classification in the Town of Osceola. Land use per capita is obtained by dividing existing land uses by the population. This information can help predict future land demand for particular uses.

Table 8.3: Town of Osceola acres per capita (2005)

Use (accessed)	Acres per capita
Government	0.77
Residential	0.94
Commercial	0.23
Manufacturing	0.06
Agricultural	2.67
Swamp/Waste/Other	1.11
Forest	2.52

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Stevens Engineers, Inc.

Redevelopment Opportunities

Redevelopment opportunities are parcels of land that had been previously developed and built upon, but are now abandoned or underutilized. Because the Town is mostly rural and undeveloped and surrounds two Villages, there is little opportunity for redevelopment.

Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts

Some examples of existing and potential land use conflicts include:

- Multi-family housing in rural areas
- Motorized recreation in rural areas
- Residential development within agricultural areas
- Increased traffic along local roads
- Increased lakeshore development degrading environmental quality
- Quarry operations locating close to residential areas
- Increased demand for large-scale commercial, industrial or agricultural operation

As shown in Table 8.4, most Osceola respondents don't feel that conflicts between farm operations and neighboring residences about noise, dust or odors are a substantial problem. Only 17 percent agreed or strongly agreed that these conflicts are common, while a majority disagreed or strongly disagreed. More than one in four had no opinion

about this issue. More than seven in ten respondents agree or strongly agree that agricultural uses should not be restricted because of proximity to residences. Not surprisingly, a larger proportion of farmland owners said they agree or strongly agree that agricultural uses should not be restricted because residences are nearby. As one respondent said, “Don't tell me I can't have a rooster who crows or a pig whose waste smells.”

Table 8.4: Opinions about proximity of houses to agricultural operations

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Conflicts (dust, noise, odors) between farms and neighbors are common	460	3%	14%	44%	11%	27%
Ag uses should not be restricted because of proximity to residences	460	28%	43%	16%	5%	7%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Survey (2008)

Some Wisconsin towns have put programs in place to purchase the development rights of farmland, open space, or important natural areas. As shown in Table 8.5, two-thirds of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the use of the Town’s public funds for this type of program. A related program attempts to preserve farmland, open space, or important natural area by the use of the transfer of development rights among private land owners. Town of Osceola respondents had split opinions about this type of program; 44 percent agreed or strongly agreed and 45 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed. A higher proportion of retired respondents disagreed with the Town’s use of either of these programs.

Table 8.5: Opinions about purchase and transfer of development rights

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Use public funds for purchase of development rights	457	33%	35%	26%	0%	7%
Allow transfer of development rights between property owners	459	34%	10%	45%	0%	11%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Survey (2008)

Private Property Rights

The intent of this plan is to respect private property rights by showing the entire planning process and making the rationale behind land use decisions transparent to the public. If a landowner disagrees with the existing land use map, future land use map, or any other part of this plan, they have the right to petition the Town to amend the document. Any amendments would occur through a public process, including a public hearing (see Implementation Element).

As shown in Table 8.6, a majority of Osceola respondents do not believe that property owners should be allowed to develop their land any way they want (63%). Residents who have lived in the Town more that 15 years were more likely to believe that land

Land Use

owners should be able to develop their land any way they want and male respondents were more likely to disagree that there should be restrictions on how much of their land a property owner should be allowed to develop.

Table 8.6: Opinions about property rights

Use	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Land owners should be allowed to develop any way they want	455	15%	22%	42%	20%	2%
Land owners should have restrictions on how much of their land they can develop	459	12%	46%	25%	12%	5%
Land owners should be able to subdivide their land consistent with minimum lot size regulations	454	13%	51%	23%	8%	6%

Source: Town of Osceola Community Survey (2008)

Land Use Projections

Using the acres per capita figures calculated when looking at land demand, the number of future residential and commercial land needed in the Town can be calculated. Table 8.7 shows the additional acreage needed to accommodate the projected population growth in the Town. Between 2005 and 2030, about 1,900 acres will be converted to residential land use. Based on the land use trends shown in Table 8.9, the majority of new residential land will come from existing agricultural land, as well as some forest land. Please note that these projections account for only land that is assessed as residential. For example, a new home constructed in the middle of a five acre field would account for a small amount of space (residentially assessed acres), but the location of the house may force the entire field to be unfarmable.

An informal analysis of available lots in existing subdivisions revealed that there are approximately 300 currently available at the time this plan was adopted. In order to preserve more land for open space and farmland preservation, the Town would favor infill development on these lots prior to the development of additional large subdivisions. Factoring in the approximate acreage of the existing available lots, the Town can anticipate having to absorb approximately 1,600 acres of additional residential land uses by 2030.

Table 8.7: Town of Osceola future residential land use projections (2010-2030)

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Total Acres Needed by 2030
Projected Population	2,681	3,078	3,506	3,934	4,338	4,700	
Residential Acres	2,526.0	2,900.0	3,303.6	3,706.6	4,087.2	4,428.3	
Additional Acres Needed	(X)	374.0	403.6	403.0	380.6	341.1	1,902.3

Source: Stevens Engineers, Inc.

Table 8.8 shows the same projections for commercially assessed acres. The Town has two large commercially-assessed operations: Trollhaugen Ski area and Krooked Kreek Golf Course; they combine for a total of approximately 334.2 acres. Since over half of

the commercially assessed acres in the Town are contained in just two uses, they were removed from the total commercial acres in 2005 used to project the amount of additional acres the Town needs by 2030. Based on the number of acres per capita of commercial land in 2005; the Town is looking at an increase of about 208.5 acres.

Table 8.8: Town of Osceola future commercial land use projections (2010-2030)

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Total Acres Needed by 2025
Projected Population	2,681	3,078	3,506	3,934	4,338	4,700	
Commercial Acres	276.8	317.8	362.0	406.2	447.9	485.3	
Additional Acres Needed	(X)	41.0	44.2	44.2	41.7	37.4	208.5

Source: Stevens Engineers, Inc.

According to a 2006 Program on Agricultural Technology Studies (PATs) report on agricultural land use trends, from 2000-2005 Polk County lost approximately 17,230 acres of agricultural land, which accounted for approximately 4% of agricultural land lost statewide. Combined with St. Croix and Barron Counties, the region accounts for just 6% of the state’s agricultural land, but accounted for 12% of the statewide agricultural land conversion from 2000-2005. The loss of approximately 7% of farmland a year over the five year period is nearly 70% faster than in the State as a whole. According to PATs and the Department of Revenue, residential development caused 44% of farmland conversion in Polk County, which was more than Barron County (24%) and less than St. Croix County (53%). Table 8.9 shows the amount of agricultural land projected to be converted to other land uses by the year 2030 in the Town of Osceola.

Table 8.9: Town of Osceola future agricultural land use conversion (2000-2030)

	Acres lost	Percent loss	Acreage lost since 2000	Percent lost since 2000	Remaining acres at end of period	Remaining percent of 2000 acreage at end of period
2000-2006	1,281	15.3%	1,281	15.3%	7,114	84.7%
2006-2010	743	10.5%	2,024	24.1%	6,371	75.9%
2010-2020	1,536	24.1%	3,561	44.6%	4,424	55.4%
2020-2030	1,067	24.1%	4,628	59.3%	3,172	40.7%

Source: UW Extension, Stevens Engineers, Inc.

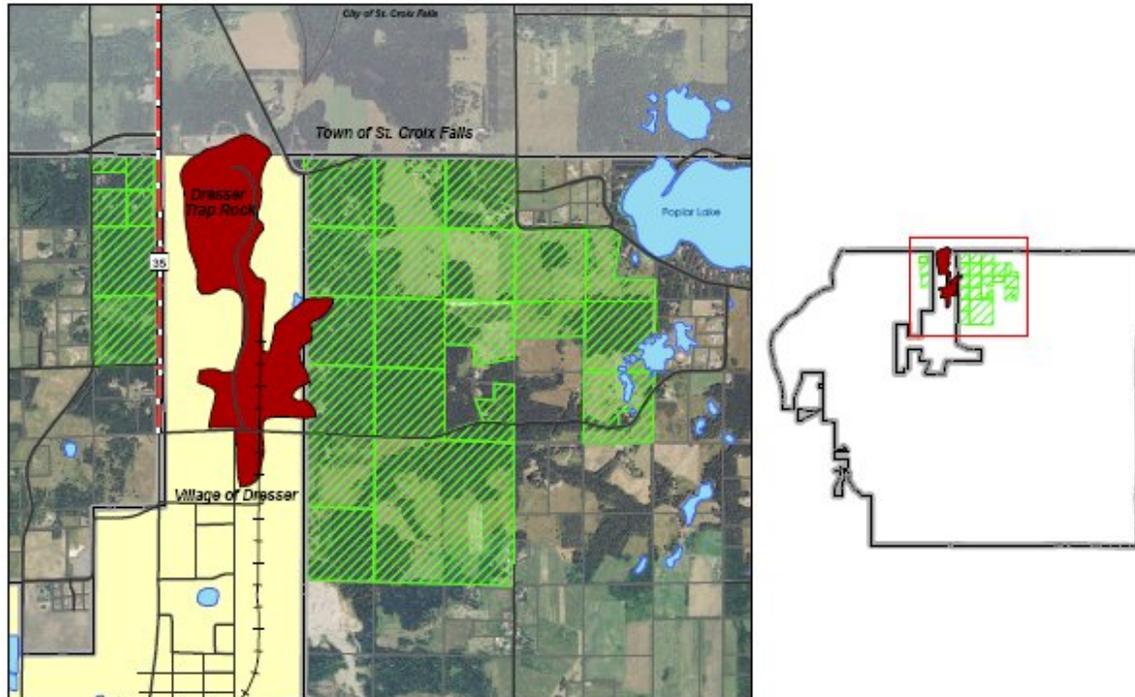
Preferred Future Land Use

A Preferred Land Use (or Future Land Use) map is a community’s visual guide to future planning. It is meant to be a map of what the community would like to happen. The map is not the same as a zoning map or an official map and is not a prediction of the future. The preferred land use map brings together all of the elements in the comprehensive plan. The decision where to locate future development in order to meet growth demands over the next twenty years was made by using a number of maps and information from other elements of this Comprehensive Plan.

As shown on the Future Land Use map, the primary area suggested for future residential growth is located in the southwest portion of the Town. This area was chosen because of its proximity to the Village of Osceola and other subdivisions and because of its access to existing transportation infrastructure. The decision to concentrate the majority of future

residential development in the southwest portion of the Town was made in order to preserve other areas for open space, forest and agricultural preservation. Also influencing this decision was the significant amount of available land in the northwest portion of the Town that is owned by Dresser Trap Rock (shown in green in Figure 8.5). The Town considered this land to be unavailable and undesirable for potential future residential or commercial development. Future commercial development on the Future Land Use map was located along the major transportation corridors in the Town.

Figure 8.5: Parcels owned by Dresser Trap Rock in the Town of Osceola



Source: Town of Osceola, Town Assessor (2009)

Basalt (Trap Rock) Mining

Dresser Trap Rock currently operates a large-scale basalt mining operation in the Village of Dresser and a small portion of the Town of Osceola. It is the Town's position that in order to promote high-quality rural housing, separate incompatible land uses, and respect landowner's rights that allowing any new basalt (trap rock) mining operations in the Town would likely make those goals difficult to attain. The significant population growth that has occurred and is projected to occur in the Town by 2030 will make it difficult for such an operation to exist without disrupting a number of residences.

When new mining operations are proposed, the Town intends to use the Future Land Use map to identify areas where potential land use conflicts exist with current and future uses. The Town also intends to use the maps contained in this plan to support rezoning those areas in the future to zoning districts that do not allow non-metallic mining. The Town acknowledges and respects landowner's rights to register their property as having a

Marketable Non-metallic Mineral Deposit. It is understood that those properties cannot be rezoned while the registration is in effect. However, the Town could advocate for rezoning those properties that are re-applying for registration, if no active mining has begun on the land, in order to implement the goals of the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

Land Use Workshop

In order to promote public participation in the comprehensive planning process, the Town of Osceola Plan Commission hosted an open house and land use workshop during their April 2009 meeting. The Plan Commission presented the Draft Future Land Use map and their methodology behind it; attendees were then invited to provide comments about the map and the Town's Comprehensive Plan. A SWOT Analysis was not conducted.

Land Use Regulations

Polk County

The Town currently uses Polk County zoning, which covers the administration costs. Polk County currently has three major land use ordinances:

- **Comprehensive Land Use Ordinance**

The Comprehensive Land Use Ordinance was adopted by the County in 1971 and has been considered long out of date. The County's zoning ordinance identifies ten land use districts:

- Residential District
- Agricultural District (A-1)
- Exclusive Agricultural District (A-2)
- Conservancy District
- Commercial District (C-1)
- Restricted Commercial District (C-2)
- Industrial District (I-1)
- Restricted Industrial District (I-2)
- Recreational District
- Forestry District

- **Subdivision Ordinance**

Polk County established a subdivision ordinance as part of its land use regulations on July 1, 1996. These regulations provide an overlay district on top of the regular zoning ordinance. Polk County defines subdivisions as the division of a piece of property that results in one or more parcels or building sites that are five acres or smaller in size. According to the County Statute, Town comprehensive plans will be given review consideration, but the responsibility for enforcing the plans belongs "primarily" to the Town. Also included in the County language is requirement that

developers proposing subdivisions complete and submit to the County a “town government checklist,” which takes roads, culverts, surface drainage, erosion control, and soil permeability standards into consideration.

- **Shoreland Protection Zoning Ordinance**

All counties are mandated by Wisconsin law to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land-use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the county outside of villages and cities. This ordinance supersedes any town ordinance, unless the town ordinance is more restrictive. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the landward side of a floodplain whichever distance is greater.

Town Zoning

The Town could write its own zoning ordinance after being approved by the County Board. Local zoning would give the greatest amount of control over zoning decisions. The Town would have to cover the administration costs, which would include a zoning administrator (part-time) and enforcement of the ordinance (including legal expenses). These costs could potentially be shared among neighboring townships that do not use County zoning. The Town would have the option of opting out of County zoning when the Comprehensive Land Use Ordinance is updated and readopted by the County Board.

Airport Overlay Zoning

The Village of Osceola Airport Commission enacted an Airport Overlay Zoning Ordinance in 2009. The ordinance applies additional conditions and restrictions to the specified area while retaining the existing base zoning classification. The purpose of the overlay ordinance is to protect the airport from incompatible land uses that could interfere with airport operations and to protect public safety and investment. The overlay extends three miles from the airport. It combines the existing height limitations already in place to create four overlay districts:

- Airport District
- Runway Approach and Departure District
- Noise Control/Overflight District
- Height Limitation District

Goals, Objectives, Implementation

Goal: Encourage land uses that will maintain the Town’s rural and agricultural character, protect natural resources, and respect property owner’s rights.

Objectives:

- Maintain consistency in land use planning.

- Respect private property owner's rights.
- Separate incompatible land uses.
- Promote orderly growth and encourage infill development.
- Allow commercial development along major transportation corridors.
- Encourage public participation.
- Land use decisions and policies should attempt to conceal and concentrate future residential growth.
- Land use decisions and policies should increase conservation and recreational land uses.
- Discourage subdivision development next to existing agricultural farmsteads.
- Protect undeveloped lakeshore property from dense residential development.
- Educate landowners on available land use options.

Implementation (Policies and Programs):

- Use all means necessary to ensure that any new non-metallic mining operations are compatible with surrounding existing and preferred future land uses.
- Identify areas where basalt (trap rock) mining operations would be incompatible with existing and preferred future land uses.
- Work with the Villages of Osceola and Dresser to establish uniform commercial architectural design standards along transportation corridors, including light pollution abatement.
- Analyze farmland preservation and working land initiatives and strategies to implement in the Town.
- Provide fact sheets to residents concerning available land conservation options.
- Review Polk County Shoreland Protection Ordinance and provide a fact sheet concerning lakeshore property-owner responsibilities.
- Review Polk County Comprehensive Land Use Ordinance and review future zoning options in the Town.
- Review Town Subdivision Ordinance for possible incorporation of conservation subdivision development standards.
- Explore adopting a Town Zoning Ordinance.
- Review and update for consistency with this plan as rules and regulations change.

IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

This element should be looked at as a “to do” list which compiles all the elements together and gives the plan some “teeth.” The implementation element gives decision makers, landowners, non-profit organizations, and others the ability to turn a plan into action.

Plan Adoption

As stated in the Public Participation Plan, the adoption of the Town of Osceola Comprehensive Plan involves the consent of the Plan Commission, the Town Board, and the public. By adopting this plan, the entire Town of Osceola recognizes it’s commitment to uphold the plan and ensure the implementation of the goals, objectives, policies, and programs that were developed in the plan.

Plan Monitoring, Amendments, and Update

It is the major function of the Town of Osceola Plan Commission to prepare and amend the comprehensive plan as well as coordinate and oversee that the implementation measures are accomplished. Because the comprehensive plan addresses many different areas of the community, the plan commission cannot control implementation without assistance from the entire community. As identified in the Implementation Matrix, the Plan Commission has chosen to assign specific implementation activities to the Town Board, particularly ones which involve drafting Town ordinances.

Plan Monitoring

Once adopted, all land use actions must be consistent with the Town of Osceola Comprehensive Plan. In order to achieve this, the Town should evaluate decisions regarding development, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions from the goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the Town of Osceola Comprehensive Plan.

Plan Amendments

Amendments to be made following the adoption of the Town of Osceola Comprehensive Plan are generally defined as minor or major. Minor amendments are generally limited to changes to maps or general text. Major amendments are defined as any change to the Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs, or the Future Land Use Map. Major amendments

Implementation Element Requirements:

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, to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs contained in pars. (a) to (h). 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.

§66.1001(2)(i) Wis. Stat.

Implementation

will require at a minimum a public hearing to gather input from the community. Any amendment to the Town of Osceola Comprehensive Plan must be adopted by ordinance.

Plan Updates

The State requires that comprehensive plans are updated no less than once every ten years. Compared to an amendment, an update involves a significant change of the text and maps. Because the Town of Osceola Comprehensive Plan relied heavily on the 2000 Census, much of the data collected is already out-of-date. In order to keep the demographic and projection data up-to-date, these statistics should be updated immediately after every United States Census Report. These updates should be made in addition to the required ten year updates to spread out the work load.

Consistency among Plan Elements

The State Comprehensive Planning statutes require plans to describe how each of the elements of the comprehensive plan will be integrated and made consistent with each other. Because the Town of Osceola conducted a SWOT Analysis on every element, the Plan Commission was able to compare the results of each element to each other to ensure consistency among the beliefs reflected in the goals, objectives, policies, and programs.

Implementation Toolbox

The following list contains specific methods of implementation that could be available to the Town of Osceola:

Zoning Ordinance

The idea of zoning is to separate incompatible land uses. It addresses use, bulk, and density of land development. A general zoning ordinance is probably the most common implementation tool. There are many different types of zoning. Communities may need help from a professional planner to administer these ordinances.

Subdivision Ordinance

State subdivision regulations provide minimum standards and procedures for dividing and recording parcels of land in a community. State agencies are authorized to review and object to local subdivisions on the basis of minimum requirements for sanitation, street access and platting. Wisconsin counties, towns, cities, and villages are also authorized to adopt local land division ordinances that are more restrictive than state subdivision standards. These ordinances often focus on the design and physical layout of a development and may require developers to provide public improvements such as roads, utilities, landscaping or signage. Together with zoning, which focuses on the uses of land in a community, land division and subdivision regulations help to control the physical layout and quality of new developments.

Eminent Domain

Eminent domain allows government to take private property for public purposes, even if the owner does not consent, if the government compensates the property owner for their loss. Local governments may use eminent domain to acquire critical natural resource lands.

Conservation Subdivision Design

A conservation design (cluster development) is a type of “Planned Unit Development” in which the underlying zoning and subdivision ordinances are modified to allow buildings (usually residences) to be grouped together on part of the site while permanently protecting the remainder of the site from development. This type of development provides great flexibility of design to fit site-specific resource protection needs. Conservation design creates the same number of residences under current community zoning and subdivision regulations or offers a density bonus to encourage this type of development. There is a savings in development costs due to less road surface, shorter utility runs, less grading and other site preparation costs. Municipalities also experience lower long-term maintenance costs for the same reasons. The preserved land may be owned and managed by a homeowners association, a land trust or the municipality.

Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is an incentive-based legal agreement that is voluntarily placed on a piece of property to restrict the development, management, or use of the land in order to protect a resource or to allow the public use of private land as in the case of a trail or water access.

Purchasing of Development Rights (PDR)

Purchasing development rights is an incentive based, voluntary program with the intent of permanently protecting productive, sensitive, or aesthetic landscapes, yet retaining private ownership and management. A landowner sells the development rights of a parcel to a public agency, land trust, or unit of government. A conservation easement is recorded on the title of the property that limits development permanently. While the right to develop or subdivide that land is permanently restricted, the land owner retains all other rights and responsibilities with that land and can use or sell it for purposes allowed in the easement. PDR programs and conservation easements do not necessarily require public access, though it may be granted as part of the agreement or be a requirement of the funding source.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is a voluntary, incentive-based program that allows landowners to sell development rights from their land to a developer or other interested party who then can use these rights to increase the density of development at

another designated location. While the seller of development rights still owns the land and can continue using it, an easement is placed on the property that prevents further development. A TDR program protects land resources while at the same time providing additional income to both the landowner and the holder of the development rights.

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND)

The Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning law defines Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) to mean: A compact, mixed use neighborhood where residential, commercial and civic buildings are within close proximity to each other. It is a planning concept based on traditional small towns and city neighborhoods. The variety of uses permits educational facilities, civic buildings and commercial establishments to be located within walking distance of private homes. A TND is served by a network of paths, streets, and lanes designed for pedestrians as well as vehicles. Residents have the option of walking, biking, or driving to places within their neighborhood. Potential future modes of transit are also considered during the planning stages. Public and private spaces have equal importance, creating a balanced community that serves a wide range of home and business owners. The inclusion of civic buildings and civic space such as plazas, greens, parks, and squares enhances community identity and value. Such neighborhoods allow the efficient use of public resources and can help preserve the historic and architectural character of the community.

Planned Unit Development (PUD)

The term Planned Unit Development (PUD) is used to describe a type of development and the regulatory process that permits a developer to meet overall community density and land use goals without being bound by existing zoning requirements. PUD is a special type of floating overlay district which generally does not appear on the municipal zoning map until a designation is requested. This is applied at the time a project is approved and may include provisions to encourage clustering of buildings, designation of common open space, and incorporation of a variety of building types and mixed land uses. A PUD is planned and built as a unit thus fixing the type and location of uses and buildings over the entire project. Potential benefits of a PUD include more efficient site design, preservation of amenities such as open space, lower costs for street construction and utility extension for the developer and lower maintenance costs for the municipality.

Overlay Zoning

Overlay zoning is a regulatory tool that creates a special zoning district, placed over an existing base zone(s), which identifies special provisions in addition to those in the underlying base zone. The overlay district can share common boundaries with the base zone or cut across the base zone boundaries. Regulations or incentives are attached to the overlay district to protect a specific resource or guide development within a special area.

Density Bonuses

A density bonus is an incentive-based tool that permits developers to increase the maximum allowable development on a property in exchange for helping the community achieve public policy goals. Increasing development density may allow for increases in developed square footage or increases in the number of developed units. This tool works best in areas where growth pressures are strong and land availability is limited or when incentives for attaining the goals outweigh alternative development options.

Official Maps

These maps can show existing and planned public facilities among other things. They can also be used to restrict the issuance of building permits within the limits of the mapped area; often by depicting classes of land.

Comprehensive Planning

A comprehensive plan is the adopted official statement of a legislative body of a local government that sets forth (in words, maps, illustrations and/or tables) goals, policies and guidelines intended to direct the present and future physical, social and economic development that occurs within its planning jurisdiction and that includes a unified physical design for the public and private development of land and water.

Economic/Environmental Impact Analysis

Growth has often been viewed as healthy and desirable for communities because it often leads to additional jobs; increased income for residents; a broader tax base; and the enhancement of cultural amenities such as libraries and parks. But growth may also be accompanied by costs such as increased fiscal expenditures for necessary public services and infrastructure, traffic congestion, consumption of local natural resources, loss of open space and unique cultural attributes. Also, development decisions are too often made without a sufficient understanding of the consequences of those decisions on overall community well-being. An economic/environmental impact analysis is conducted to slow down the development process and look at all the consequences that could result.

Impact Fees

An impact fee is a financial tool used to subsidize anticipated capital improvements associated with new development. Impact fees enable cities, villages and towns to shift a proportionate share of the capital cost of public facilities serving new developments to developers (Wis. Stat. 66.0617). They also serve to bridge the gap between limits on traditional funding sources, such as property taxes and state or federal aids, and the high cost of new development.

Implementation

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Wisconsin’s Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) program was approved in 1975. The purpose is to provide a way for a city, village, or town to promote tax base expansion through its own initiative and effort. As of October 1, 2004 towns were added to the TIF Program. Town projects aimed at agricultural, forestry, manufacturing or tourism improvements that would otherwise not have been initiated due to limited funds are eligible for the TIF Program. Any changes to the State Statutes regarding Town TIF Districts will be incorporated in the plan.

When a TIF District is created the aggregate equalized value of taxable and certain municipal-owned property is established by the Dept. of Revenue. This is called the Tax Incremental Base. The town then installs public improvements and property values grow. Taxes paid on the increased value are used to pay for projects undertaken by the town; this is the tax increment. It is based on the increased values in the TID and levies all of the taxing jurisdictions that share the tax base.

Implementation Matrix

The implementation schedule provided in this element is a listing of all the policies and programs (or activities) that need to be completed in order to implement the goals of this comprehensive plan. The potential groups to implement have been suggested, however it may be the desire of these groups to form subgroups, task forces, or utilize other citizen participation methods to complete the tasks and encourage opportunities for public involvement.

Element	Proposed Action(s)	Potential Groups to Implement	Proposed Completion Date	Method of Funding	Current Status
Issues and Opportunities	Establish a formal volunteer Parks and Recreation Committee	Town Board and Plan Commission		Town funds	
Issues and Opportunities	Develop a newsletter/ Town update to be included on the Town’s website	Town Board		Town funds	
Issues and Opportunities	Update background information once updated Census data becomes available	Plan Commission	Within one year after data becomes available	Town funds	
Housing	Schedule a review of the housing stock and administer notices to enforce the Town’s Public Nuisance Ordinance	Town Board and Plan Commission		Town funds	
Housing	Monitor lot availability	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		

Implementation

Element	Proposed Action(s)	Potential Groups to Implement	Proposed Completion Date	Method of Funding	Current Status
Housing	Review Town Subdivision Ordinance for possible adoption of conservation subdivision development standards	Plan Commission	Jan. 2011		
Transportation	Require turn lanes into subdivisions and explore opportunities to lower speed limits	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Transportation	Limit access on major arterial roads	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Transportation	Separate local and through traffic wherever possible	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing	Town funds	
Transportation	Study cost and benefits of increasing shoulder widths on roadways with higher AADT levels and determine possible funding sources	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Transportation	Make roadway design consistent with speed limits on new roads	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Transportation	Improve visibility at existing railroad crossings	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing	state and federal grants	
Transportation	Ensure developments are interconnected with roadways	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Transportation	Perform AADT measurements on all Town roads as a means to prioritize projects	Town Board	Ongoing	Town funds	
Transportation	Promote conservation of rail corridors for future uses including mass transit	Town Board	Ongoing		
Transportation	Survey area residents to gauge interest in establishing park and ride and ride sharing facilities	Town Board and Plan Commission		Town funds	
Transportation	Review any request for access along 240 th St. with WisDOT	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Transportation	Promote the extension of shoulders to newly paved roads for walking/bike trails	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		

Implementation

Element	Proposed Action(s)	Potential Groups to Implement	Proposed Completion Date	Method of Funding	Current Status
Transportation	Work with adjacent municipalities and appropriate agencies on a long range trail plan	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing	Town funds	
Transportation	Consider additional ATV routes as opportunities arise	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Transportation	Continue to work with the DNR and Polk County to encourage the connection of the Amery-Dresser Trail to the Gandy Dancer Trail	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Develop more parks and open space as opportunities arise	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing	Town funds	
Utilities and Community Facilities	Upgrade existing boating facilities depending on use and available funding	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing	Town funds, state and federal grants	
Utilities and Community Facilities	Examine service area maps to determine the emergency service that can provide the fastest response time	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Work with emergency response units to analyze capital needs and ensure the capital needs do not exceed the Town's limits	Town Board	Ongoing		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Support the Osceola Area Ambulance Service upgrade to a higher level of service	Town Board	Ongoing	Town funds	
Utilities and Community Facilities	Analyze Town's contribution from circulation and Act 150 funds to the Osceola, St. Croix Falls and Dresser Libraries	Town Board	Ongoing		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Determine if a joint library would be beneficial to the community	Town Board	Ongoing		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Determine what can be done to assist the local libraries in upgrading their level of service	Town Board	Ongoing		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Encourage utilities to convert to underground road crossings	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		

Implementation

Element	Proposed Action(s)	Potential Groups to Implement	Proposed Completion Date	Method of Funding	Current Status
Utilities and Community Facilities	Create a road crossing permit process charging a fee for any new overhead road crossing	Town Board	Ongoing		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Encourage mobile phone service providers to increase coverage throughout the Town	Town Board	Ongoing		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Encourage collocation of mobile phone antennas on any new towers	Town Board	Ongoing		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Encourage the implementation of solar, wind, and other renewable energy sources	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing	state and federal grants	
Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources	Promote educational opportunities concerning the Town's natural resources through the neighboring school districts	Town Board and School Districts	Ongoing		
Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources	Revise the Town's ordinances to reflect the results of the Community Survey concerning natural resource conservation	Town Board and Plan Commission	Within one year after adoption of comprehensive plan		
Economic Development	Encourage commercial development along transportation corridors	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Economic Development	Work with adjacent municipalities to collaborate on new development	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Economic Development	Promote financing tools on the Town's website to current and prospective businesses	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing	state and federal grants	
Intergovernmental Cooperation	Continue to meet with the Villages of Osceola and Dresser concerning land use planning issues	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Intergovernmental Cooperation	Inventory the Town's Public Works equipment and distribute to adjacent municipalities	Public Works	Ongoing		

Implementation

Element	Proposed Action(s)	Potential Groups to Implement	Proposed Completion Date	Method of Funding	Current Status
Intergovernmental Cooperation	Work with the County and DNR to prepare more detailed inventories and locations of natural resources, wildlife habitats, and environmentally sensitive areas	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Land Use	Use all means necessary to ensure that any new non-metallic mining operations are compatible with surrounding existing and preferred future land uses	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Land Use	Identify areas where basalt (trap rock) mining operations would be incompatible with existing and preferred future land uses	Town Board and Plan Commission	Jan. 2010		
Land Use	Work with the Villages of Osceola and Dresser to establish uniform commercial architectural design standards along transportation corridors, including light pollution abatement	Town Board and Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Land Use	Analyze farmland preservation and working land initiatives strategies to implement in the Town	Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Land Use	Provide fact sheets to residents concerning available land use options	Plan Commission	Ongoing		
Land Use	Review Polk County Shoreland Protection Ordinance and provide a fact sheet concerning lakeshore property responsibilities	Plan Commission	Ongoing		

Implementation

Element	Proposed Action(s)	Potential Groups to Implement	Proposed Completion Date	Method of Funding	Current Status
Land Use	Review Polk County Comprehensive Land Use Ordinance and review future zoning options in the Town	Plan Commission	Jan. 2011		
Land Use	Explore adopting a Town Zoning Ordinance	Town Board and Plan Commission	Jan. 2011		
Land Use	Review and update for consistency with this plan as rules and regulations change	Plan Commission	Ongoing		

APPENDIX

Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) – Town of Osceola
Polk County Land and Water Resources – Lotus Lake Report Recommendations
Polk County Historical Sites – Town of Osceola
Public Participation Plan
Resolution Adopting Written Public Participation Procedures
Community Planning Survey Report – Executive Summary*
Resolution to Accept the Comprehensive Plan and Distribute for Public Review
Wisconsin Department of Administration Review Letter
Ordinance to Adopt the Town of Osceola 2030 Comprehensive Plan

Maps

Functional Classification
Community Facilities
School Districts
Depth to Water Table
Depth to Bedrock
Managed Forest Lands
Soil Capabilities
Soil Suitability
Drainage Class
Land Cover
Watersheds
Recreational Opportunities
Remediation and Redevelopment Sites
Existing Land Use
Future Land Use

*Entire report available for review at the Town Hall

Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) – Town of Osceola

033N018W	<i>Fundulus diaphanus</i>	Banded Killifish	SC/N	S3	G5	Fish~
033N019W	<i>Acipenser fulvescens</i>	Lake Sturgeon	SC/H	S3	G3G4	Fish~
	<i>Alasmidonta marginata</i>	Elktoe	SC/H	S4	G4	Mussel~
	<i>Anguilla rostrata</i>	American Eel	SC/N	S2	G4	Fish~
	<i>Bedrock glade</i>	Bedrock Glade	NA	S3	G2	Community
	<i>Besseyia bullii</i>	Kitten Tails	THR	S3S4	G3	Plant
	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	Red-shouldered Hawk	THR	S3S4B,S1	G5	Bird~
	<i>Carex assiniboensis</i>	Assiniboine Sedge	SC	S3	G4G5	Plant~
	<i>Crystallaria asprella</i>	Crystal Darter	END	S1	G3	Fish~
	<i>Cumberlandia monodonta</i>	Spectacle Case	END	C S1	G2G3	Mussel~
	<i>Cycleptus elongatus</i>	Blue Sucker	THR	S2	G3G4	Fish~
	<i>Cyclonaias tuberculata</i>	Purple Wartyback	END	S1S2	G5	Mussel~
	<i>Ellipsaria lineolata</i>	Butterfly	END	S2	G4	Mussel~
	<i>Elliptio crassidens</i>	Elephant Ear	END	S1	G5	Mussel~
	<i>Emergent marsh</i>	Emergent Marsh	NA	S4	G4	Community
	<i>Epioblasma triquetra</i>	Snuffbox	END	S1	G3	Mussel~
	<i>Etheostoma clarum</i>	Western Sand Darter	SC/N	S3	G3	Fish~
	<i>Floodplain forest</i>	Floodplain Forest	NA	S3	G3?	Community
	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	SC/P	S4B,S2H	G5	Bird~
	<i>Ictiobus niger</i>	Black Buffalo	THR	S2	G5	Fish~
	<i>Lampsilis higginsii</i>	Higgins' Eye	END	LE S1	G1	Mussel~
	<i>Lithospermum latifolium</i>	American Gromwell	SC	S3	G4	Plant
	<i>Macrhybopsis aestivalis</i>	Shoal Chub	THR	S2	G5	Fish~
	<i>Moxostoma carinatum</i>	River Redhorse	THR	S2	G4	Fish~
	<i>Moxostoma valenciennesi</i>	Greater Redhorse	THR	S3	G4	Fish~
	<i>Mussel Bed</i>	Mussel Bed	SC	S3?	GHR	Other~
	<i>Neurocordulia molesta</i>	Smoky Shadowfly	SC/N	S2S3	G4	Dragonfly~
	<i>Northern mesic forest</i>	Northern Mesic Forest	NA	S4	G4	Community
	<i>Notropis texanus</i>	Weed Shiner	SC/N	S3	G5	Fish~
	<i>Ophiogomphus susbehcha</i>	Saint Croix Snaketail	END	S1	G1G2	Dragonfly~
	<i>Opsopoeodus emiliae</i>	Pugnose Minnow	SC/N	S3	G5	Fish~
	<i>Opuntia fragilis</i>	Brittle Prickly-pear	THR	S3	G4G5	Plant
	<i>Pleurobema sintoxia</i>	Round Pigtoe	SC/H	S3	G4	Mussel~
	<i>Quadrula fragosa</i>	Winged Mapleleaf	END	LE S1	G1	Mussel~
	<i>Quadrula metanevra</i>	Monkeyface	THR	S2	G4	Mussel~
	<i>Quadrula nodulata</i>	Wartyback	THR	S1S2	G4	Mussel~
	<i>Southern mesic forest</i>	Southern Mesic Forest	NA	S3	G3?	Community
	<i>Springs and spring runs, hard</i>	Springs and Spring Runs, Hard	NA	S4	GHR	Community

Polk County Land and Water Resources – Lotus Lake Report

Lotus Lake Recommendations:

- The aquatic plant community of any shallow lake is an invaluable part of the lake's ecosystem, particularly to invertebrates and fish. In order to protect these lakes, the aquatic plant community needs to be protected and/or enhanced. Aquatic plant communities should continuously to be monitored to ensure a healthy ecosystem and gauge the effectiveness of management techniques. A major disturbance to the macrophyte community of Lotus Lake could be

detrimental to its ecosystem. Enhancement would enrich the water quality and fisheries.

- Consider if an aerator is necessary for Lotus Lake. The constant stirring of a shallow lake could be affecting turbidity, color, and macrophyte growth. Shallow lakes are accustomed to fish kills; with an inlet and outlet creek, the fishery will recover quickly. Adequate habitat and food is a more important factor to improve the sport fishery.
- Watershed residents should limit the amount of impervious surfaces on their property to allow for water infiltration and reduce runoff. Raingardens and native vegetation are also beneficial to reduce stormwater runoff and for wildlife habitat.
- Any new construction in the watershed shall have proper erosion control measures in place. Sediment loading from construction sites is a major polluter to our waterways. Properly installed silt fences, erosion control blankets and other BMPs are required under the Uniform Dwelling Code and Stormwater and Erosion Control Ordinance. Riparian vegetation, aquatic plants, and coarse woody debris (fallen trees and logs) should be left where it stands to preserve the water quality of Lotus Lake.
- Recreational boating should be moderated on shallow lakes. Non-motorized sports will have less impact on water quality and turbidity than PWC and motorized boats. At a minimum, slow-no-wake speeds should be implemented and the 100-foot from shore law upheld.
- Agricultural and other best management practices should be utilized in the watershed, including education, to reduce phosphorus and other pollution reaching surface waters. Work with Osceola Rod and Gun Club to try to implement voluntarily use of lead-free shot over the upstream wetland.
- Residents should continue their relationship with the Polk County Association of Lakes and Rivers, Wisconsin Association of Lakes, and the Lakes Partnership. An informed citizenry will be the best advocate for the lake. Newsletters and conferences will be valuable educational material for Lotus Lake residents. Continued monitoring of Lotus Lakes' biological community and water quality is important for establishing a baseline. Citizens should become familiar with the Self Help program and Adopt a Stream to initiate citizen monitoring in the near future.
- New residents should be alerted of local zoning laws to prevent misunderstandings and violations.
- No phosphorus fertilizers shall be applied in shoreland areas of Polk County.
- Septic systems should regularly be maintained and checked on to prevent pollution from entering the lake.
- Area residents and fisherman should inspect boating and fishing equipment to prevent the introduction of invasive species into Lotus Lake. Unused fishing bait should be disposed of in the trash. Tackle and sinkers should be lead free. Aquatic plants should be removed from the trailer and axles before and after launching.

Polk County Historical Sites – Town of Osceola

- Geiger Brewery – From 1867
- Bethesda Lutheran Church – 1872-1876
- First Baptist Church – Since 1857
- Methodist Episcopal – Since 1854
- The First Courthouse – 1899
- 2nd Polk County Courthouse – 1882/1889
- Elizabeth Clarke Farm – From 1854
- Joseph Berg Century Farm – 1860
- Jerry Heichel Century Farm – 1898
- Stanley Lindahl Century Farm – 1874
- Phillip McCarty Farm – 1852/1952
- Robert Frank Century Farm – 1869
- Emily Olson House – 1862/1964
- Charles E. Mears House – 1862
- The Second Jail – 1910/1953
- William Kent Landing – 1844/1888
- Lime Kiln – 1849/1876
- Grist & Sawmill – 1849/1884
- Osceola Mills Post Office – 1854/1897
- Nye Post Office – 1892/1957
- Dresser School #2 – 1903/1907
- Dresser School #3 – 1907/1918
- East Lake School – 1874/1887
- East Lake School – 1887/1935
- The First School – 1854
- Godfrey School – 1852/1860
- Godfrey School – 1860/1928
- Nye School – 1869/1898
- Nye School – 1898/1943
- St Croix Falls School – 1895/1906
- Dresser School #1 – 1867/1903
- The Red School – 1858/1956
- Cascade Water Falls

Town of Osceola

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Prepared by the
Town of Osceola Plan Commission
January 2008

Adopted by the
Town of Osceola Town Board
February 11, 2008

With assistance from:



TOWN OF OSCEOLA
 COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING
 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

PURPOSE

Public participation is an important component of the comprehensive planning process. The Town of Osceola Comprehensive Plan is meant to reflect the views and opinions of the residents, which are unlike the views and opinions of other municipalities. This plan is considered a tool that residents can use to guide the direction of the Town in the way that suits them best.

This plan is intended to outline the public participation strategy for the development, evaluation, and eventual adoption of the Town of Osceola Comprehensive Plan. In accordance with Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001 (4)(a): 'The governing body of a local governmental unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative, or amended elements of a comprehensive plan and shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments. The written procedures shall describe the methods the governing body of a local governmental unit will use to distribute proposed, alternative, or amended elements of a comprehensive plan to owners of property, or to persons who have a leasehold interest in property pursuant to which the persons may extract nonmetallic mineral resources in or on property, in which the allowable use or intensity of use of the property is changed by the comprehensive plan.'

PLAN COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Town Board of the Town of Osceola has designated the Town of Osceola Plan Commission to develop and review the comprehensive plan. The Plan Commission will adopt the plan by resolution and petition the Town Board to adopt the plan by ordinance.

All meetings of the Town of Osceola Plan Commission will be posted in advance and open to the public in accordance with Wisconsin law. The agenda shall provide for comments from the general public. Plan Commission members will ensure that public meetings allow for open discussion on issues concerning the comprehensive plan. To accomplish this, the following steps will be taken:

- The purpose of the meeting as well as items to be addressed will all be posted on each agenda.
- The date and time of meetings will be convenient to allow for maximum public involvement.
- All agendas will be posted 24 hours prior to the meeting at the Town Hall, Rural American Bank – Dresser, and Dresser Post Office.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION METHODS

Awareness and Education Methods

Public participation methods are designed to increase the public's awareness of planning and participation activities and build their capacity to become further involved.

- **Public Notice:** the minimum legal requirement necessary to advertise opportunities for public participation. Notice is usually posted in public places and newspapers.
- **Displays and exhibits:** maps, pictures, and text arranged in a poster style and posted in high traffic public places or during meetings to share information with the general public.
- **Direct mail:** a method to build awareness by mass mailing written materials. Direct mailings work best when the message is simple and an audience is easily identifiable.
- **Community Calendar:** a typical calendar filled with important meeting dates, information about the planning process, and pictures or photos submitted by area students and adults.
- **Newsletter/Flyer:** provides the public with a regular source of information that can be reviewed at their leisure. Newsletters or flyers may be distributed at various planning stages to keep the public informed and educated throughout the planning project.
- **Public Education Meeting:** incorporate educational programs, such as seminars and presentations or simulations and informal discussions to improve citizens' understanding of a planning issue or task. Public educational meetings build citizens' capacity to participate more effectively.
- **Website:** the Internet is a tool to share information with the general public and stakeholders. Maps, reports, meeting agendas and minutes, contact information, and many other types of information can be served on the Web. The Internet also supports interactive participation, such as on-line voting, planning chat-rooms, and Internet map serving that can be used to create planning maps at home.
- **Media Liaisons:** members from the media are invited to participate as non-voting members on area planning committees. This way planning would be consistently and accurately covered in the local newspapers and radio stations.

Input Methods

Methods designed to gather public opinions and expertise.

- **Open house:** an informal setting using displays, handouts and other materials designed to expose citizens to planning information and ideas. It provides citizens a chance to react and express feedback about planning information in oral or written form.
- **Public hearing:** the minimum legal requirement for public participation is an official meeting used to present technical information and obtain formal review and approval of proposals. The hearing consists of 1) a summary of why the project is being done, 2) the alternative solutions identified, 3) an assessment of the consequences and impacts of each solution, and 4) reactions to the proposed course of action. An official, permanent record of the public hearing is established.

- Visual preference survey: asks citizens to identify 3-D rendering or actual photographs of design alternatives or landscapes they prefer or find appropriate. This method is used to identify visual preferences common to the community.
- Opinion surveys: questionnaire used to systematically collect data or viewpoints from many people. Data is relatively easy to obtain, but difficult to analyze and interpret. Sample must be chosen carefully to represent appropriate population. Questions should be simple and brief.
- Focus groups: a small group of people (usually 6-12) responsible for identifying issues, concerns, values, beliefs or information related to a particular issue. Participants often are selected based on their knowledge of a particular subject. Focus groups require a skilled facilitator and vocal participants.
- Visioning: citizens are asked to develop a vision that reflects community values and depicts what they want the future to look like using text, speech, images, or a combination.

The Town of Osceola proposes to implement any the following methods of public participation:

1. Plan Commission meetings. The Town of Osceola Plan Commission will develop the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Commission may invite key citizens for specific issues and not require them to remain active members throughout the process. The planning consultants, Stevens Engineers, will facilitate the meetings, provide background research, and write the document. The Plan Commission decides what is included in the plan and approves the contents of the final document with ultimate adoption authority lying with the Town Board. All Plan Commission meetings are open to the public.
2. Informational flyer. An informational flyer will be posted or sent out by the Town.
3. Newspaper article. The Town will send a press release to the Osceola Sun newspaper announcing all meetings of the Plan Commission and meetings for public comment. In addition, the Town will periodically send a press release out on the progress of the plan. The local media will be encouraged to attend and report on what takes place during the comprehensive planning process.
4. Display. Comprehensive planning information will be available at the Town Hall for public review and comment.
5. Community Events. The Plan Commission will release information to the local 'Community Event' section of the Osceola Sun and Country Messenger Newspapers.
6. Release of a community wide survey. The Town will mail out a survey to all residents and/or property owners in the municipality or a statistically valid sample number of them. Residents and/or property owners will be asked a series of questions to determine their values, preferences, and opinions about the Town of Osceola. The Plan Commission will consider the survey results to develop the plan.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

7. **Hosting an open house.** In addition to participating in the regular meetings to develop the plan, the public will be invited to attend open houses or public comment meetings at key points in the planning process. At these meetings a brief summary of the plan to date will be given and the public will be given an opportunity to comment on the plan. These meetings may take place at a regular Town Plan Commission or Town Board Meeting.
8. **Holding at least one public hearing.** A public hearing will be held in accordance with §66.1001(4)(d) prior to the Town Board adopting the Comprehensive Plan.
9. **Written comments.** The public is invited to provide written comments for the development of the comprehensive plan. The Plan Commission will accept written comments submitted to the Town Clerk. The Clerk will record the transmittal and forward copies of the comments to the Plan Commission for consideration.
10. **Kick-Off Meeting.** The Plan Commission will host a public 'kick-off' meeting to give town residents the opportunity to learn more about the comprehensive planning process and to provide input about growth and other land use-related issues.
11. **Website.** The Town of Osceola is in the process of developing a website. Upon completion of the website, completed elements of the draft comprehensive plan will be posted for public review and comment.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND PUBLIC COMMENT ON DRAFT DOCUMENT

Wisconsin's open records law will be complied with in all cases. During the preparation of the comprehensive plan, a copy of the draft plan will be kept on file at the Town Hall and will be available for public inspection during normal office hours. The public is encouraged to submit written comments on the plan or any amendments of the plan. Written comment should be addressed to the Town Clerk who will record the transmittal and forward copies of the comments to the Plan Commission or Town Board for consideration.

The Town Board shall respond to written comments either individually or collectively by type of comments. Town Board responses may be in the form of written or oral communication, or by a written summary of the Town's disposition of the comments in the comprehensive plan.

PLAN COMMISSION ADOPTION OF PLAN BY RESOLUTION

The Town of Osceola Plan Commission may recommend the adoption or amendment of the comprehensive plan only by the adoption of a resolution by a majority vote of the entire Commission at a regularly scheduled and publicly noticed meeting of the Plan Commission in accordance with § 66.1001 (4)(b). The vote shall be recorded in the official minutes of the Plan Commission. The resolution shall refer to maps and other descriptive materials that relate to one or more elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE RECOMMENDED AND ADOPTED PLANS

In accordance with § 66.1001 (4), Procedures for Adopting Comprehensive Plans, one copy of the recommended and adopted plan or amendment shall be sent to the following:

- Every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the local governmental unit;
- Every local governmental unit that is adjacent to the local governmental unit which is the subject of the plan;
- The Wisconsin Land Council;
- The Wisconsin Department of Administration;
- The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission;
- The Village of Dresser Public Library; and
- The Village of Osceola Public Library.

ADOPTION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BY TOWN BOARD

After adoption of a resolution by the Town of Osceola Plan Commission, the Town Board will adopt the Comprehensive Plan by ordinance only after holding at least one public hearing at which the ordinance relating to the Comprehensive Plan is discussed. A majority vote of the members-elect is necessary for adoption. The hearing will be preceded by a Class 1 notice under ch. 985 that is published at least 30 days before the hearing is held. The Class 1 notice shall contain at least the following information:

- The date, time, and place of the hearing;
- A summary, which may include a map, of the proposed Comprehensive Plan;
- The name of an individual employed by the Town of Osceola who may provide additional information regarding the proposed ordinance; and
- Information relating to where and when the proposed comprehensive plan may be inspected before the hearing, and how a copy of the plan may be obtained.

Upon the day of publication of the public hearing notice, copies of the plan will be made available for public review at the nearest local library of the community and at the Osceola Town Hall. Written comments on the plan from members of the public will be accepted by the Town Board at any time prior to the public hearing and at the public hearing.

ADDITIONAL STEPS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Town of Osceola reserves the right to execute any of the suggested methods of public participation and additional steps, means, or methods in order to gain additional public participation and /or additional understanding of the Comprehensive Plan and the process of its development and adoption. These optional steps may include, but are not limited to, informational memos, postcards, letters, posters, fliers, or website.

STATE STATUTES

Where there is a conflict with these written procedures and provisions of § 66.1001 (4), Procedures for Adopting a Comprehensive Plan, the state statutes shall apply.

AMENDMENTS

The Town Board may amend these procedures.

Resolution No. 08-03

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING
WRITTEN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES**

TOWN OF OSCEOLA
Polk County, Wisconsin

WHEREAS, the Town of Osceola is preparing a Comprehensive Plan under Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001, and;

WHEREAS, the Town of Osceola may amend the Comprehensive Plan, and;

WHEREAS, Wisconsin State Statute 66.1101 (4) requires a governing body of a local unit of government to adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation in the adoption or amendment of a comprehensive plan, and;

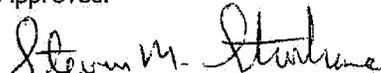
WHEREAS, the Town Plan Commission has prepared, publicly reviewed such written procedures, and recommended approval to the Town Board of the public participation plan entitled Town of Osceola: Comprehensive Planning Public Participation Plan, which is attached hereto and made part hereof, and;

WHEREAS, the Town of Osceola believes that regular, meaningful, public involvement in the comprehensive planning process is important to assure that the resulting Comprehensive Plan meets the wishes and expectations of the public.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Town of Osceola Town Board officially adopts Town of Osceola: Comprehensive Planning Public Participation Plan.

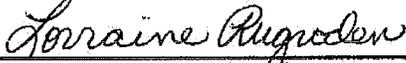
Adopted this 11th day of February, 2008.

Approved:



Steven M. Strohane, Town Chairman

Attest:



Lorraine Rugroden, Clerk/Treasurer

Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey Report

Executive Summary

In March, 2008, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to all 1,309 Town of Osceola households and non-resident property owners for which mailing addresses were available. The surveys were followed up with reminder postcards. The overall response rate was 36 percent (476 completed questionnaires). The data provided in this report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.9 percent with 95 percent confidence. In general, the sample aligns with the demographic patterns in the 2000 Census data. In short, we expect the sample to accurately represent the opinions of the residents and non-resident land owners of the Town of Osceola.

The following are key observations from the survey results:

1. The top three reasons Town of Osceola respondents gave for choosing to live in the Town are to experience a lifestyle based on a small town/rural atmosphere, to live in surroundings characterized by natural beauty, and to be near their family and friends. Over three-fourths rated the quality of life in the Town as very good or good.
2. Most community services and facilities were rated highly by a majority of respondents.
3. A majority support using public tax dollars for a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.
4. Most Town of Osceola respondents placed a high level of importance on the protection of the natural resource base of the Town; a majority support using public funds and regulations to protect these resources.
5. Majorities said there is a need in the Town for more single family housing, affordable housing, and senior citizen housing. They support the use of cluster design for groups of houses. At the same time, written comments revealed a pattern of concern that the rural atmosphere of the Town will be lost due to residential development.
6. Town of Osceola residents and non-resident land owners are largely satisfied with the overall road network in the Town and the condition of its roads.
7. A majority of respondents do not believe that productive farmland should be used for residences, and do not believe that land owners should be able to develop their land any way they want. At the same time a majority does not believe in limiting the proportion of an individual's land holdings that could be developed into housing lots as long as the minimum lot size is met.
8. Production agriculture, agricultural service businesses, and direct farm marketing operations received the highest level of support as appropriate types of businesses in the Town, although smaller majorities find numerous other types of businesses to be appropriate as well. A majority does not believe that large scale agricultural operations are appropriate in the Town.
9. The response pattern among the demographic groups varied in several questions. Among the most notable were the responses from households with children and from retired respondents. Households with children gave higher ratings to the school system and were more likely to support various recreational programs. Specifically they see a need for more off-road trails for non-motorized uses and for more walking and hiking lanes along public roadways. Households with

children were also more likely to support the use of public funds for ballfields and other active recreation areas and for enhancements of boat launches and beaches.

Retirees were more likely to favor the status quo in their responses to several questions. They were more likely to disagree with reducing the minimum lot size adjacent to higher density areas and to disagree with increasing the minimum lot size to preserve wildlife corridors. Retirees were less likely to view large scale agricultural operations as appropriate in the Town but were more likely to believe that manufacturing or industrial businesses are appropriate. They were less likely to support programs for the purchase or the transfer of development rights. In addition, they were less likely to see a need for more biking and walking lanes along public roadways.

Quantitative Summary of Responses by Question

QUALITY OF LIFE

1. From the following list, please identify which of the following items, a – m, are the most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Town of Osceola: **(Please list top three only)**

	Most Imp.	2nd Most Imp.	3rd Most Imp.		Most Imp.	2nd Most Imp.	3rd Most Imp.	
a. Appearance of homes	1%	1%	2%	g. Near job (empl. opp.)	12%	9%	7%	
b. Cost of home	8%	6%	8%	h. Property taxes	7%	4%	3%	
c. Cultural/Community events	1%	0%	2%	i. Proximity to Twin Cities (amenities, etc.)	3%	10%	14%	
d. Low crime rate	4%	6%	7%	j. Quality schools	9%	14%	6%	
e. Natural beauty/Surroundings	18%	14%	14%	k. Recreational opportunities	2%	7%	8%	
f. Near family and friends	16%	10%	7%	l. Small town atmos./Rural lifestyle	16%	17%	22%	
				Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
2. How would you rate the overall quality of life in the Town of Osceola?				25%	58%	15%	1%	0%

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES These questions ask your opinion about community facilities and services in the Town of Osceola.

3. Rate the quality of the following services in the Town of Osceola:	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	No Opinion
a. Ambulance service	23%	34%	15%	1%	0%	28%
b. Fire protection	24%	35%	14%	1%	0%	25%
c. High speed internet	11%	22%	28%	15%	5%	19%
d. Library	14%	37%	25%	6%	1%	17%
e. Mobile (cell) phone coverage	6%	20%	31%	26%	12%	6%
f. Park and recreation facilities	17%	37%	32%	7%	2%	4%
g. Police protection	16%	38%	29%	7%	1%	9%
h. Public facilities (e.g., Town Hall)	15%	34%	29%	5%	1%	16%
i. Public school system	34%	39%	13%	1%	1%	12%

j. Recycling programs	12%	36%	32%	7%	3%	9%
k. Street and road maintenance	10%	34%	39%	12%	3%	1%
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
4a. I oppose the construction of mobile (cell) phone towers because of their visual impact on the landscape.	5%	16%	38%	33%	9%	
4b. I am not concerned about the visual impact of electricity-generating windmills.	30%	41%	16%	8%	5%	
4c. I oppose the construction of electricity-generating windmills because of the noise they create.	2%	8%	41%	34%	15%	
5a. Additional off-road trails for <u>motorized</u> vehicles are needed in the Town.	20%	20%	19%	27%	13%	
5b. Additional off-road trails for only <u>non-motorized use</u> (e.g., hiking, walking, horses) are needed in the Town.	22%	39%	16%	13%	10%	
6. The Town of Osceola should use public funds to support the following recreational opportunities:		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Ballfields, active recreation areas	9%	49%	21%	12%	8%	
b. Bicycle routes	14%	46%	20%	14%	6%	
c. Enhance boat landings/beaches	12%	55%	19%	7%	8%	
d. Hiking and skiing trails	9%	47%	24%	12%	8%	
e. Horse trails	5%	22%	38%	20%	16%	
f. Hunting/fishing access	13%	45%	23%	10%	9%	
g. Parks	16%	64%	9%	6%	4%	
h. Publicly-owned campgrounds	6%	34%	32%	14%	13%	
i. Snowmobile/ATV trails	15%	29%	28%	19%	10%	
	Sand Lake	Poplar Lake	Horse Lake	Dwight Lake	Lotus Lake	None
7. Which lakes/beaches have you visited in the past year? Mark as many as apply. If None, go to question 9.	41%	29%	26%	17%	34%	28%
8. How often have you visited each lake in the past year?						
	Sand Lake	Poplar Lake	Horse Lake	Dwight Lake	Lotus Lake	
	Mean = 25 times	Mean = 19 times	Mean = 15 times	Mean = 15 times	Mean = 10 times	
	Median = 4 times	Median = 3 times	Median = 3 times	Median = 3 times	Median = 3 times	

NATURAL RESOURCES. We would like your opinion about the importance of protecting natural resources in the Town and surrounding area.

9. How important is it for the Town of Osceola to protect the following?	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
a. lakes	62%	31%	4%	2%	2%
b. prairie land/grasslands	38%	40%	13%	4%	4%

c. river corridors	47%	40%	7%	2%	4%
d. wetlands	42%	39%	12%	3%	4%
e. woodlands	45%	41%	8%	3%	3%
f. wildlife corridors (land that knits together wetlands, woods, and fields.)	46%	39%	9%	3%	3%
g. other: <u>See Appendix A</u>					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
10a. Town tax revenues should be used to protect the preceding list of resources (9a to 9g).	16%	48%	20%	11%	6%
10b. The Town of Osceola should use regulations to protect the preceding list of resources (9a to 9g).	25%	51%	11%	7%	6%

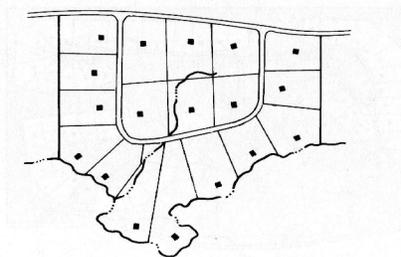
HOUSING/DEVELOPMENT We would like your opinion about housing development in the Town of Osceola.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
11. Residential growth is desirable in the Town of Osceola.	7%	49%	28%	9%	7%
12. More of the following types of housing are needed in the Town of Osceola:					
a. Affordable housing	12%	45%	20%	12%	11%
b. Condominiums, Apartments	3%	23%	40%	22%	12%
c. Duplexes	2%	25%	41%	19%	13%
d. Freestanding mobile homes	1%	5%	36%	47%	10%
e. Housing subdivisions	2%	32%	30%	22%	14%
f. Mobile home parks	1%	7%	33%	49%	9%
g. Seasonal and recreational homes	2%	35%	29%	15%	18%
h. Senior housing	18%	55%	12%	6%	10%
i. Single family housing	18%	55%	12%	5%	10%
13. The external appearance of residences in my neighborhood is <u>important</u> to me.	54%	35%	5%	3%	4%

14. Traditionally, rural housing developments have been designed on large lots as in the diagram (Option A) on the left below. An alternative layout for rural housing is the “cluster” concept, which has smaller lots and permanently preserved open space as in the diagram (Option B) on the right below. **Please mark either Option A or Option B (not both) below to indicate your preference.**

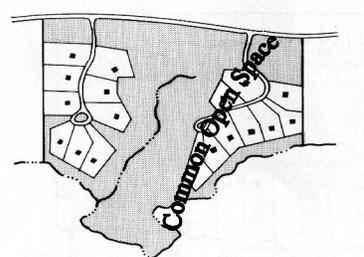
OPTION A

31%



OPTION B

69%



TRANSPORTATION These questions ask your opinion about transportation issues in the Town of Osceola.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
15. The <u>overall road network</u> (roads, streets, and highways) in the Town of Osceola meets the needs of its citizens.		12%	75%	8%	3%	3%
16. The <u>overall condition of roads and streets</u> in the Town of Osceola is acceptable for present needs.		9%	67%	17%	5%	2%
17. Additional biking lanes and walking lanes are needed <u>along public roadways</u> in the Town of Osceola.		21%	35%	27%	9%	8%
18. If one or more adults in your household works outside the home, how many minutes (one way) does it take the one who drives the furthest to commute to work each day?	Under 10					
		10-14	15-19	20-29	30-44	45+
	13%	9%	5%	8%	16%	27%
						NA
						22%

AGRICULTURE AND LAND USE

The following questions are asking for your opinion about agriculture and land use in the Town.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
19. We should allow productive farmland to be used for:						
a. Agricultural use		60%	37%	1%	0%	2%
b. Residential use		7%	27%	38%	20%	7%
c. Any use		9%	16%	36%	28%	11%
20. Landowners should be allowed to develop their land <u>any way they want</u> .		15%	22%	42%	20%	2%
21. There should be restrictions on <u>how much</u> of their land owners should be allowed to develop.		12%	46%	25%	12%	5%
22. Landowners should be able to subdivide their land consistent with minimum lot size regulations into housing lots.		13%	51%	23%	8%	6%
23. Conflicts between farms and neighbors (dust, noise, and odors) are common in the Town of Osceola.		3%	14%	44%	11%	27%
24. Agricultural uses should not be restricted because of proximity to residences.		28%	43%	16%	5%	7%

Some Wisconsin Towns have put programs in place that allow land owners to sell and transfer the development rights to their land. Sale of development rights ensures the land will be used in agriculture or remain as open space in the future. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

25. The Town of Osceola should use public funds to purchase development rights to preserve farmland, maintain open space or protect important natural areas.		33%	35%	26%	0%	7%
26. The Town of Osceola should allow developers to purchase development rights from one Town property and transfer them to another in order to increase the number of lots that can be developed on the receiving property (increase density).		34%	10%	45%	0%	11%
27. Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected through regulations.		39%	48%	8%	0%	4%

28. Fees should be imposed on new private development to pay for the added costs of public services such as roads, highways, emergency services, etc.	38%	45%	11%	0%	7%
29. I am dissatisfied with the enforcement of existing land use regulations in the Town of Osceola.	11%	13%	22%	0%	53%
30. Do you believe that the current <u>1 acre minimum</u> residential lot size should be uniform throughout the Town?		Yes (go to Q32) 50%	No (go to Q31) 37%	No Opinion (go to Q32) 13%	
31. If you answered “no” to Q30, please answer the following: Variations from the 1 acre minimum residential lot sizes should be allowed in the following situations:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Smaller lot sizes in areas adjacent to higher density local communities (e.g. Osceola/Dresser).	16%	49%	15%	14%	5%
b. Smaller lot sizes/greater density if shared septic systems are available.	10%	38%	25%	16%	11%
c. Larger lot sizes/lower density in environmentally sensitive areas (lakes, steepness of terrain, etc.).	34%	47%	8%	4%	6%
d. Larger lot sizes/lower density to preserve wildlife corridors (land that knits together wetlands, woods, and fields).	42%	40%	6%	5%	6%

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT The following question asks how you view economic development in the Town of Osceola.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
32. The following types of economic/business development are appropriate in the Town of Osceola.					
a. Ag production (crops and livestock)	39%	54%	2%	0%	4%
b. Ag service businesses	31%	61%	2%	0%	6%
c. Composting sites	19%	56%	12%	2%	11%
d. Convenience stores/gas stations	12%	55%	22%	6%	5%
e. Corporate/large scale farms (Over 700 dairy cows or 1,000 beef steers/cows)	6%	32%	36%	14%	12%
f. Direct sales of farm products (vegetables, fruit, meat, trees)	29%	62%	4%	1%	3%
g. Dog boarding and kennels	7%	57%	19%	6%	2%
h. Golf courses	13%	55%	17%	5%	9%
i. Gravel pits	6%	47%	27%	8%	12%
j. Home based businesses	17%	68%	5%	0%	9%
k. Industrial/Manufacturing	13%	59%	17%	5%	7%
l. Junk/Salvage yards	5%	21%	37%	28%	8%
m. Privately owned campgrounds	10%	56%	19%	5%	11%
n. Retail/Commercial	14%	61%	13%	4%	7%
o. Storage businesses	7%	51%	26%	7%	10%
p. Electricity-generating windmills	25%	51%	10%	4%	9%
q. Other: See Appendix A					

SPECIFIC ISSUES The following question asks how you view select issues facing the Town of Osceola.

33. How important are the following issues in the Town of Osceola?	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
a. Well water contamination	68%	27%	2%	0%	3%
b. Rural residential development	38%	45%	10%	2%	5%
c. Loss of productive farmland	44%	41%	11%	0%	4%
d. Land annexation by Villages of Osceola and Dresser	29%	37%	15%	4%	16%
e. Other:	See Appendix A				

34. Do you have additional comments about **land use and comprehensive planning** in the Town of Osceola?

DEMOGRAPHICS Please tell us some things about you: **Please choose only one answer per question.**

35. Gender:	Male 59%	Female 41%	36. Age:	18–24 0%	25–34 15%	35–44 22%	45–54 23%	55–64 21%	65+ 19%
37. Employment Status:	Employed full-time 55%	Self-employed 13%	Employed part-time 6%	Unemployed 1%	Retired 24%	Other: See Appendix A 1%			
38. Which of the following best describes your residential status in the Town of Osceola?	Farmland owner 7%	Rural Resident (non-farm) 79%	Non-Resident Landowner 10%	Renter 1%	Other: 3%	See Appendix A			
39. Number of adults (18 or older) in household:	0 17%			1 72%	2 7%	3 3%	4 0%	5 0%	6+ 0%
40. Number of children (under 18) in household:	59%			13%	19%	6%	1%	1%	0%
41. If you are a Town resident, how long have you lived in Town of Osceola?	Less than 1 year 4%	1 to 5 years 19%	5.1 – 10 years 22%	10.1 – 15 years 15%	15.1 – 20 years 7%	20.1 to 30 years 12%	Over 30 Years 21%		
42. Highest Level of Education:	Less than high school 1%	High school diploma 19%	Some college/tech 26%	Tech college graduate 16%	Bachelor’s degree 20%	Graduate or professional degree 17%			
43. Household Income range:	Less than \$15,000 2%	\$15,000 - 24,999 5%	\$25,000 – 49,999 22%	\$50,000 – 74,999 29%	\$75,000 – 99,999 19%	\$100,000 or more 23%			

Resolution No. 09-05

**RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND
DISTRIBUTE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW**

**TOWN OF OSCEOLA
Polk County, Wisconsin**

The Town Board of the Town of Osceola, Wisconsin, does resolve the following:

Whereas, pursuant to sections 62.23 (2) and (3) of Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Osceola is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in sections 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of Wisconsin Statutes.

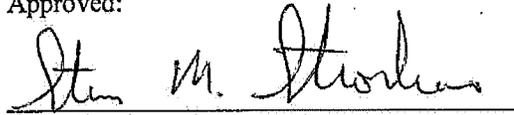
Whereas, the Town Board of the Town of Osceola, Wisconsin, has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by Section 66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Whereas, the Plan Commission of the Town of Osceola by a majority vote recorded in its official minutes, is recommending to the Town Board the acceptance of the document entitled "Town of Osceola 2030 Comprehensive Plan," pursuant to section 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Town of Osceola Town Board officially accepts "Town of Osceola 2030 Comprehensive Plan" together with all sections and maps, and authorizes distribution for public review followed by a Public Hearing as required by law.

ADOPTED this 13 day of July, 2009.

Approved:



Steve Stroshane, Town Chairman

Attest:


Lorraine Rugroden, Town Clerk



**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
ADMINISTRATION**

JIM DOYLE
GOVERNOR
MICHAEL L. MORGAN
SECRETARY

Division of Intergovernmental Relations
101 E. Wilson Street, 10th Floor
Madison, WI 53702-0001
Tel. (608) 267-3369 Fax (608) 267-6917
<http://www.doa.state.wi.us>

June 25, 2009

Nolan Wall
Stevens Engineers
1680 Livingstone Road
Hudson, WI 54016

Dear Mr. Wall:

The Comprehensive Planning Grant Program received the draft comprehensive plan for the Town of Osceola on June 22, 2009. Thank you for your submittal. According to our review of the grant agreement requirements, we did not determine any requirements to be missing.

Please remember to include a copy of the adoption ordinance with the final plan submittal. Please contact me at (608) 267-3369 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Peter Herreid
Comprehensive Planning Grant Administrator
Tel. 608.267.3369
Peter.Herreid@wisconsin.gov

cc: Tim Anderson, Planner, Polk County

ORDINANCE 09-08-02

ORDINANCE TO ADOPT THE TOWN OF OSEOLA 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

TOWN OF OSEOLA

Polk County, WI

The town board of the Town of Osceola, Wisconsin do ordain as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to section 62.23(2) and (3) under 60.22(3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Osceola, 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 Osceola, 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 Osceola, by a majority vote of the entire plan commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the town board the adoption of the document entitled "Town of Osceola 2030 Comprehensive Plan," containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

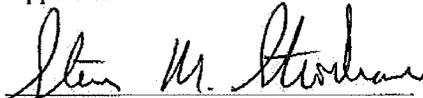
Section 4. The Town of Osceola has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 5. The town board of the Town of Osceola, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "Town of Osceola 2030 Comprehensive Plan" 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 or posting required by law.

Adopted this 5th day of October, 2009

Approved:



Steve Strohane, Town Chairman

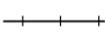
Attest:



Lorraine Rugroden, Town Clerk

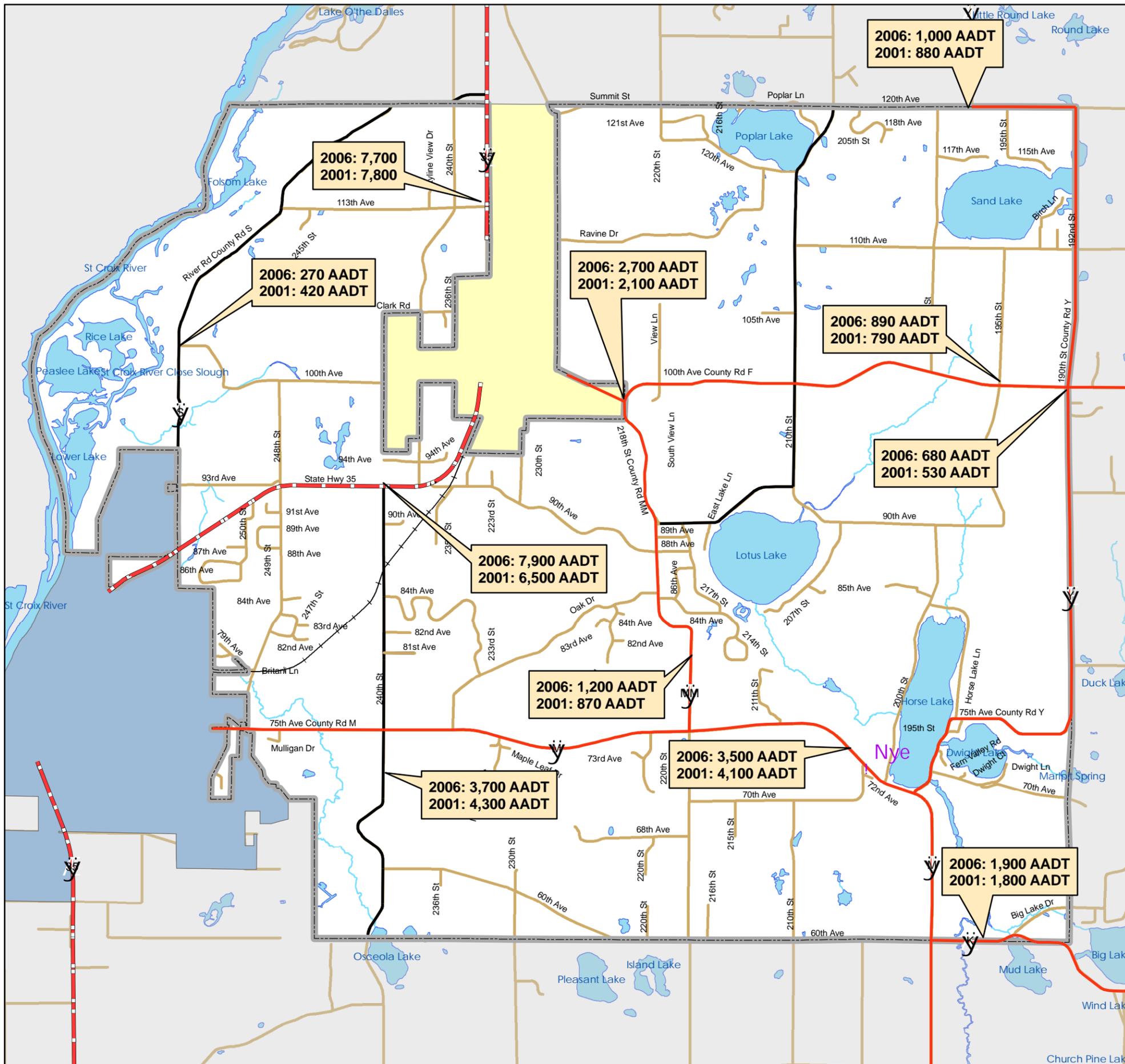
Town of Osceola

Functional Classification

-  Town of Osceola
-  Village of Osceola
-  Village of Dresser
-  Railroad

Functional Classification

-  Minor Arterial
-  Major Collector
-  Minor Collector
-  Local Road



The Functional Classification of roads refers to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. At the upper limit of the system are those facilities that emphasize traffic mobility, whereas at the lower limit are those local roads and streets that emphasize access.



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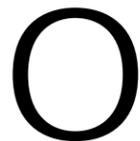
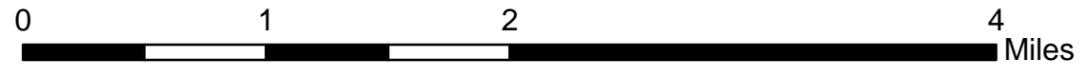
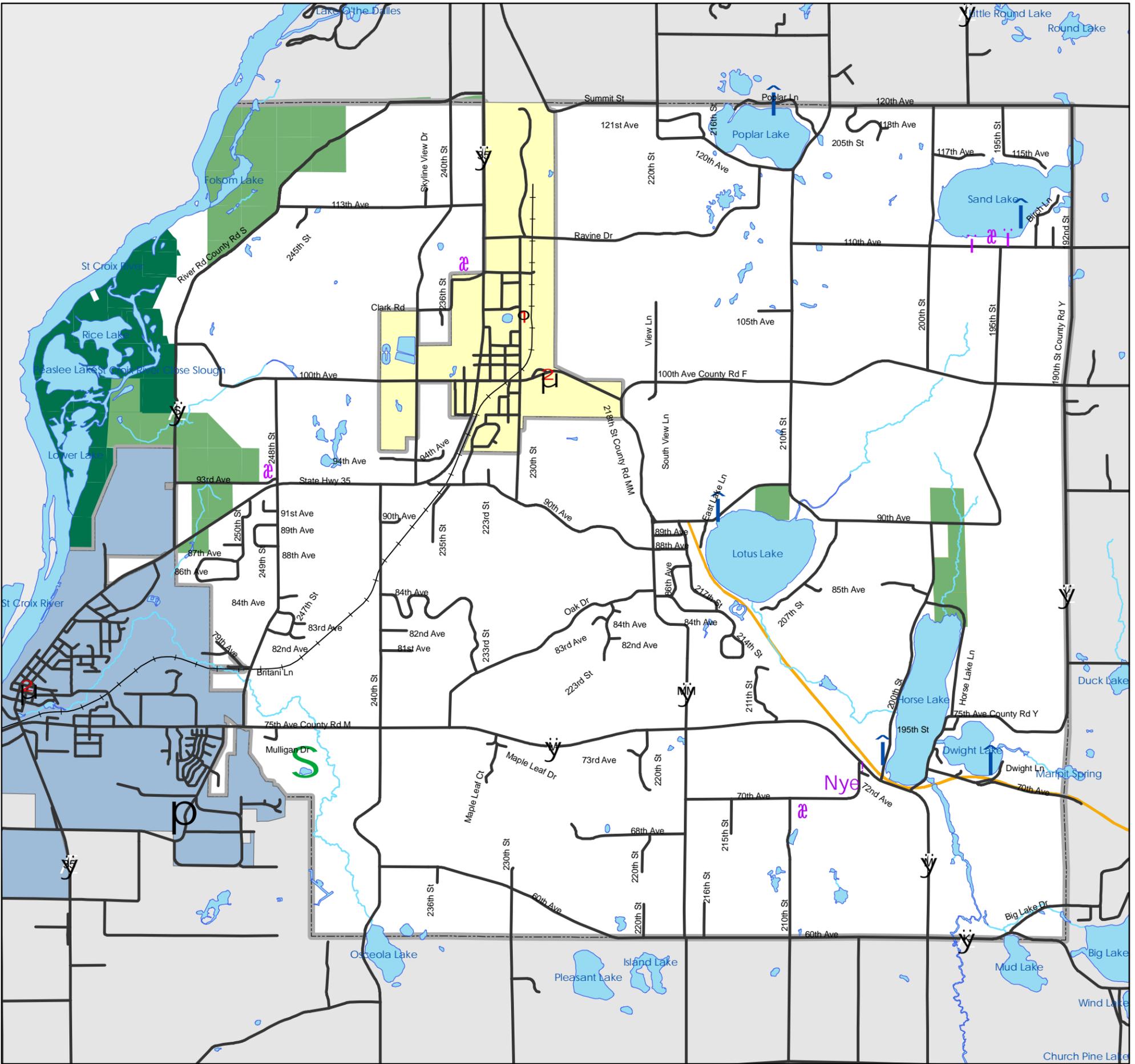
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October 2009
Source: Polk County, WisDOT



Town of Osceola

Community Facilities

-  Town of Osceola
-  Village of Osceola
-  Village of Dresser
-  Lakes & Rivers
-  Streams
-  Federal Managed Lands
-  DNR Managed Lands
-  Boat Access
-  Town Hall
-  Fire Hall
-  Kroked Kreek Golf Course
-  Amery-Dresser Trail
-  L.O. Simenstad Airport
-  Church
-  Cemetery



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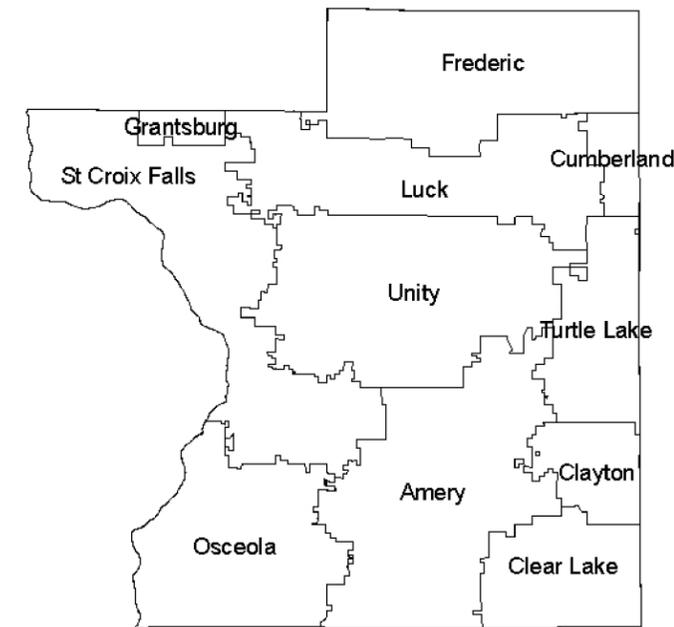
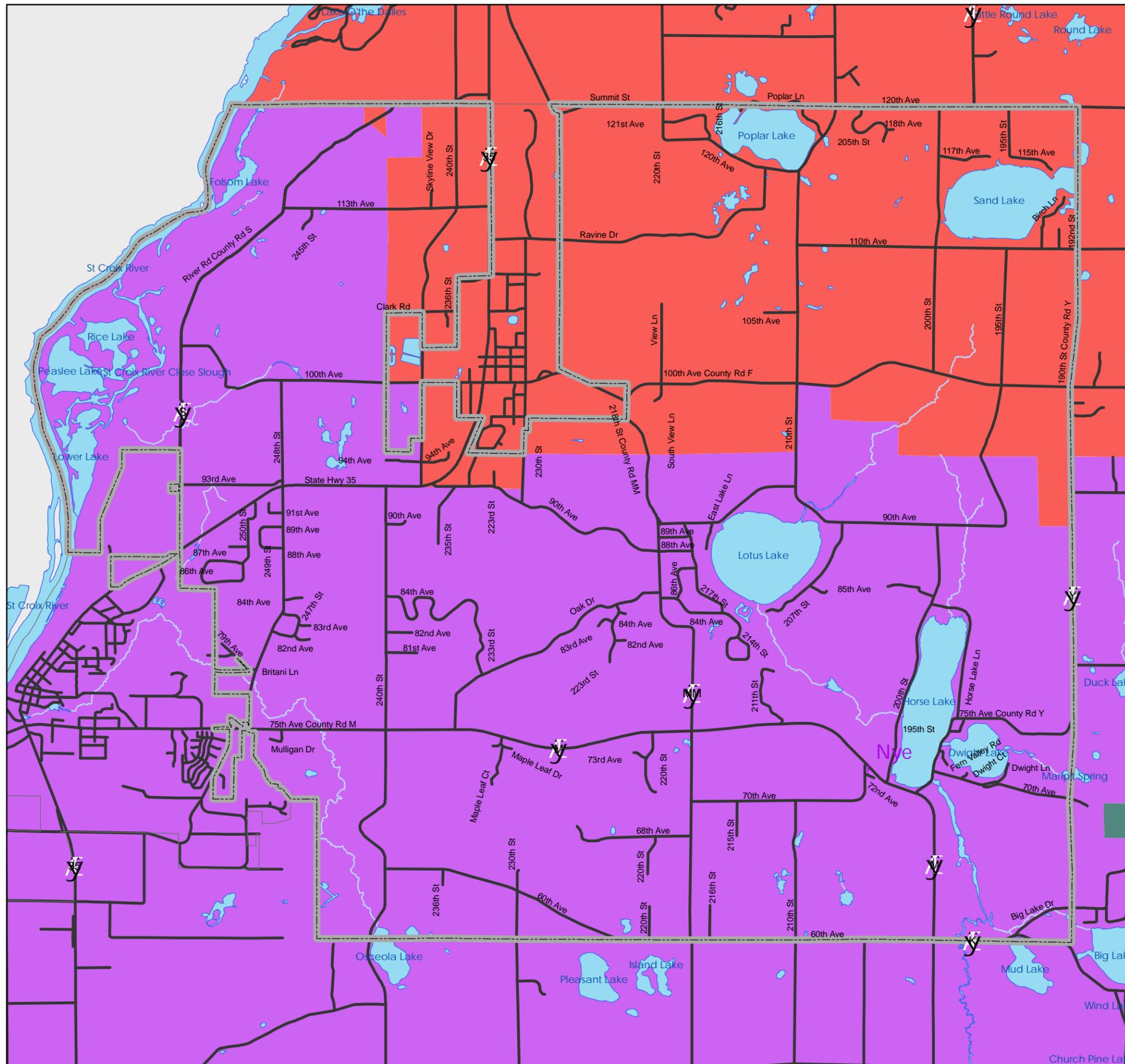
Town of Osceola

School Districts

 Town of Osceola

School Districts

-  Amery
-  Osceola
-  St Croix Falls



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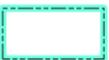
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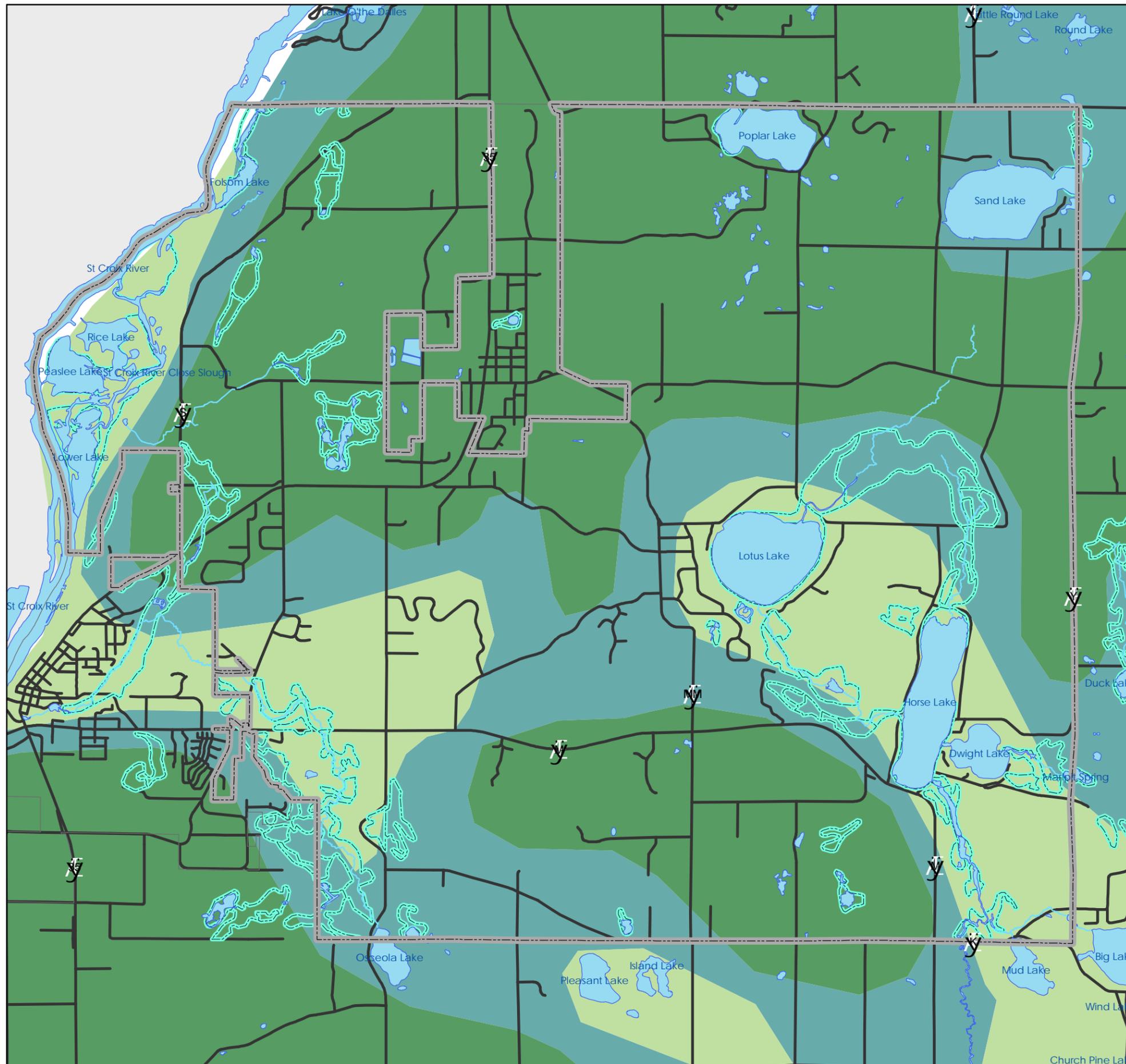
Town of Osceola

Depth to Water Table

-  Town of Osceola
-  Lakes & Rivers
-  Streams
-  Wetlands

Depth to Water Table

-  0 to 20 feet
-  20 to 50 feet
-  Greater than 50 feet



Groundwater is an important resource for Wisconsin as about 75% of residents rely on it for their source of drinking water. About fifteen to thirty percent of all precipitation in Wisconsin ends up as groundwater. There is documentation in some parts of the state of reduction in groundwater recharge due to increases in impervious surfaces and increases in demand. Also, the quality of groundwater has been of concern in parts of Wisconsin where high levels of nitrates and other contaminants have been found. The distance the water must flow to the groundwater and the ease of its movement combine to play a significant role in determining the susceptibility of an area to contamination.

NOTE:
The data used to create this map were derived from generalized statewide information at small scales, and cannot be used for any site-specific purposes.



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Town of Osceola

Depth to Bedrock

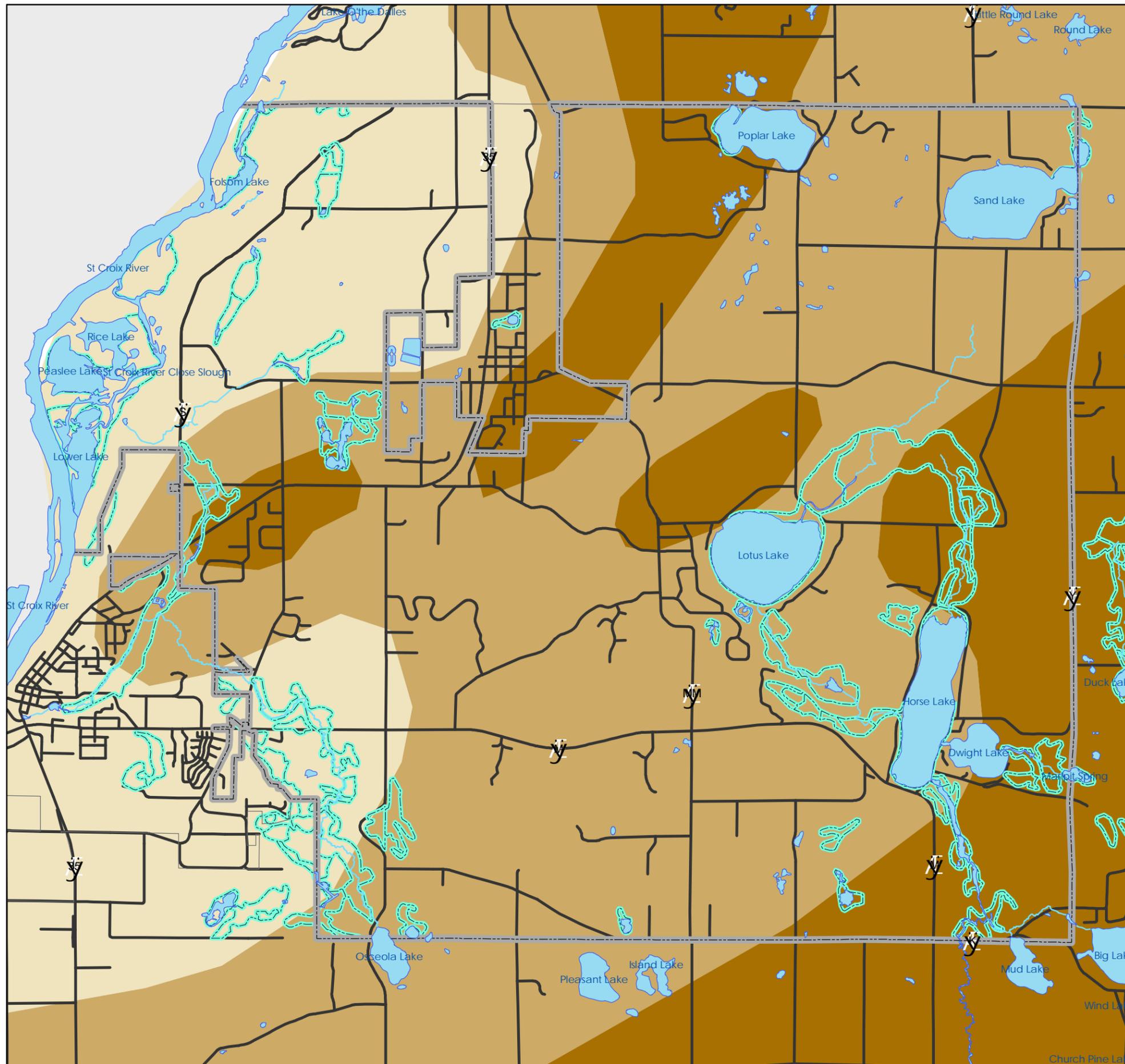
-  Town of Osceola
-  Lakes & Rivers
-  Streams
-  Wetlands

Depth to Bedrock

-  5 to 50 feet
-  50 to 100 feet
-  Greater than 100 feet

Depth to bedrock is the distance to the top of the bedrock, which is the uppermost consolidated deposit. Where the depth to bedrock is shallow, contaminants generally have less contact time with the earth's natural pollutant removal processes found in the unconsolidated surficial deposits. The greater the depth to bedrock, the more likely that the water table is located above the bedrock layer.

NOTE:
The data used to create this map were derived from generalized statewide information at small scales, and cannot be used for any site-specific purposes.

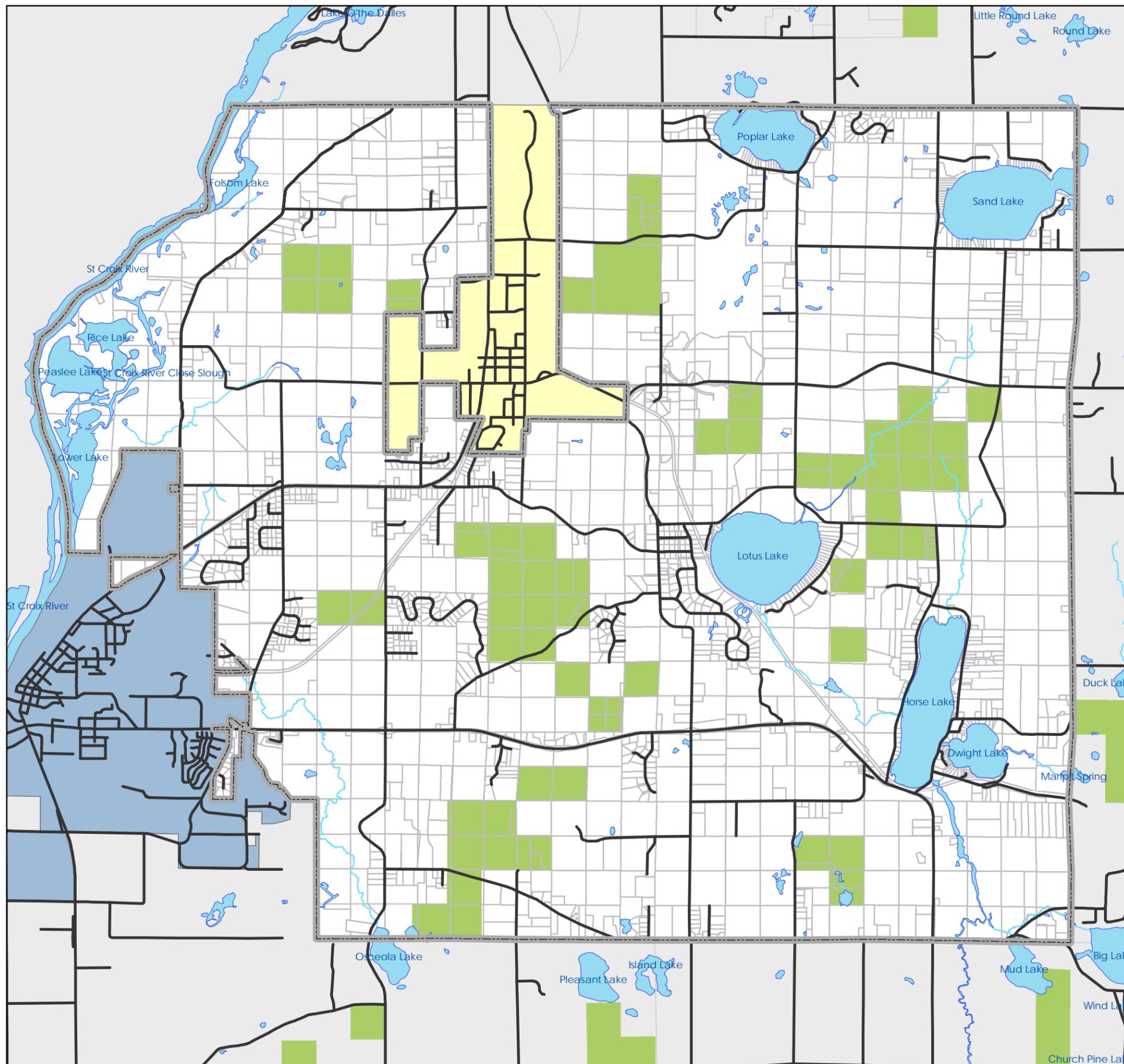


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Town of Osceola

Managed Forest Lands



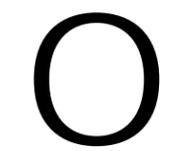
- Town of Osceola
- Village of Osceola
- Village of Dresser
- Lakes & Rivers
- Streams
- Parcels with land enrolled in MFL

NOTE:
This map displays generalized spatial representation of lands enrolled by landowners in the Managed Forest Law program. Parcels smaller than 40 acres are not delineated in this layer, but are represented by the 40-acre quarter-quarter they lie within. A PLSS quarter-quarter section indicator (from Tax Law ORACLE database) was used to select quarter-quarter section polygons from the PLSS grid. This process results in polygons of 40 acres, minimum. However, the actual size of the enrolled property may be as small as 10 acres. Certain government lots or fractional lots, that cannot be represented by a PLSS quarter-quarter number, are not included in this GIS layer. An estimated 5% of the MFL lands are excluded.



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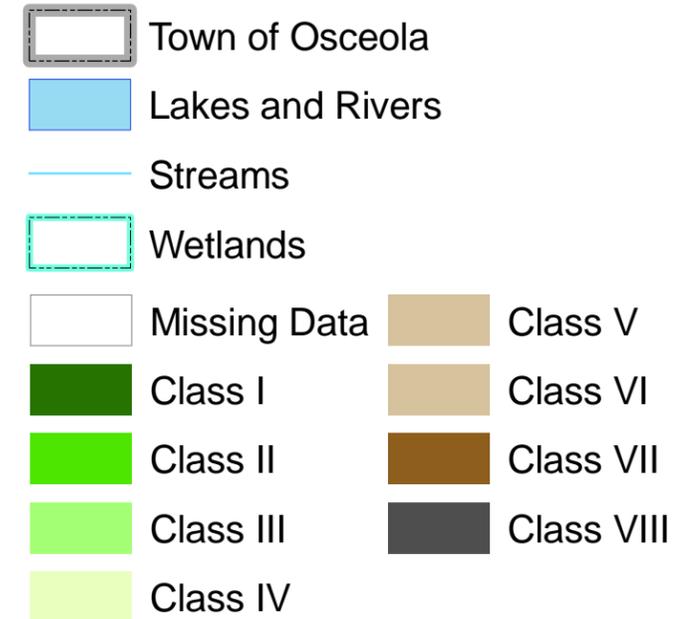
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0 1 2 4 Miles

Town of Osceola

Soil Capabilities

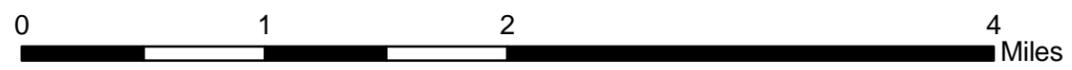
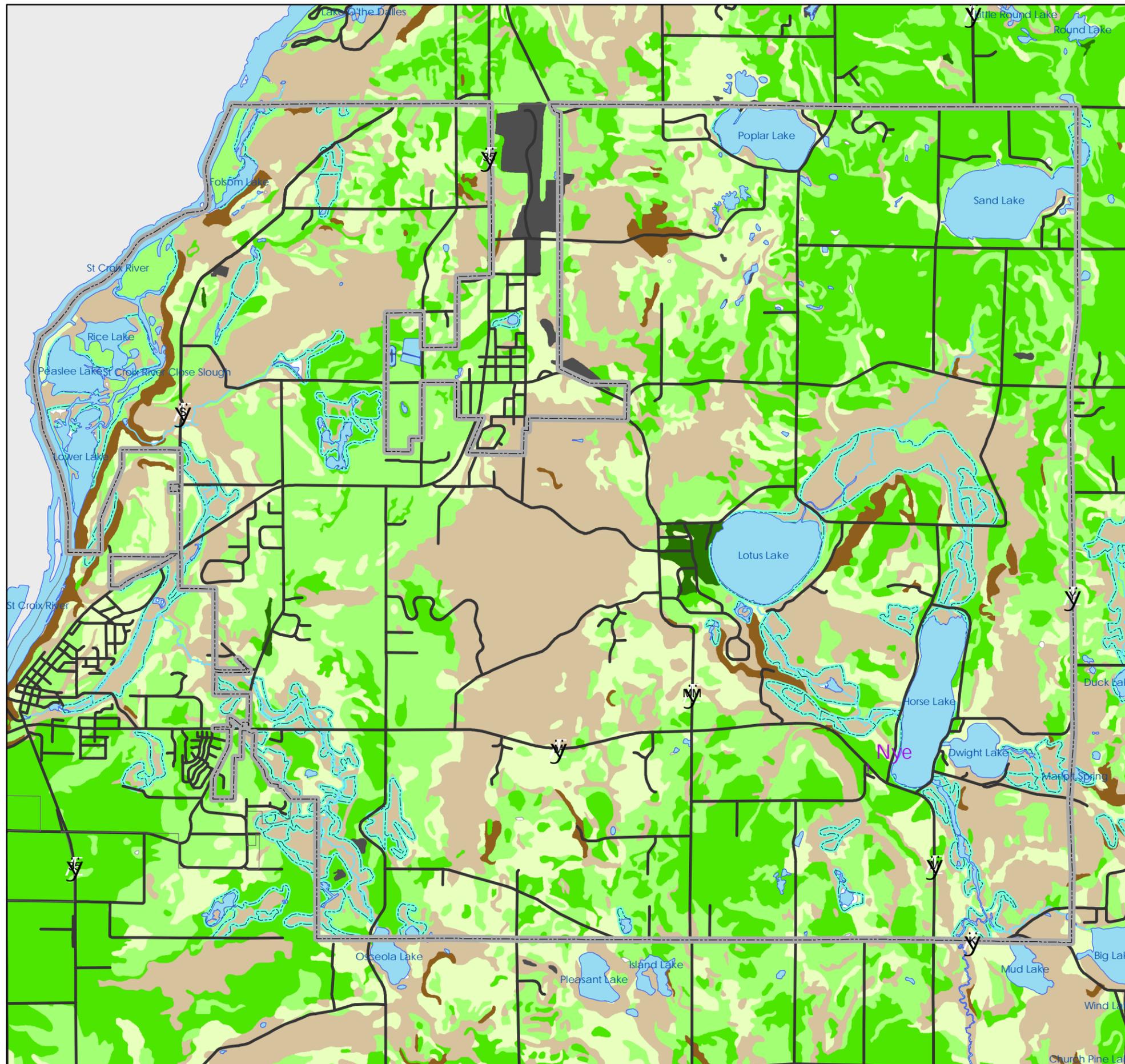


Land Suited to Cultivation and Other Uses:

Class I - soils have few limitations that restrict their use.
 Class II - soils have some limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices.
 Class III - soils have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require special conservation practices, or both.
 Class IV - soils have very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants, require very careful management, or both.

Land Limited in Use-Generally Not Suited to Cultivation:

Class V - soils have little or no erosion hazard but have other limitations impractical to remove that limit their use largely to pasture, range, woodland, or wildlife food and cover.
 Class VI - soils have severe limitations that make them generally unsuited to cultivation and limit their use largely to pasture or range, woodland, or wildlife food and cover.
 Class VII - soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuited to cultivation and that restrict their use largely to grazing, woodland, or wildlife.
 Class VIII - soils and landforms have limitations that preclude their use for commercial plant production.



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Town of Osceola

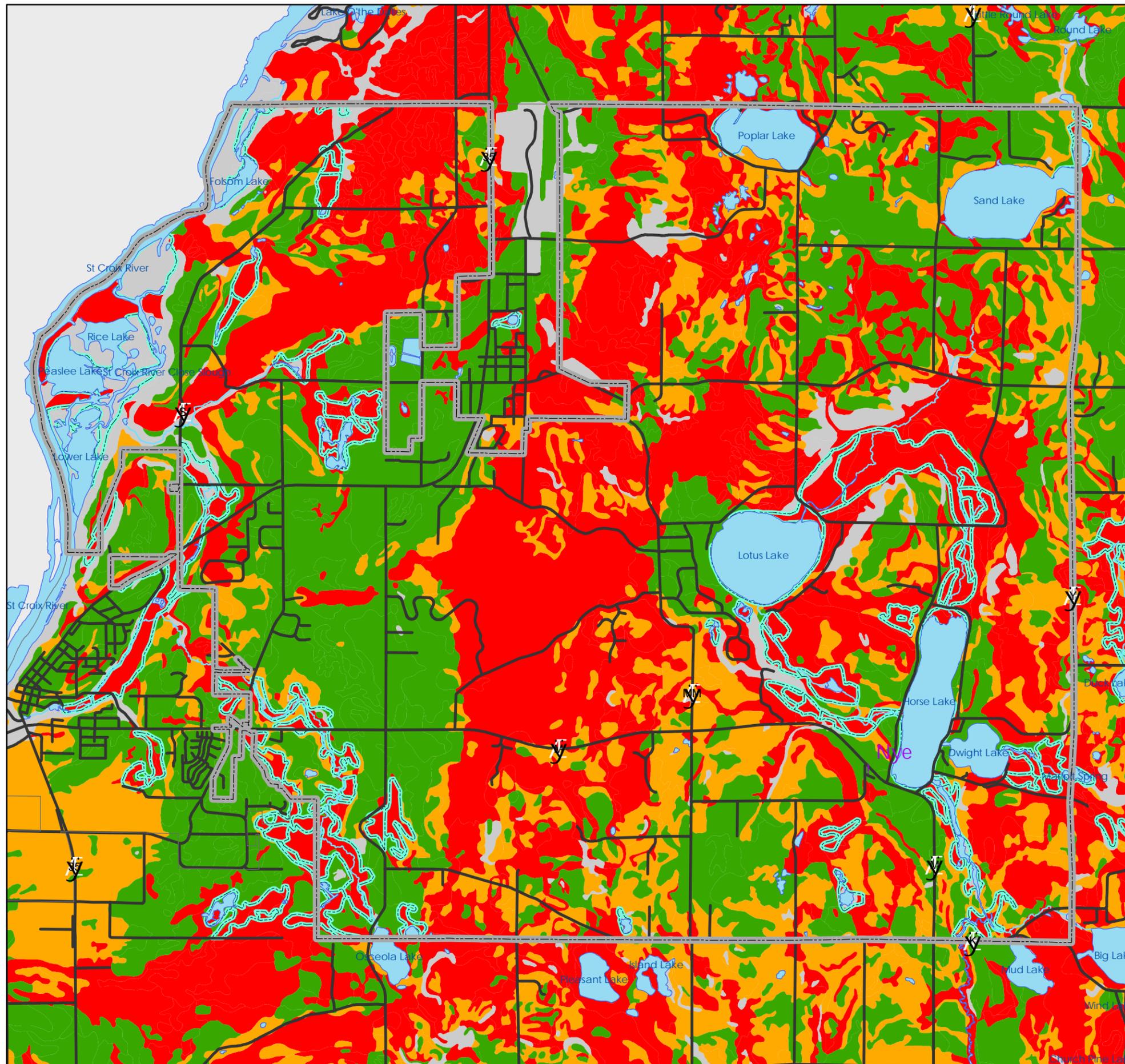
Soil Limitations

-  Town of Osceola
-  Lakes & Rivers
-  Streams
-  Wetlands

Soil Limitations for Dwellings w/ Basements

-  Not Rated
-  Not Limited
-  Somewhat Limited
-  Very Limited

Soil properties influence the development of building sites, including the selection of the site, the design of the structure, construction, performance after construction, and maintenance. The USDA Polk County Soil Survey identifies soil limitations for various types of buildings. These limitations are labeled as slight, moderate, and severe. The ratings for dwellings are based on the soil properties that affect the capacity of the soil to support a load without movement and on the properties that affect excavation and construction costs. The properties that affect the load-supporting capacity include depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, subsidence, linear extensibility (shrink-swell potential), and compressibility. The properties that affect the ease and amount of excavation include depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, slope, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, and the amount and size of rock



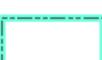
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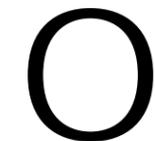
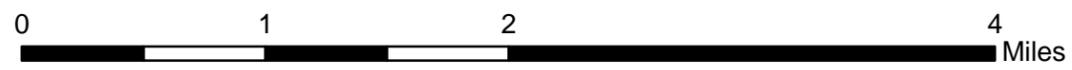
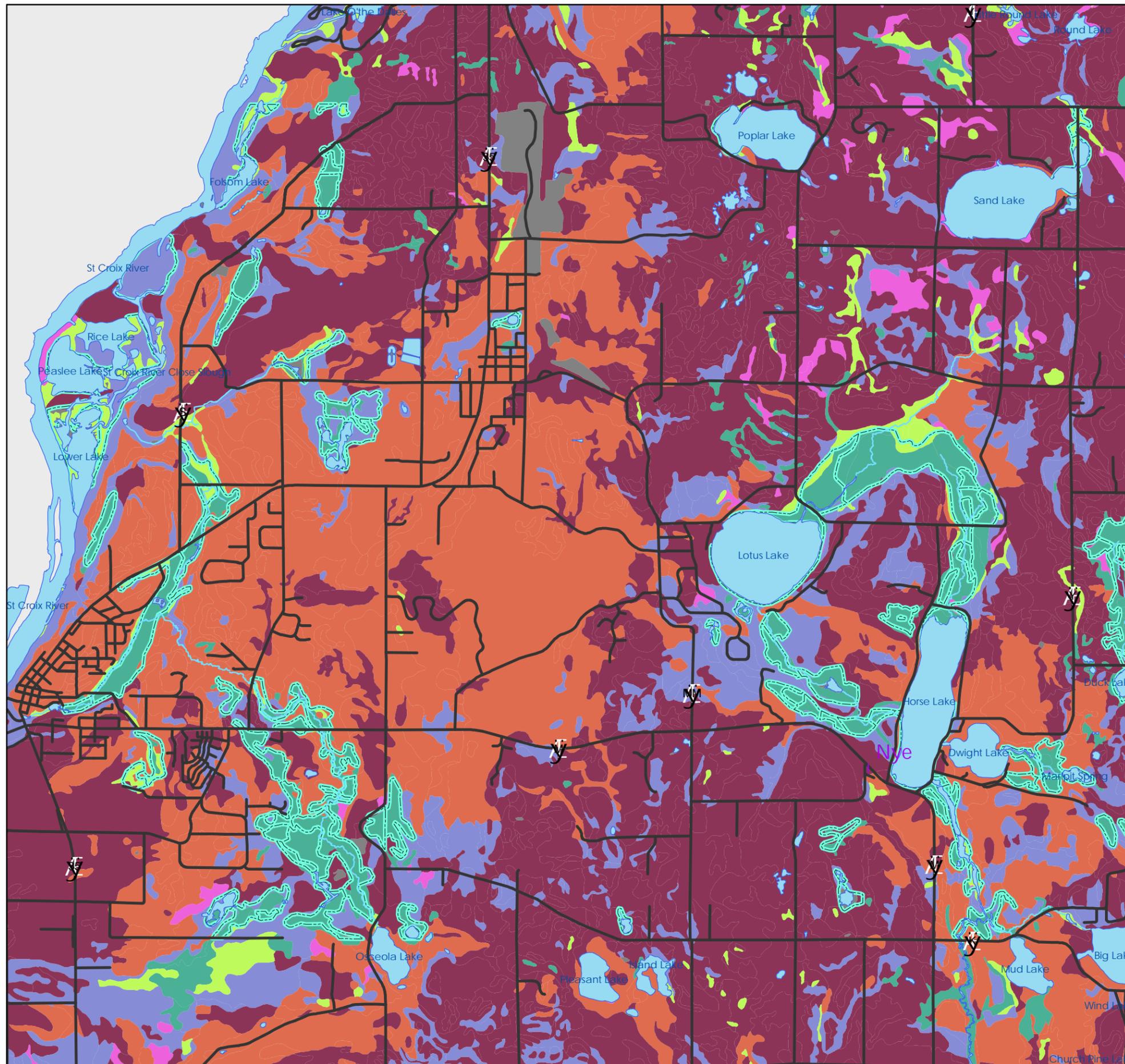
0 1 2 4 Miles

Town of Osceola

Drainage Class

-  Town of Osceola
-  Lakes & Rivers
-  Streams
-  Wetlands
-  Excessively drained
-  Well drained
-  Moderately drained
-  Somewhat drained
-  Poorly drained
-  Very poorly drained
-  No Data

The natural drainage class is a group of soils defined as having a specific range in relative wetness under natural conditions as it pertains to wetness due to a water table under conditions similar to those under which the soil developed.

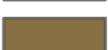


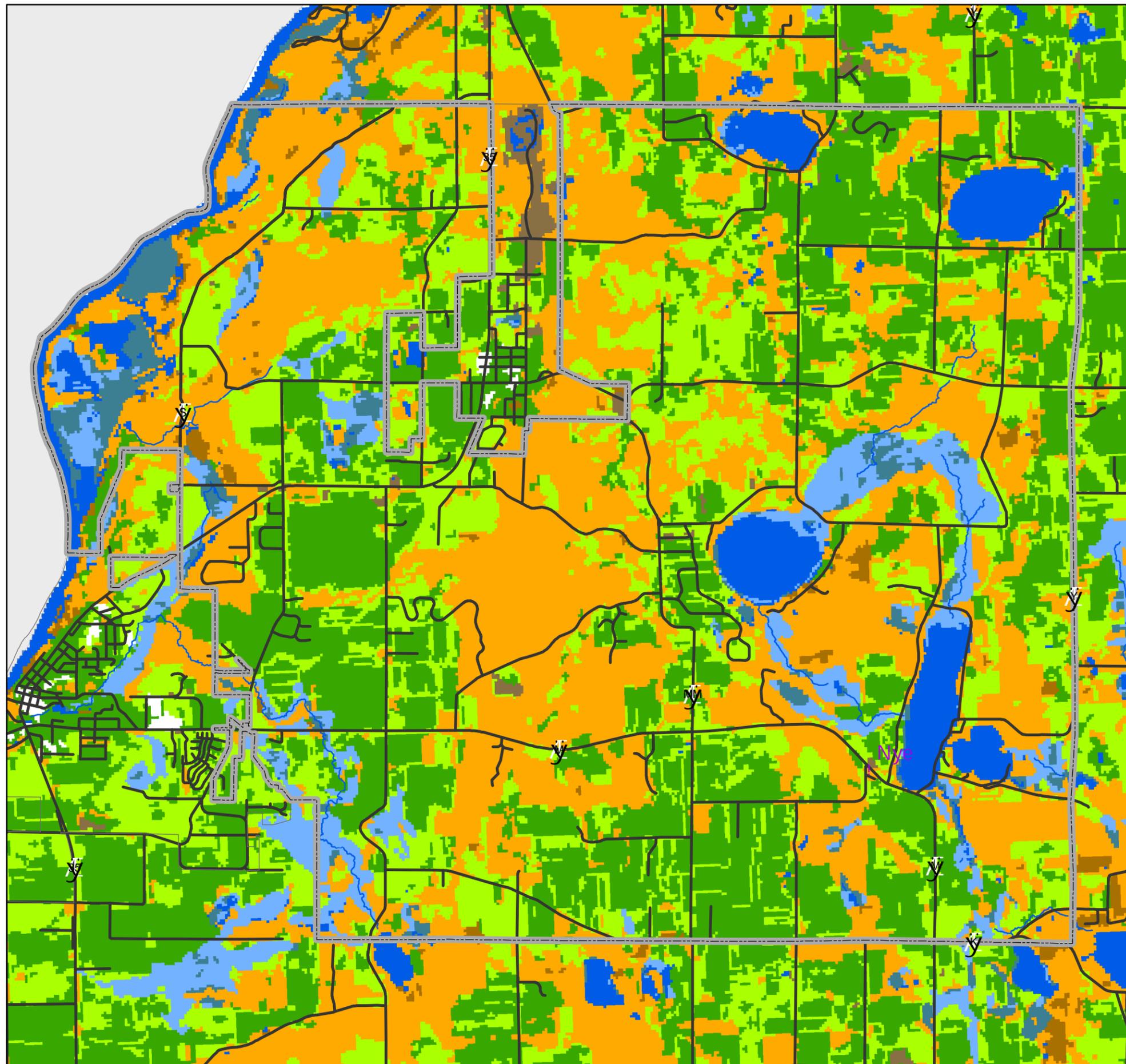
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Town of Osceola

Land Cover

-  Town of Osceola
-  Agriculture
-  Grassland
-  Coniferous Forest
-  Deciduous Forest
-  Mixed Forest
-  Open Water
-  Wetland
-  Forested Wetland
-  Barren



0 1 2 4 Miles



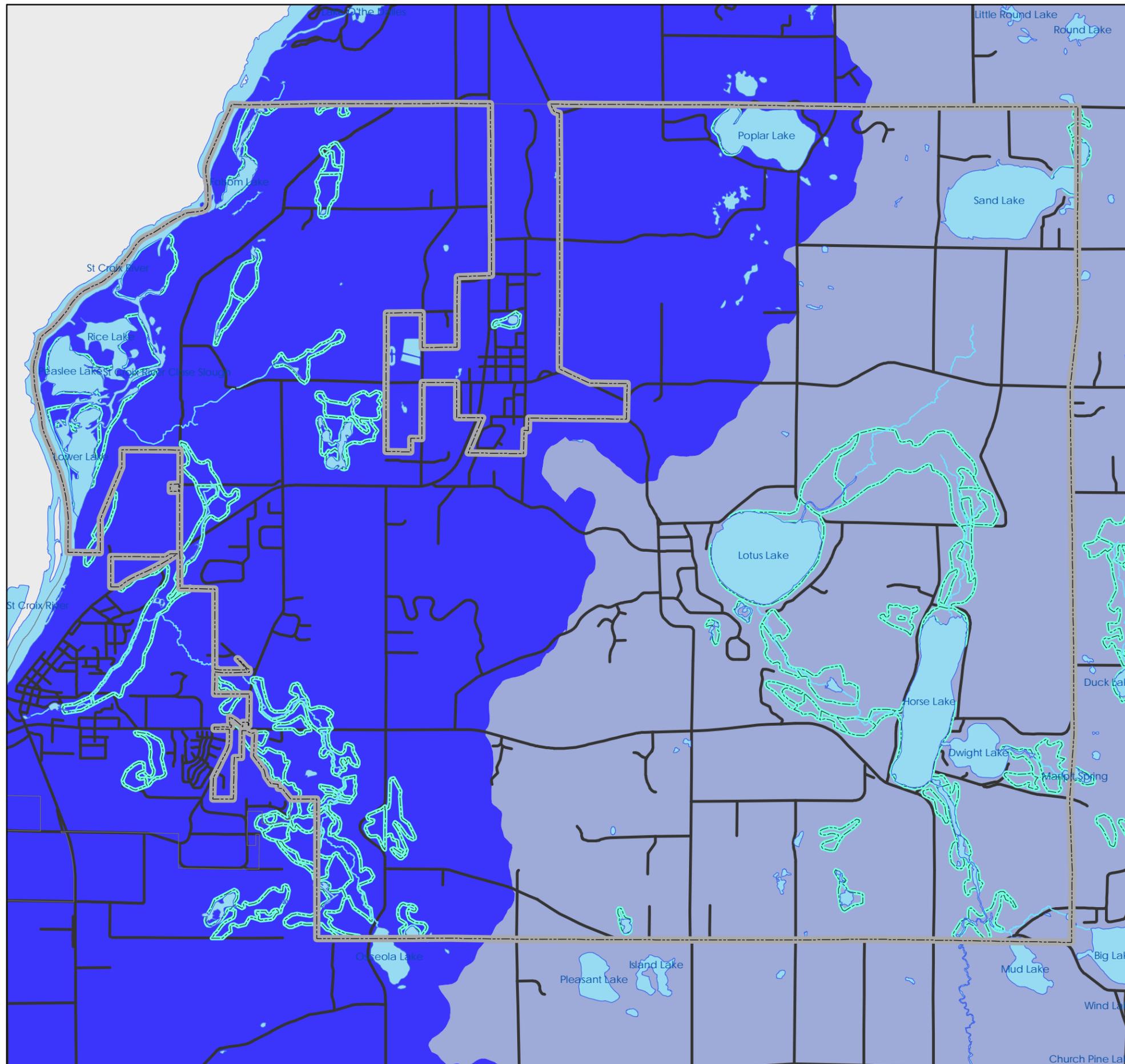
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Town of Osceola

Watersheds

-  Town of Osceola
 -  Lakes & Rivers
 -  Streams
 -  Wetlands
- Watershed**
-  Lower Apple River
 -  Trout Brook



A watershed is an area of land that drains its water into a stream, lake, or wetland. The size of a watershed can range from several hundred square miles to only a few square miles. There are 13 watersheds in Polk County.



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October 2009
Source: Polk County, WDNR



0 1 2 4 Miles

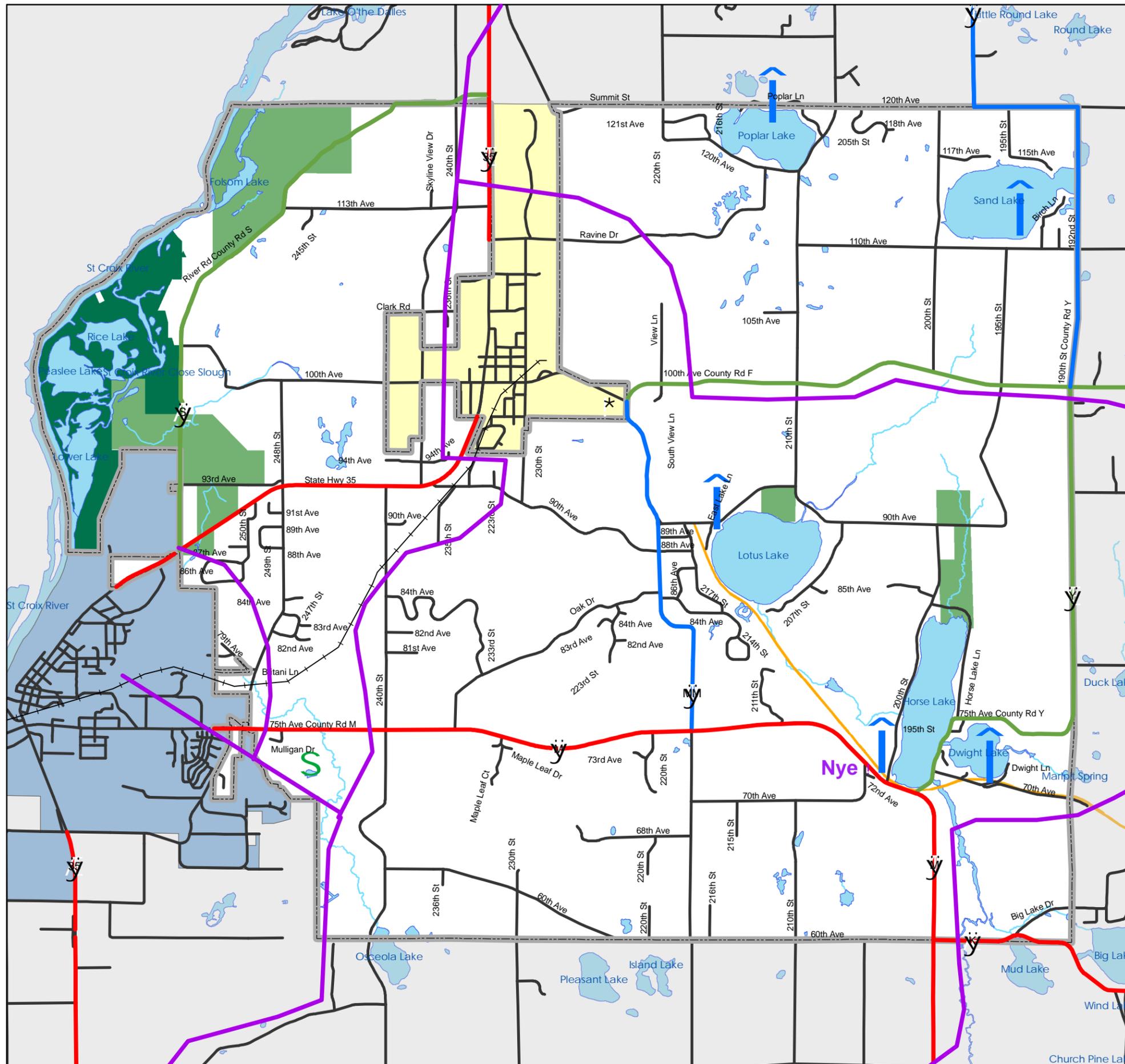
Town of Osceola

Recreational Opportunities

-  Town of Osceola
-  Village of Osceola
-  Village of Dresser
-  Lakes & Rivers
-  Streams
-  Boat Access
-  DNR Managed Lands
-  Federal Managed Lands
-  Kroked Kreek Golf Course
-  Trollhaugen Ski Resort

Bicycling Conditions

-  Best Conditions
-  Moderate Conditions
-  Undesirable Conditions
-  Amery-Dresser Trail
-  Snowmobile Trails



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Remediation & Redevelopment Sites

- Open Site (ongoing cleanup)
- Closed Site (completed cleanup)
- Town of Osceola
- Village of Dresser
- Village of Osceola
- Lakes & Rivers
- Streams
- Wetlands

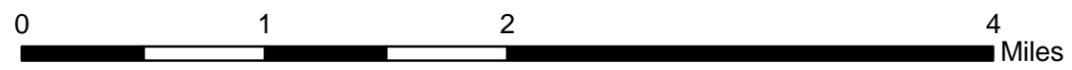
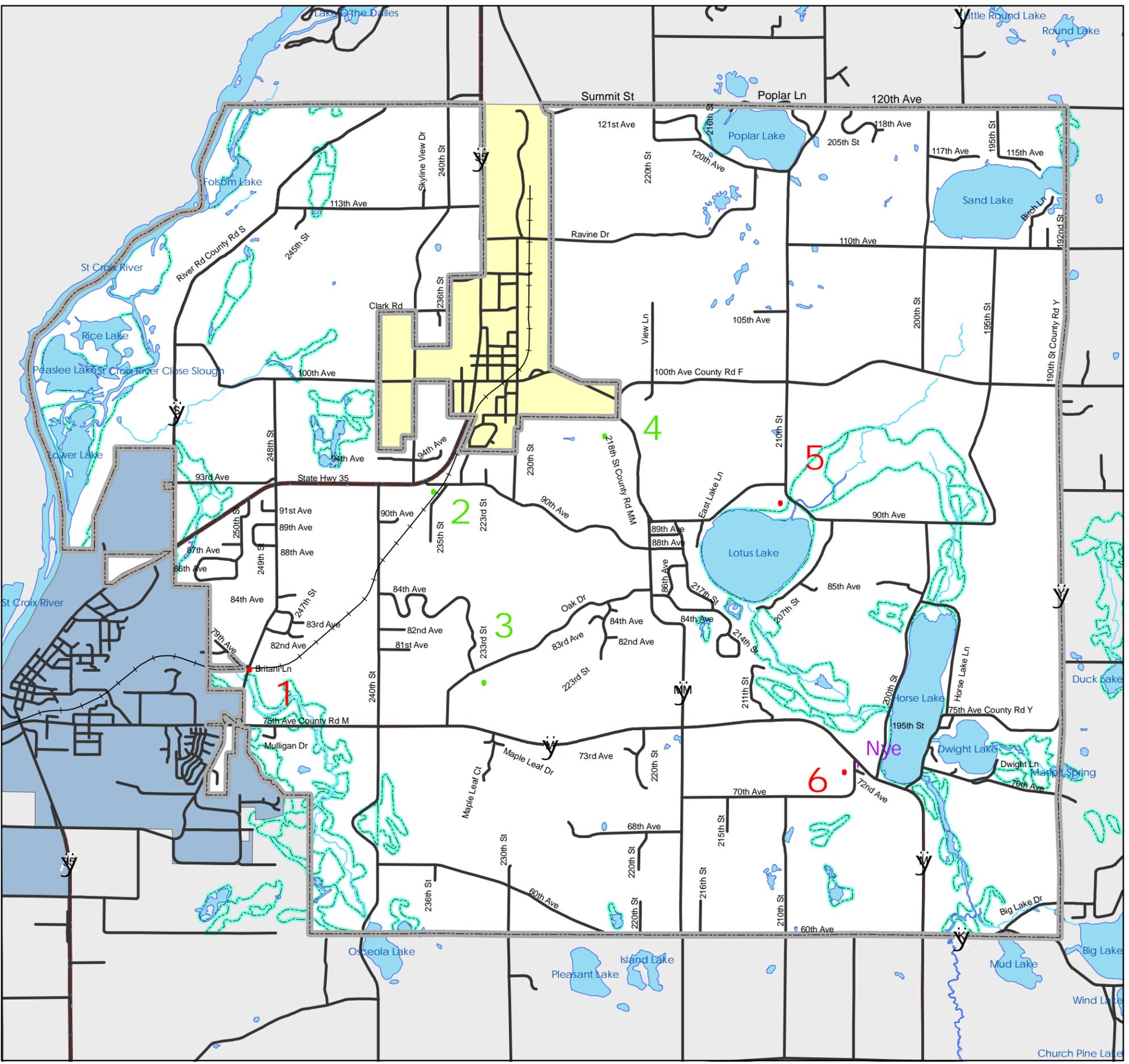
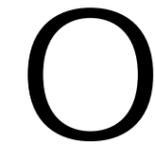
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Godfrey Property
Started: 10/00
Ended: OPEN | 4. Trollhaugen Ski Area
Started: 4/98
Ended: 10/00 |
| 2. Selzler Office & Garage
Started: 6/94
Ended: 4/00 | 5. Osceola Rod & Gun Club
Started: 12/01
Ended: OPEN |
| 3. St. Croix River Valley LF
Started: 11/93
Ended: 10/96 | 6. Nye Store (former)
Started: 10/00
Ended: OPEN |

Remediation and Redevelopment sites are part of the DNR's Contaminated Lands Environmental Action Network (CLEAN), an inter-linked network of DNR databases tracking information on different contaminated land activities throughout the State.



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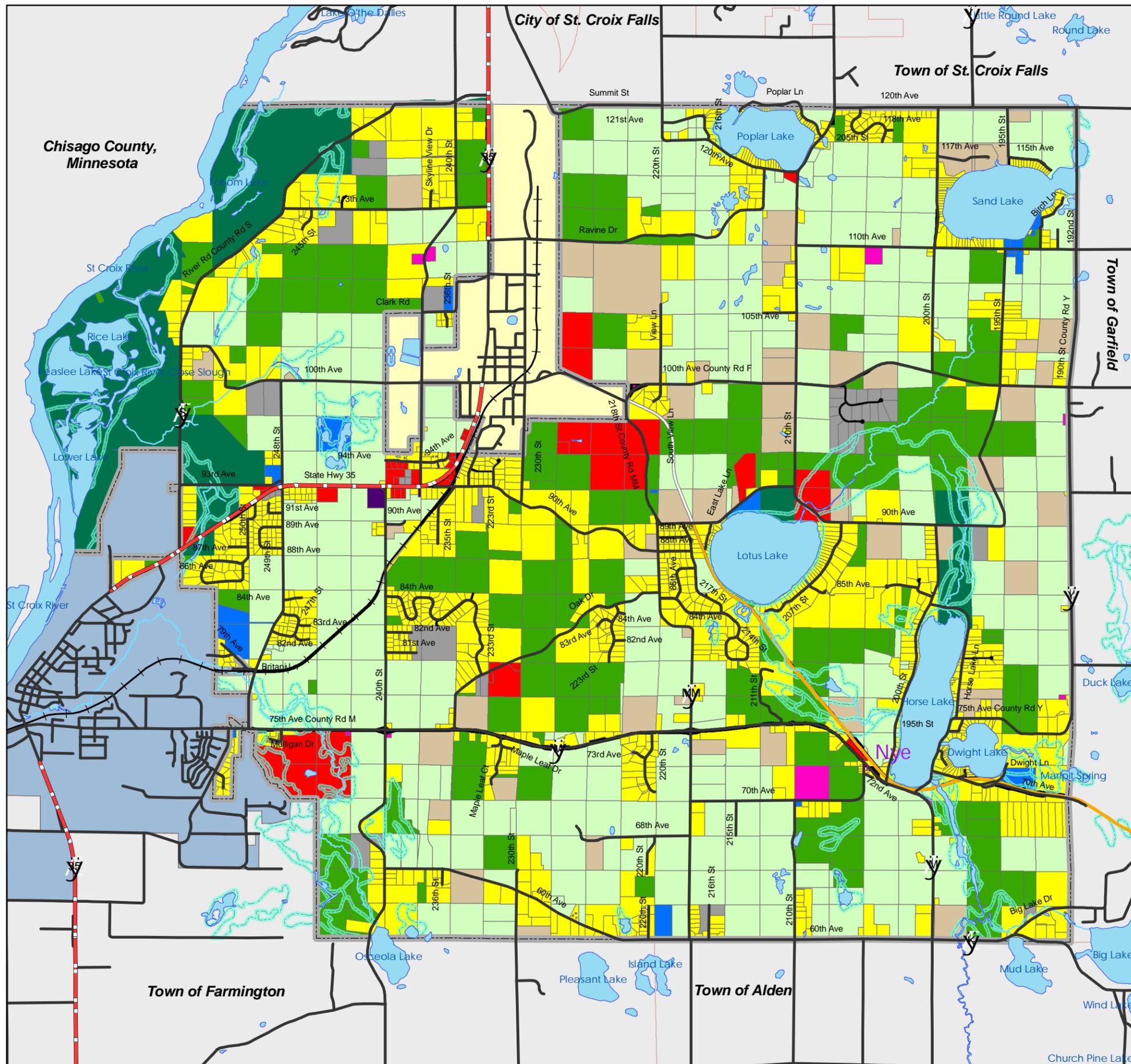
Town of Osceola

Existing Land Use

-  Town of Osceola
-  Village of Osceola
-  Village of Dresser
-  Lakes & Rivers
-  Streams
-  Wetlands
-  Amery-Dresser Trail
-  Federal and State Lands

Existing Land Use

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Residential |  Farmstead |
|  Commercial |  Public/Institutional |
|  Agricultural |  Manufacturing/Industrial |
|  Undeveloped |  Transportation |
|  Forest |  Utility |



This map was created using assessment codes for each property according to the 2007 Polk County Tax Roll and by using aerial photographs from the Polk County Land Information Department; descriptions of the classifications are included in the Land Use Element.



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Town of Osceola

Future Land Use

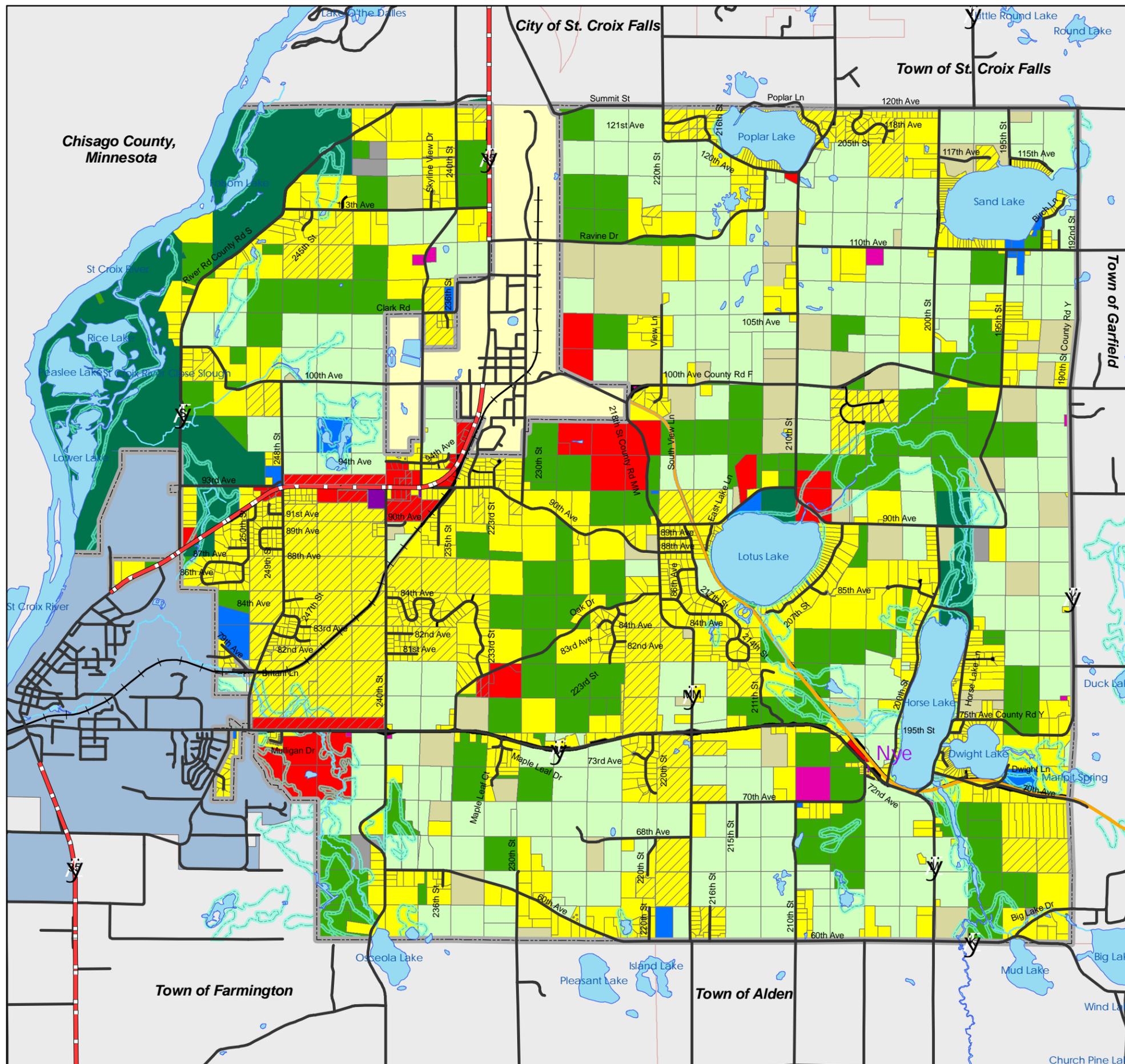
- Town of Osceola
- Village of Osceola
- Village of Dresser
- Lakes & Rivers
- Streams
- Wetlands
- Amery-Dresser Trail
- Federal and State Lands

Future Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial
- Agricultural
- Undeveloped
- Forest
- Farmstead
- Public/Institutional
- Manufacturing/Industrial
- Transportation
- Utility

A Future Land Use map is a community's guide to future planning. It is meant to be a map of what the community would like to see happen. The map is not the same as a zoning map or official map and is not a prediction of the future. It can be amended as needed.

The Potential Areas of Land Use Conversion are those parcels that may be changed from the existing land use designated on the Town's Existing Land Use map.



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