

STATE OF WISCONSIN
TOWN OF CROSS, BUFFALO COUNTY

Ordinance No. 2011-12-4

**AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE TOWN OF
CROSS, BUFFALO COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

The Town Board of the Town of Cross, Buffalo County, Wisconsin does ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. Pursuant to sections (59.69(3) Wis. Statutes, the Town of Cross is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in sections 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of Wis. Statutes.

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

SECTION 3. The Planning Committee of the Town of Cross, Buffalo County, Wisconsin, by a majority vote of the entire committee recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the document entitled "TOWN OF CROSS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN", containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of Wis. Statutes.

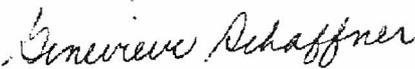
SECTION 4. The Town of Cross has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of section 66.1001(4)(d) of Wis. Statutes.

SECTION 5. The Town Board of the Town of Cross, Buffalo County, Wisconsin, does, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "TOWN OF CROSS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN", pursuant to section 66.1001(4)© of the Wis. Statutes.

SECTION 6. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority of the members of the town board and as required by law.

ADOPTED this 9 day of December, 2011


Town Chair


Attest:

Town Clerk

**Town
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Comprehensive Plan

Adopted : 12/9/2011

**Prepared by: Town of Cross
Landowners**

Town of Cross Comprehensive Plan Buffalo County, Wisconsin

Town Board: Leonard Litscher Chair
 Chris Klein Supervisor
 Corey Kubis Supervisor

Town Clerk: Genevieve Schaffner

Town Treasurer: Wanda Putz

Assessor: Barrett Brenner, Chimney Rock Appraisal

Planning Committee: Corey Kubis
 Leonard Litscher
 Diane Oliver
 Bob Putz
 Carol Risley
 Genevieve Schaffner
 Arlen Schmitt
 John Stettler, Chair
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Definitions:

Bluff- A steep headland, promontory (high ridge of land or rock jutting out to sea or other body of water), riverbank, or cliff.

Dugway- A section of roadway extending from the top of a bluff to the bottom of a bluff, generally through the wooded portion of the bluff with a steep grade, often with sharp curves and/or switchbacks. We assume the term originates from construction by digging into a hill.

Prime Farmland- Rural land with the best combination of physical & chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is available for these uses. Normally includes classes I, II, III land as defined by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Works Cited

“Bluff.” The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

“Dugway.” Brevick, Dave. Buffalo County Highway Commissioner. Personal Interview. 4 Oct. 2001.

“Prime Farmland.” Official definition. National Resource Conservation Services.

Planning Process

The land use planning process began with a presentation by the Buffalo County Extension Agriculture Agent to the Buffalo County Towns Association in 2001. The agent spoke on changes in agriculture and the effect of that change on land use. The Town of Cross was the eighth town to contact the Buffalo County Extension Office for help in developing a plan. Town of Cross officials then attended a public meeting for other towns and further discussion took place on reasons for planning.

Town of Cross officials then invited a number of people to serve on a planning committee. Other committee members asked to be included through a land use survey and through public meeting announcements. Efforts were made to invite a diverse group of residents. The planning committee provided needed views and input into issues that should be addressed and that are included in this document. Results from this effort are found later in this document. A public meeting was held about halfway through the process to get more input from the citizens of the Town of Cross.

Comprehensive plans are not static documents, but are designed to change and be revised to meet current needs of the people. This document will be used as a guide to future change and development in the Town of Cross.

9 ELEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

The Smart Growth legislation, signed into law as part of the 1999-2000 budget, is intended to provide local government units tools to create comprehensive plans, to promote more informed land-use decisions and to encourage state agencies to create more balanced land-use rules and policies. Nine elements are required by the Smart Growth legislation. These elements ensure that all aspects of community life will be considered as part of the comprehensive plan. The nine elements are:

- Issues and opportunities
- Housing
- Transportation
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Agriculture
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Economic Development
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Land Use
- Implementation

Development of Goals for the Town of Cross

Land use planning is more than a set of rules for building, etc. It is a declaration of the priorities and values of the people within the Town. These priorities and values should determine if and how property is developed and used.

The remainder of this document describes the priorities and values of the people of the Town of Cross. It lists a set of action plans to achieve these priorities and values.

I. Issues and Opportunities:

Population and Population Projections:

Population of the Town has decreased some over time from 395 in 1960 to 325 in 1990. Projections from the Wisconsin Department of Administration – Demographic Services Center, indicate that population is expected to rise in Cross by 100 persons. Residents felt that their population would not increase as the projections indicated. This was confirmed by the 2010 Census.

Table 1: Town of Cross Population Statistics and Projections – U.S. Census Data

Jurisdiction	Census 1960	Census 1970	Census 1980	Census 1990	Census 2000	Census 2010	Proj. 2015	Proj. 2020
Cross	395	363	393	325	366	377	427	446
Buffalo County	14202	13743	14309	13584	13804	13,577	14,554	14,794

Population by Race:

The Town of Cross is predominantly white. This has been constant since records have been kept. There is an increasing population of Hispanic people due to employment opportunities on farms and other business entry level positions.

Table 2: Town of Cross Population by Race – 2000 Census

Race	Population %
Total	366
White	97.8
Hispanic	1.4
Black	0.0
Asian	0.0
Other	0.8

Population by Education Level:

The town of Cross is similar to other neighboring municipalities except that they have a higher population of people with college graduate degrees than other municipalities in Buffalo County. This may be explained by the number of people employed in the education and health care fields.

Table 3: Town of Cross Population by Education – 2000 Census

Education Level	Population %
Total	366 (people)
No High School Diploma	4.1
High School Diploma Only	40.5
Some College	20.2
Associates Degree	12.4
Bachelor's Degree	11.6
Graduate Degree	11.2

Population by Age:

Population in the Town of Cross tends to be 1-3% younger than in Buffalo County.

Table 4: Town of Cross Population by Age – 2000 Census

Age – years	Number	Percent
Under 5	24	6.6
5-9	27	7.4
10-14	40	10.9
15-19	33	9.0
20-24	12	3.3
25-34	53	14.5
35-44	55	15.0
45-54	56	15.3
55-59	16	4.4

60-64	17	4.6
65-74	19	5.2
75 and older	14	3.8

Per Capita Income:

Per capita income has increased in the Town of Cross faster than that of Buffalo County, but still lags behind the State of Wisconsin.

Table 5: Town of Cross Per Capita Income – 2000 Census

	1990 per Capita Income	2000 Per Capita income	% Change
Town of Cross	\$11,550	\$19,625	+69.9
Buffalo County	\$10,947	\$18,123	+65.6
State of Wisconsin	\$13,276	\$21,271	+60.2

A SWOT Analysis was conducted with the planning committee after analyzing data as collected in a community survey. This list provided a guideline throughout the planning process.

Strengths~

- People – good, helpful
- Scenery
- Schools
- Privacy
- Hunting
- Produce and Fertile Land – Ag
- Outdoor sports – beyond hunting
- Rivers
- Good roads
- Close to town – jobs, parts, etc.
- Strong sense of history
- Wide range of wildlife
- Cold winters
- Seasons

Opportunities~

- ATV, Bike, Hiking, Horse trails
- Develop guidelines for lot sizes
- Easy access for work and higher education → Winona
- Amount of land for development
- Quality local contractors for housing and other construction live here
- Develop a plan for conversation/cooperation between rural people and sub development people

- Cottage industries suited to area
 - Cabins
 - Bed & Breakfast
 - Etc.
- Child Care services?
- Alternate agricultural crops – CSA, Pick your own
- Limited restrictions to growth

Weaknesses~

- Not enough public input at town board meetings
- Police protection – not around, not proactive
- High taxes due to MFL
- High taxes due to Hunting – Recreational land
- Increasing absentee landownership
- Decrease in State and Federal funding decreases services
- Technology lacking – cell phone, high speed internet
- Shortage of children – schools
- Increased parceling of land – small tracts
- Resistance to change – slow to look at different ways to do things
- Skepticism towards people with higher education (outside of trades)

Threats~

- Woodland tax – people who do not live on property
- Just “old” people left in town
- Closing interstate bridge to Winona during construction
- Lack of well-paying local jobs
- Open enrollment – schools – loss of state aid
- State mandates – voting, roads, survey in town hall
- County taking over planning, highway work, etc.
- Lack of solid waste recycling in town
- Lack of support groups and /or social activities
- Higher taxes – regardless of type

II. HOUSING ELEMENT:

Wisconsin's population density is 103 people per square mile. Buffalo County is well below that with only 20 people per square mile. Housing growth in Cross was the third fastest among Buffalo County Towns.

Table 6: Housing Units in the Town of Cross and Buffalo County – Census Data

Area	1970	1980	1990	2000
Town of Cross	96	118	118	141
Buffalo County	4,597	5,478	5,586	6,098

There are a total of 141 total housing units in the Town of Cross. The housing density was 3.7 homes per square mile, which is slightly less than the average for Buffalo County. 90.1% (127) of the homes were occupied during the 2000 census. 74% of the homes (94) were occupied by married couple families. 18% (23) had at least one individual 65 years or older living in the home. 19.7% (25) were renter occupied homes. Average household size was 2.88 persons. The average home value was \$105,400 and was built in 1970. 97% of all homes were single family dwellings (10% of those homes were mobile homes). There were no structures having more than 2 housing units.

There has been a significant growth of seasonal homes, cabins and second homes in Cross over the last twenty years. There has been some concern over trailers being placed without permits and being left in place year round and not having a fire number. Concern was also expressed about manufactured homes that may not meet safe living standards. It was determined that housing is available for purchase for those choosing to purchase a home. Land for building homes is readily available in the Town including many sites that are not designated as prime farmland.

Goals and Actions:

- Encourage single family dwellings in the Town. All income levels are served, and no restrictions are recommended for minimum square footage, minimum value, etc.
- Homes and homesteads should be maintained to maintain the beauty of the Town and meet current ordinances in place by Buffalo County.
- No restrictions on dwellings should be placed at this time, but may need to be revisited in the future.

III. TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT:

Vehicular traffic is the major form of transportation in the Town of Cross due to limited other forms of transportation available. Recreational transportation is used including snowmobiles and bicycles.

No new road construction is anticipated in the timeframe of this plan. The major objective of the transportation plan is to improve current roads high quality.

The Town of Cross has a total of 53.55 miles of road - 8.81 miles of state road, 9.89 miles of county roads and 34.85 miles of town miles. See map on page 16. Functional road classification for rural roads include principal arterials, major and minor collectors, and local roads.

Principal arterials serve interstate and interregional trips. These roads serve urban areas with populations greater than 5,000 and are classified as interstate highways. The Town of Cross has 0.0 miles of principal arterials.

Collector miles collect traffic from local roads and link them to nearby population centers. Major collectors are classified as state roads and minor collectors are classified as county roads. The Town of Cross has 18.7 miles of collector miles including the 8.81 miles of State Highway 95 that is located within their boundaries.

Local roads provide access for travel over relatively short distances. These roads are classified as town roads. The Town of Cross has 34.85 miles of town roads.

The Town of Cross also has 7 bridges over 20 feet and 8 bridges under 20 feet.

State and Regional Transportation Plans:

At www.dot.state.wi.us the Wisconsin Department of Transportation home page under "Plans and Project," then, "Planning Resources," then, "Modal and Multimodal Plans," the Town reviewed and considered the following State and Regional Transportation Plans that have potential affects or integration with the Town plan.

Connections 2030 - the current multimodal plan being developed for all forms of Transportation through the year 2030

Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020 – the current strategic plan for all facets of the 12,000 miles of the State's highways

Wisconsin Six-Year Highway Improvement Program – the more specific construction programs for the Wisconsin DOT through 2014

Wisconsin Airport System Plan 2030 – the plan for determining airport facility needs

Wisconsin Bicycle Plan 2020 – comprehensive bicycle plan

Wisconsin Statewide Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 – the plan outlines State and local measures to promote safe pedestrian travel

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 – the rail plan being developed for integrated rail development through 2030

Buffalo County Highway Plans – Currently, there are no plans for major county road work, beyond general maintenance for any county roads within the borders of the Town of Cross.

Currently, the Town of Cross is not specifically identified for any recommendations or included in any projects with these plans.

Bus Service:

There is no bus service in the Town of Cross. The nearest commercial bus service is the Jefferson Bus Lines stopping in Winona, MN.

Freight Rail Service:

There are no rail lines running through the Town of Cross. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) runs along the entire western edge of Buffalo County. The closest currently used spur is in Cochrane, WI.

Passenger Rail Service:

There is no passenger rail service to the Town of Cross. Daily passenger service (AMTRAK) is available in Winona, MN, with one train heading south in the am and one train heading north in the pm.

Airports:

There are no public or private airports in the Town of Cross. Winona, MN has a private airport but no passenger air service. La Crosse, WI has the closest passenger air service which is about 35 minutes from the Town.

Water Transportation:

The Town of Cross is not located on a commercial waterway. The Mississippi River runs on the entire west side of Buffalo County, with the Port of Winona being the closest terminal. Much of the grain produced in the Town will be transported by truck to Winona and sold to one of three grain buyers to be loaded onto barges. Fertilizer, Chemical, Liquid Propane and other commodities are shipped to Winona and distributed throughout the region by truck.

Trucking:

Most commercial shipping in the Town is by truck. With State Highway 95 being a major transportation route in the Town of Cross. Road bans may be implemented each spring on County and Town roads.

Pedestrian and Bike Trails:

There are no designated biking trails in the Town of Cross.

Snowmobile Trails:

There is a very strong network of snowmobile trails in the Town of Cross and across Buffalo County. These trails are located on private property. Maintenance and property agreements are completed by local clubs. See map on page 17.

Table 7: Town of Cross Road Improvement Plans – Town of Cross Board

Year	Road Name	Miles of Road	Improvement
2009	Schaffner Valley Road	1.8	Blacktop
2010	Brandhorst Road	1.26	Rework
2011	Brandhorst Road	1.26	Blacktop
2012	Joos Valley Road (from Glencoe Town line)	1.45	Rework
2013	Joos Valley Road (from Glencoe Town line)	1.45	Blacktop
2014	Engel Road		Bridge
2015	Engel Road		Overlay Blacktop

The following road projects will be developed as funding allows:

Hensel Dugway repair

Upgrade gravel roads based on grade and traffic count

Reconstruct and blacktop:

Baertsch Valley Road (Hwy 95 to trap range)

Alpine Road

Coyote Road

Ziegler Road

Other gravel roads as condition determines

Bridges

Engel Road Bridge

Baertsch Valley Bridges

Lists are suggestions only and can be changed as needs and highway finances change. Each year the Town Board will prioritize current year road and bridge work based on condition of road/bridge, safety, traffic count, slope, funds available and other factors.

The Town of Cross has some problems with vandalism of Town road signs and has a goal to keep all road signs up to date and replaced as needed and as funds permit. Citizens are encouraged to report all suspicious activity on the roads and related to road signs.

All-Terrain Vehicle usage has become very popular. There are some public and private trails in Trempealeau County that border the Town of Cross. This is a potential recreation use that could bring tourists to the Town.

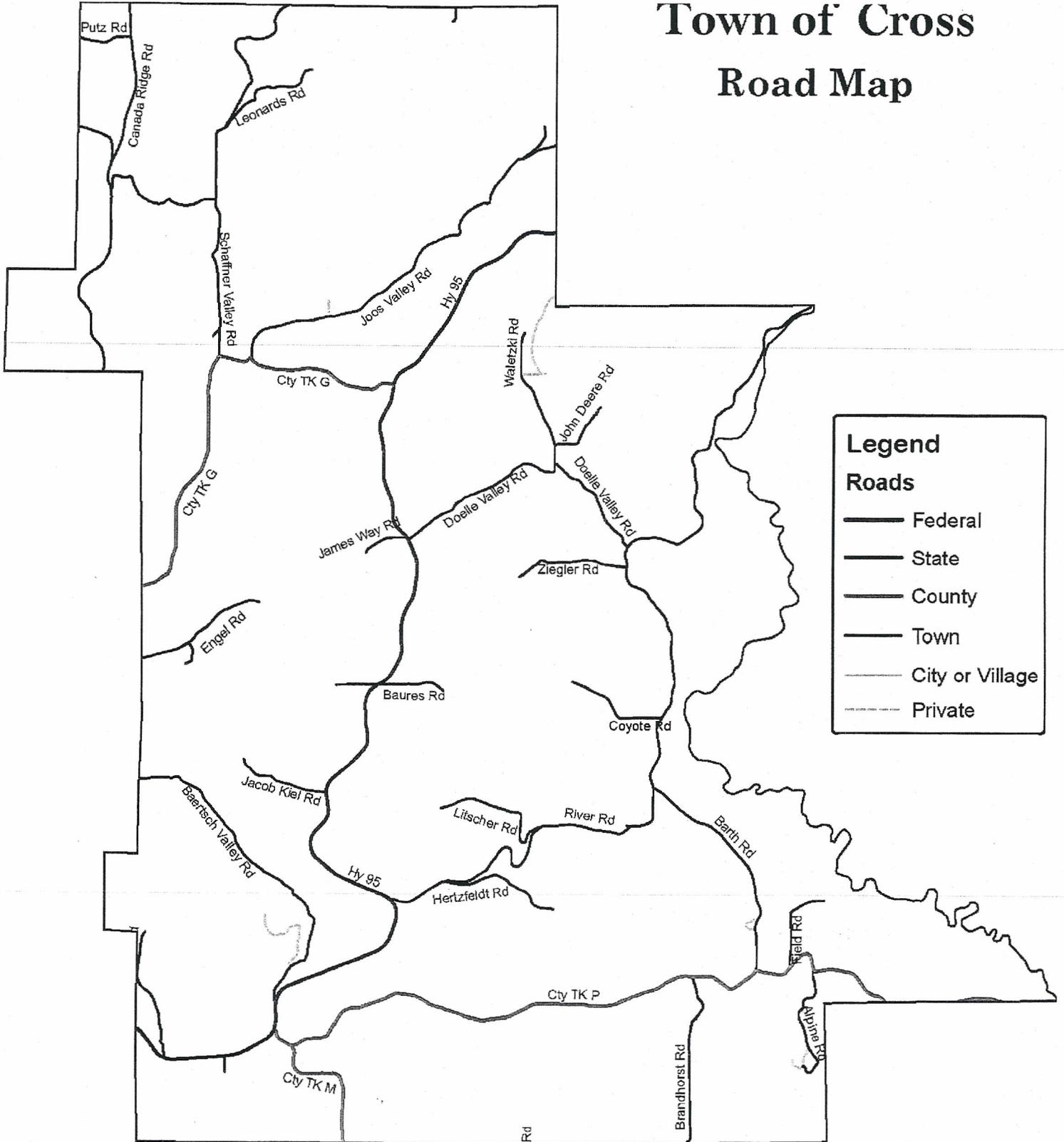
Bicycle usage in rural areas is on the increase. The planning committee expressed concerns about safety on Town and county roads due to the amount of motorized traffic, farm traffic and bicycle traffic all sharing the same roads. Many visitors to the Town may not be aware of the amount and size of modern farm machinery.

Some elderly transportation is available through Buffalo County Health and Human Services, Meals on Wheels program. Transportation is also available for veterans through Veteran's services.

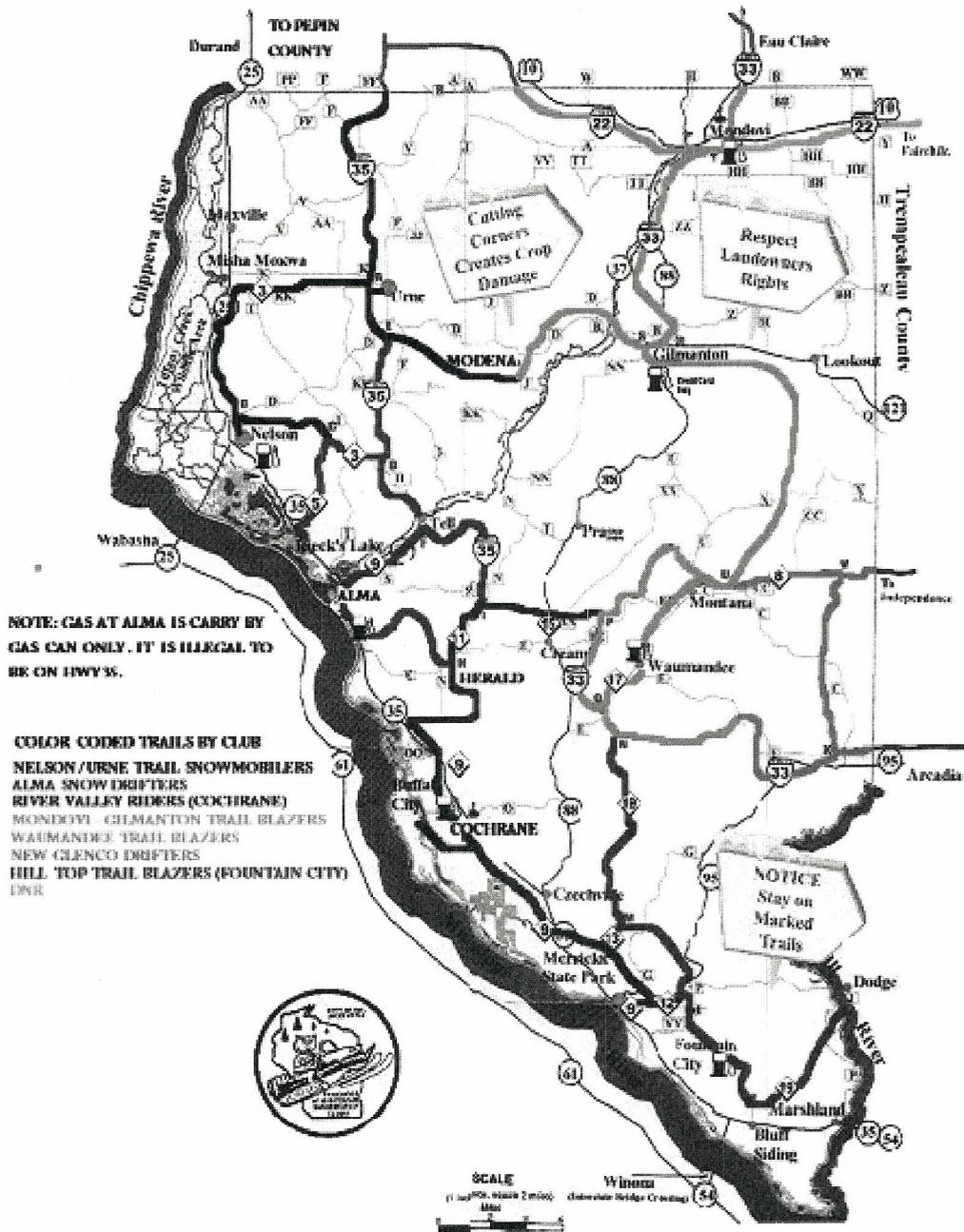
Goals and Actions:

- Road maintenance and improvements will be planned on a systematic, ongoing basis. The town board will prepare and regularly update a five year road improvement plan. County Highway officials will be consulted as needed for preparing the plan.
- Citizens are encouraged to report any suspicious activity around road signs.
- Support the development of a bicycle loop brochure for Buffalo County roads. The brochure (combined with a webpage) should highlight safety on rural roads, how to share roads with farm equipment and how to be a good neighbor as you are passing through the Town.
- Consider future All-Terrain Vehicle trails in the Town of Cross and throughout Buffalo County.

Town of Cross Road Map



Buffalo County Snowmobile Trails



IV. UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT:

This element looks at existing utility service and community facilities benefiting the citizens of the Town of Cross. Items include solid waste disposal, recycling services, parks, telecommunication services, emergency response services, schools, government facilities and others.

Sanitary Waste and Water Supply:

The Town of Cross has no concentration of residents. All citizens in the Town of Cross have private sewer and water service. There are currently no plans to develop public services at this time. Buffalo County Zoning issues all sanitary permits in the Town.

Solid Waste/Recycling:

Garbage disposal is available in cooperation with Fountain City. Garbage bags can be purchased at the City Hall in Fountain City or the Fountain City Kwik Trip and dropped off at the dumpster near the Fountain City Shop building between Tuesday 8:00 am and 8:00 am Wednesday each week. Please contact a Town Board member or the Town Clerk about recycling locations and schedules.

Town Facilities:

The Town Hall is the only public/governmental facility in Cross. It is located near the intersection of State Road 95 and Buehler Road. The town hall is used for meetings and for voting.

There are 2 cemeteries located in the Town. They include Bohri's Valley and Eagle Valley cemeteries.

Telephone/Electricity/Internet Services:

Cell phone service, cable television and internet services are poor in some areas of the Town, especially in the valley areas. Satellite television and internet are the only choice in many areas.

Riverland Energy Cooperative is the sole provider of electrical service in Cross. The citizenry find alternative energy sources such as wind, solar and methane acceptable in the Town.

Natural Gas:

There are no natural gas services in the Town. Most people rely on Liquid Propane.

Libraries:

There are no public libraries in the Town. Residents rely on the Arcadia public library or the Winona, MN public library. The County pays a fee for each transaction for Town residents using the Arcadia Public Library. Individuals must pay an annual membership to utilize the Winona, MN Public Library.

Education:

Students residing in the Town attend Arcadia School or Cochrane Fountain City School. Taxpayers also support the Western Wisconsin Technical College of La Crosse.

Fire Protection, Police Protection and Emergency Management:

Fire protection for the Town of Cross is provided by the Fountain City Volunteer Fire Department. Police protection is provided by the Buffalo County Sheriff's Department. The Fountain City First Responders and Ambulance Service provide emergency medical services. Buffalo County Emergency Management Department provides training and planning for emergencies.

Health Care and Long Term Care Services:

There are no health care providers in the Town of Cross. Excellent Medical Services are provided by Franciscan Skemp (Arcadia and La Crosse), Winona Health (Winona, MN), Gunderson Lutheran (Arcadia and La Crosse) and others. Most people choose health care services based on where they are employed. Long term care services are provided in Arcadia, Fountain City and Winona, MN.

Public Parks:

There are no parks or public trails in the Town. Merrick State Park is located just a few miles to the west of the Town.

Goals and Actions:

- There are no plans to expand any of the community facilities in the Town of Cross.
- Maintain the high quality fire and rescue services that are currently available. This requires regular contact and discussions with the other municipalities involved.
- Maintain recycling and solid waste services that the Town currently uses.
- Carefully consider new alternative energy resources as they become available as conditional use permits are considered by the Buffalo County Board of Adjustment.

V. AGRICULTURAL NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT:

The Town of Cross was settled by farmers and agriculture continues to play a very important part of the economy of the Town. Very little valued added agriculture is currently being used or explored in the Town. Farmland constitutes 47.5% of all the land in the Town of Cross.

Dairy farms were the predominant farming enterprise for many years. In the last 15 years, the number of dairy farms has decreased and row crop farming has increased. The number of large poultry farms has also increased. Most of these farms contract broiler chickens for a poultry processor located in Arcadia, WI. Recently, there has been interest in valued added livestock and vegetable production.

Soils in the Town of Cross have steep slopes and conservation is always a consideration for farmers.

Soils:

The Lower Trempealeau River and Eagle Valley of Waumandee Creek are the major drainage areas in the Town of Cross. The Trempealeau River borders the east side of the town. Soils in this area are primarily very high in organic matter and are poorly drained. Most of these soils are in grass cover or woody vegetation and are used for wildlife.

The blufftops are mainly Fayette and Dubuque soils, with Fayette being the deeper, more productive of the two. Slopes of 0-12% are very common and require minimal amount of management to control sheet and rill erosion. Contouring and conservation tillage will maintain productivity and minimize erosion of these soils. However, area of concentrated flow must be managed and monitored to prevent gulleys from forming.

Most valley sideslopes are mapped as Fayette Silt Loam and Dubuque Silt Loam. These series of Fayettes and Dubuques are different from the ridgetops in that they have a thinner topsoil and can be more susceptible to erosion with slopes up to 25%.

Overall, Fayette soils are more productive than Dubuque soils, but both are good for crop production.

In lower site positions Richwood Silt Loam and Judson Silt Loam are mapped and are very productive soils with slopes ranging from 2-10%, making them less susceptible to erosion, but are farmed more intensively with row crops.

The most abundant map unit in Town of Cross is Steep and Stony Land which is mapped on almost 5,800 acres. This soil is mainly woodland and wildlife land because it is very steep and has very shallow, fragile soils. These areas also have severe limitations for roads, houses and many other uses.

No yields are given for Norden soils with E slopes since it is class IV land and the most intensive sustainable use is permanent pasture. Many farmers in the Town are able to sustainably farm these soils with careful management practices. Many of the Loamy Alluvial soils are too wet to farm therefore, no yield potential is given.

The Town of Cross is in the driftless area of Wisconsin along the Mississippi River. The land is very steep and in some ways difficult to farm. The land is very productive and numerous cropping rotations are possible. Recently, there has been a switch from dairy production to row crop and large poultry production farms. Prime soils map on page 24.

Natural Resources:

Wildlife:

The Town of Cross has a wide variety of wildlife species and excellent wildlife habitat. It is best known (as is all of Buffalo County) for high quality whitetail deer.

Trempealeau River Meadow is a high quality wetland complex located in the Driftless Area of Wisconsin. The site features a large undisturbed sedge meadow with a diversity of species. Dominant plant species are tussock sedge, fox sedge, blue-joint grass, cord grass, fowl manna grass, and rice cut grass. Forbs include Canada anemone, marsh pea, panicled aster, swamp milkweed, spotted joe-pye weed, American water-horehound, and blunt-leaf bedstraw. Adjacent to the meadow is a shallow marsh with numerous emergent aquatics such as cat-tails, river bulrush, common rush, wool-grass, common bur-reed, swamp loosestrife, bulbet water-hemlock, wild rice, and broad-leaved arrowhead. At four locations the water deepens in old oxbows of the Trempealeau River forming deep-water marshes with an abundance of submerged aquatic species. An important aspect of these communities is the absence of invasive species. Large numbers of grassland birds, which are declining in Wisconsin, nest in the area. Species include bobolink, savannah sparrow, eastern meadowlark, sedge wren, and LeConte's sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*), a Wisconsin species of concern. Additional rare birds include the state-threatened great egret (*Ardea alba*), great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), and the red-headed woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*). Trempealeau River Meadow is owned by the DNR and was designated a State Natural Area in 2002. A map of the Trempealeau River Meadows is found on page 25.

Groundwater

All drinking water in the Town of Cross is from groundwater sources (private wells). Buffalo County completed a groundwater study in 1998 that indicated no contamination of wells within the Town of Cross. More recent, but a smaller number of samples from the Buffalo County Health and Human Services, continues to indicate good groundwater quality.

Surface Water

There are numerous small streams in the Town of Cross, many of which are intermittent streams. The streams on the east side of the Highway 95 ridge flow into the Trempealeau River which borders the Town. Streams on the west side of the Highway 95 ridge flow

into Eagle Valley Creek and into the Mississippi River. There are no lakes found in the Town of Cross. See hydrology map on page 26.

Forests

Forest land makes up 43% of the land in the Town of Cross. Much of the high quality timber has been harvested, and most timber land is managed for both forest and wildlife. The forests are located on very steep slopes which are too steep to convert to farmland.

Wetlands:

Wetlands make up a smaller portion of the Town of Cross. The wetlands are found along the Trempealeau River bottoms and along some of the streams. Wetlands should be protected from development. Current zoning regulations will not allow building in designated wetlands. A current wetlands map can be found on page 27.

Floodplains:

Development is not allowed by the Buffalo County Floodplain Zoning Ordinance. These are fragile areas necessary to avoid flooding of roads and other developed property. A map of the designated floodplains for the Town of Cross can be found on page 28.

Non-Metallic Mining:

Non-metallic mining mainly consists of the excavation of sand, gravel and stone. This has been traditionally rock quarries in the Town of Cross for road building and field limestone. There is concern about the increasing numbers of frac sand inquiries in the western Wisconsin area which also fall under the non-metallic mining category. There are currently 28. See the non-metallic mining map on page 29.

Cultural Resources:

The Town of Cross is rich in history and cultural activities that reflect the heritage of the Town. Some examples of cultural resources in the Town include:

- Town Hall – was the local one room school.
- Eagle Valley Church – built in 1905 and is currently maintained by a local non-profit group. It is available for family gatherings such as funerals and weddings.
- Old Time Farm Fest Held each Labor Day weekend by the Old Time Farm Fest LIONS Club. This is a regional event that celebrates past farming practices.
- Skippy Litscher Trap Range named after a long time resident of the Town of Cross.

There are no County or State Parks located in the Town of Cross.

Goals and Actions - Agriculture:

- The planning committee recognizes the value of agricultural land. At this time they have no plans to put measures into place to preserve agricultural land. They do support non-government efforts to preserve farmland without increasing regulations, i.e. Mississippi Valley Land Conservancy, West Wisconsin Land Conservancy, etc.
- Landowners are encouraged to use conservation practices as they farm their land. Long term productivity can only be maintained if land is conserved. Conservation also helps to maintain other resources such as streams and rivers.
- Promote state and county programs that support the preservation of farms and farmland.
- Promote state and county programs that encourage conservation of farmland.

Goals and Actions – Natural Resources:

- Citizens will learn to appreciate all wildlife, not just whitetail deer.
- Encourage landowners to maintain habitat for wildlife.
- Practice good conservation practices to maintain/improve habitat for all types of wildlife.
- Maintain current zoning regulations restricting development in floodplains and from building to close to normal high water levels.

Goals and Action – Cultural Resources:

- Continue to maintain and improve the Town Hall as funds allow.
- Support those groups that celebrate the cultural history of the Town including the Eagle Valley Church and the Cemeteries.

Buffalo County Prime Soils

Cross Township



Legend

- Cross Roads
- Cross Streams
- Cross Boundary

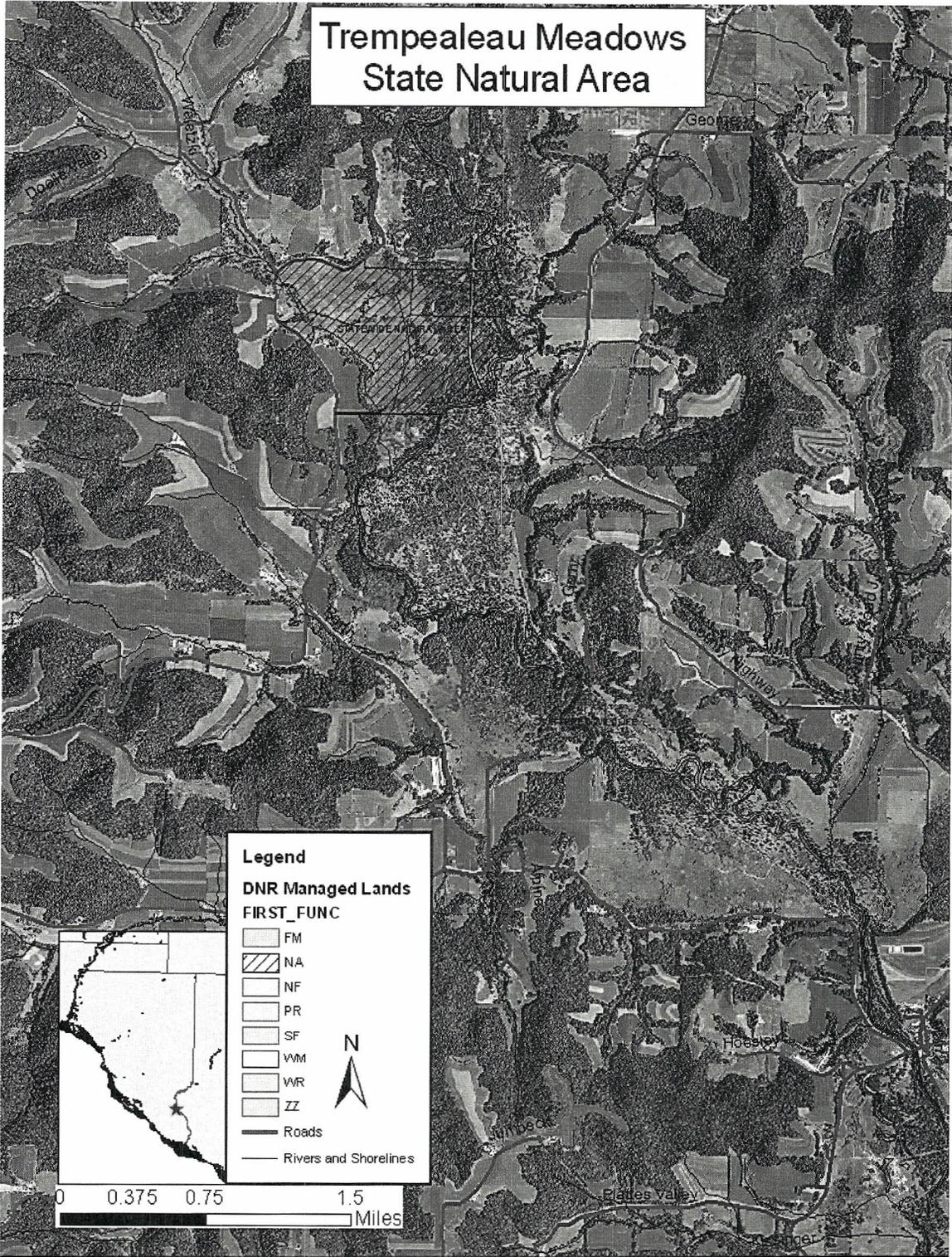
Cross Prime Farmland

MUSYM

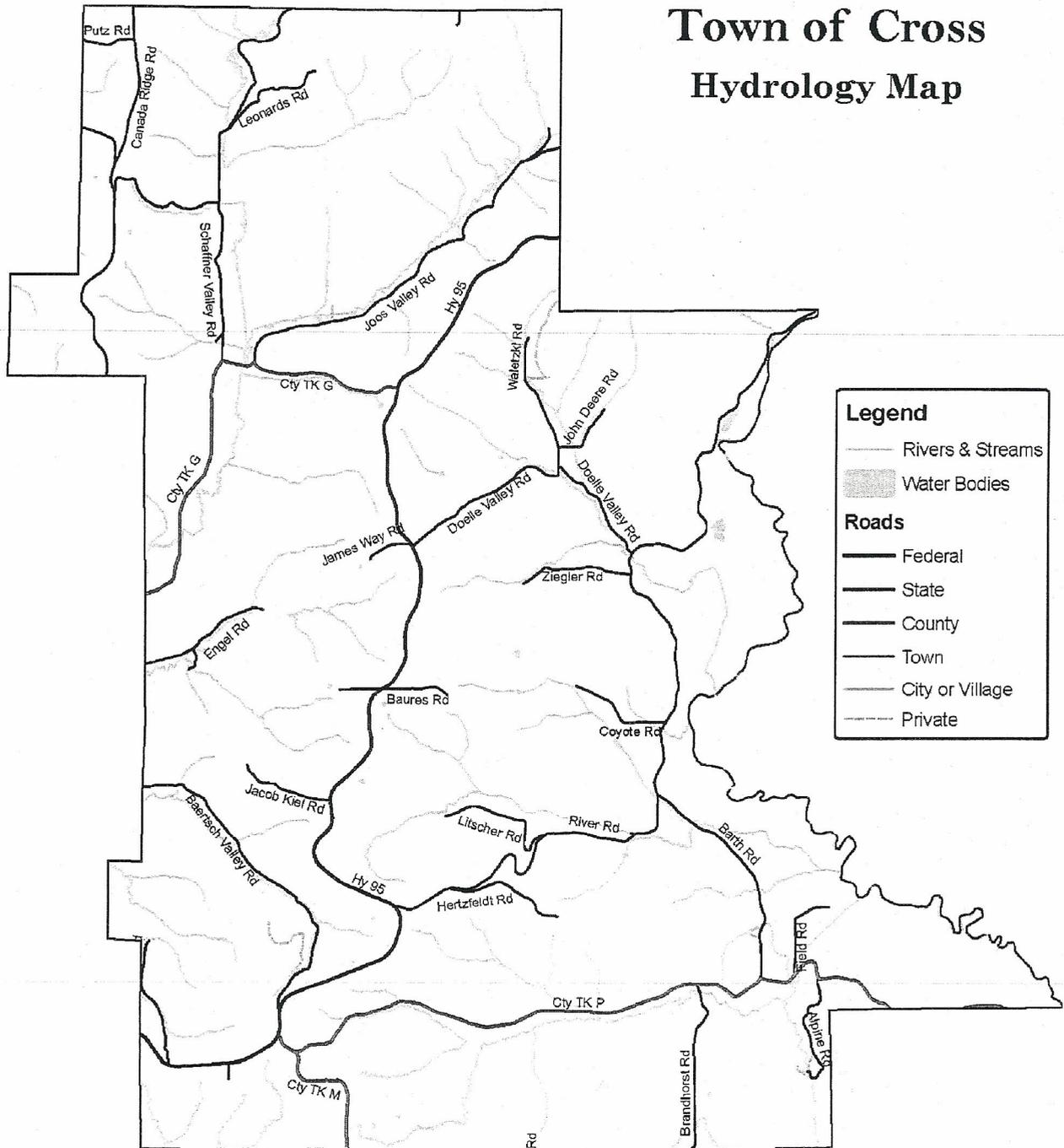
-  Prime Farmland
-  Farmland of Statewide Importance
-  Prime farmland if drained and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season



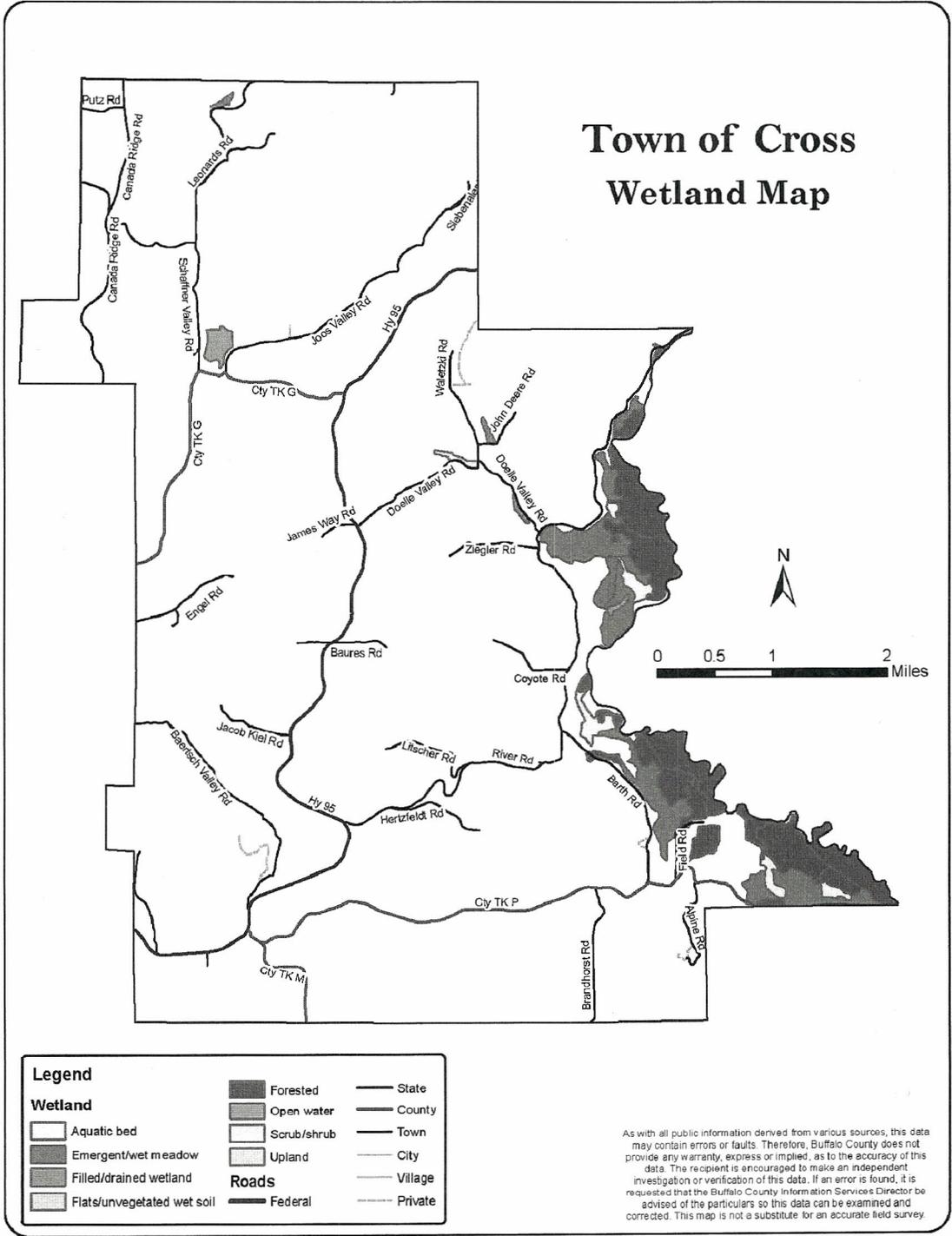
Trempealeau Meadows State Natural Area



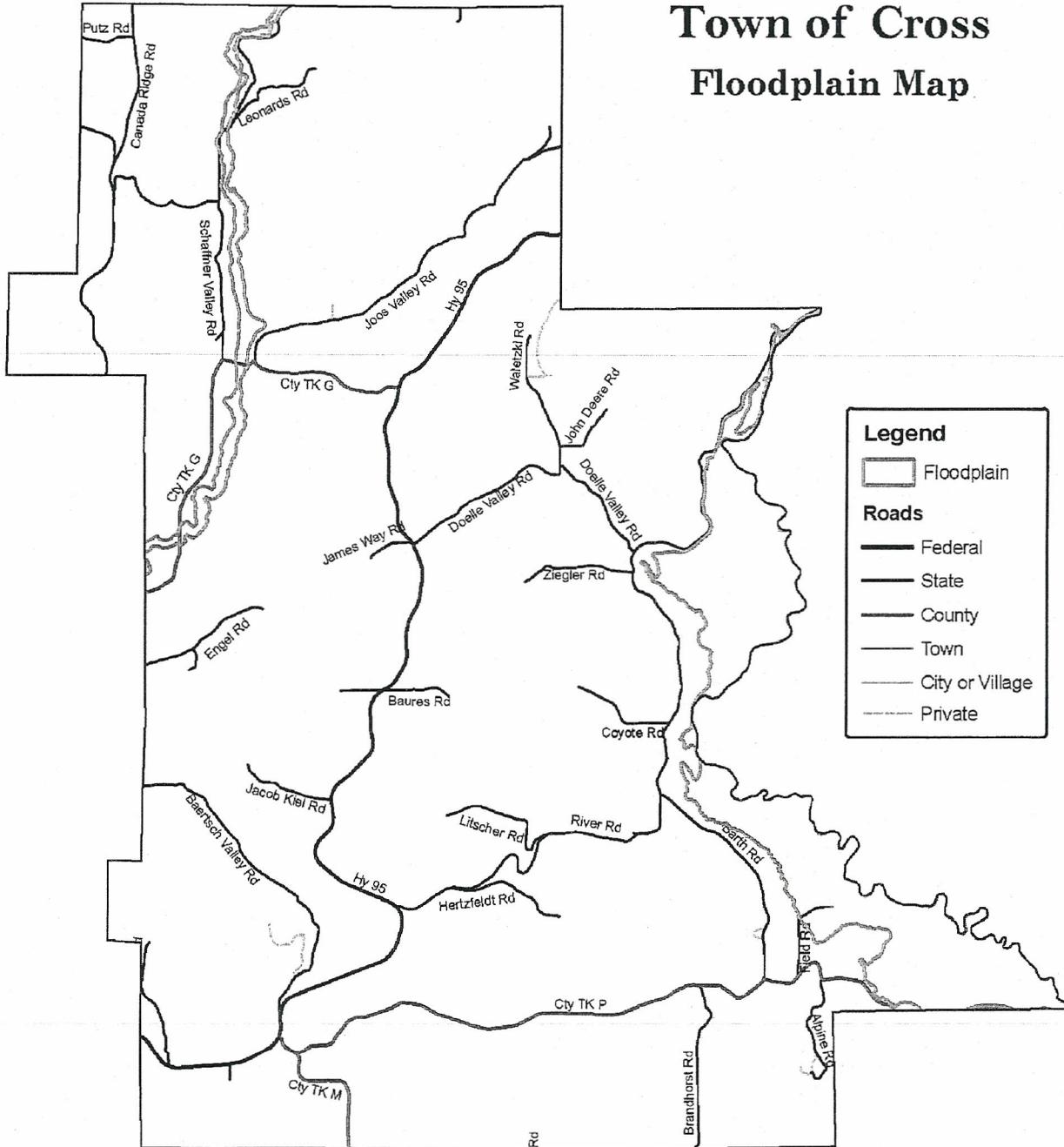
Town of Cross Hydrology Map



Town of Cross Wetland Map

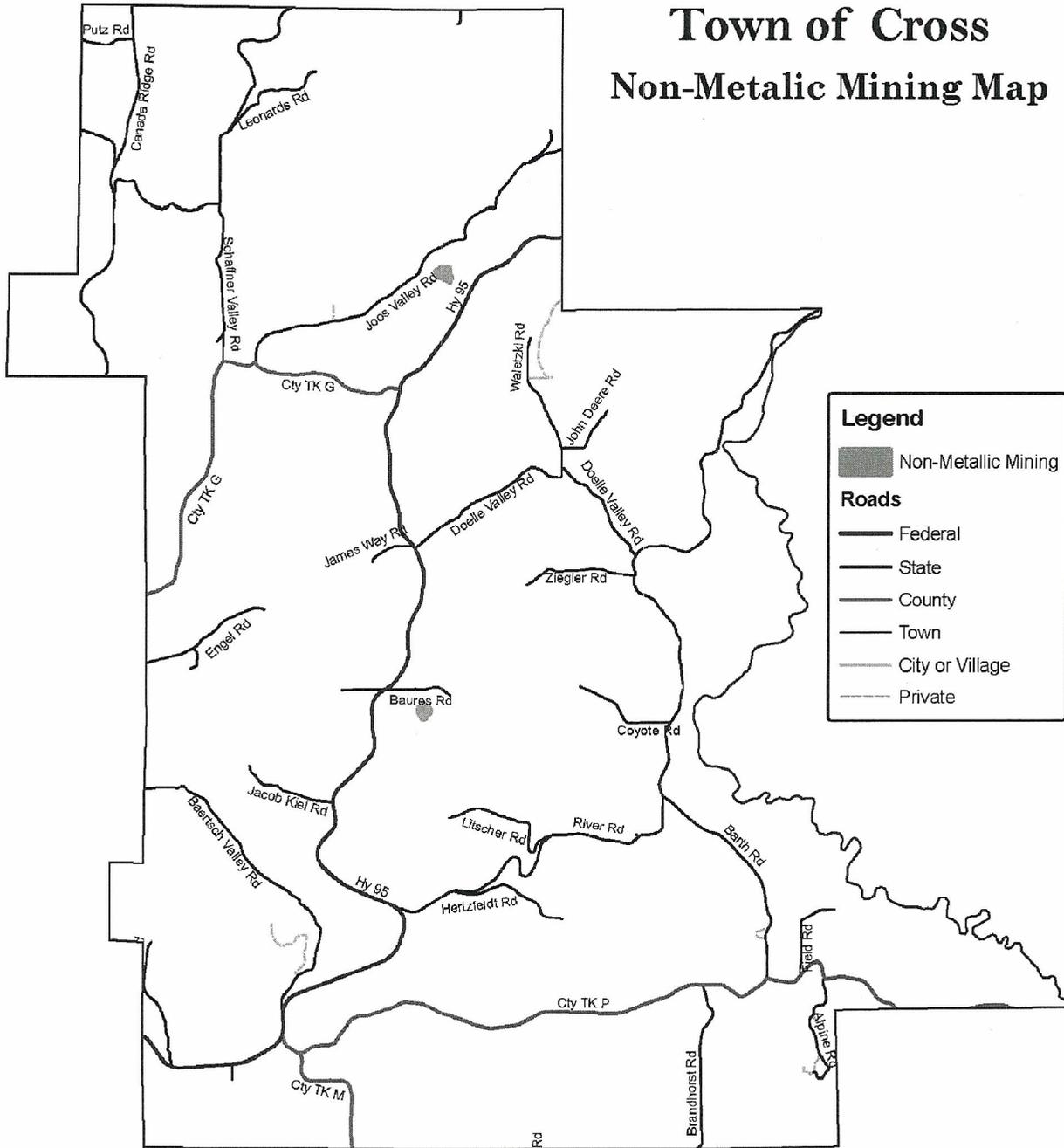


Town of Cross Floodplain Map



VI.

Town of Cross Non-Metallic Mining Map



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT:

The majority of the data for this section came from the U.S. Census Bureau, Selected Economic Characteristics: 2005-2009 5-Year Estimates. Other sources of information were the Department of Workforce Development and citizens from the Town of Cross.

Employment Information:

Manufacturing, agriculture and the education/health/social occupations comprise a majority of people employed in the Town of Cross. The Town is very rural with very productive soils. It is also within commuting distance to manufacturing, school and health care jobs in Arcadia, La Crosse, and Winona MN. The Town of Cross and all of Buffalo County tends to have very low unemployment rates, due to the variety of jobs in the region and the growth of industry in Arcadia (Ashley Furniture and Golden Plump Chicken).

Table 8 : Town of Cross Employment Statistics – Census Data

Employment Status	Number	Percent
Population 16 years and older	293	100
In Labor Force	229	78.2
Civilian Labor Force	229	78.2
Employed	227	77.5
Unemployed	2	.7
Armed Forces	0	0
Not in Labor Force	64	21.8
Occupation		
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	41	18.1
Construction	15	6.6
Manufacturing	65	28.6
Professional, management, etc.	21	9.3
Education, health care	41	18.1
All others	44	19.3
Class of Worker		
Private wage and salary	148	65.2
Government workers	39	17.2
Self-employed	40	17.6
Unpaid family	0	0

Commuting to Work:

Almost all employed residents of the Town of Cross, who do not work on their own farms, commute out of the Town to work. Both Arcadia and Winona, MN are within 20 minutes for all residents and the La Crosse area is about 40 minutes. Very few employment opportunities exist in Fountain City, the closest municipality to the Town. Residents that commute to Winona, MN, are concerned about the Interstate Bridge replacement or repair. The Minnesota Department of Transportation has indicated that the bridge at Winona will be replaced (the time frame has not been established). Depending

on how the bridge replacement is engineered, this could add 40 minutes or more to the commute to Winona.

Table 9: Town of Cross, Commuting Habits – Census Data

Means of Travel	Percent
Car, truck, van – drove alone	71.4
Car, truck, van – carpooled	16.1
Public transportation	0.4
Walked	1.8
Other means	0.0
Worked at home	10.3
	Minutes
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	22.9

Buffalo County Industries:

Buffalo County has a very small manufacturing base. Only one industry, La Crosse Milling (oat miller) is in the top ten employers in the County. Most all of the employment opportunities in the near future will be outside of the Town or Buffalo County.

Table 10: Buffalo County Top 10 Employers – WI DWD

Company	Service	Size
Martin Transport	Trucking	1,000+
Mondovi Public Schools	Education	100-249
CFC Public Schools	Education	100-249
County of Buffalo	Government	100-249
American Lutheran Homes	Nursing Care Provider	100-249
Dairyland Power	Electrical Power Generation	100-249
School District of Alma	Education	50-99
Midwest Dental	Dental Care	50-99
US Army Corp of Eng.	Engineering Service	50-99
La Crosse Milling	Oat Miller	50-99

Environmentally Contaminated Sites in the Town of Cross:

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) was utilized in identifying contaminated sites in the Town of Cross. There were no contaminated sites in the Town of Cross identified in the database.

The Wisconsin DNR Solid and Hazardous Waste Information System was reviewed for waste disposal sites in the Town of Cross. There were no waste disposal sites in the registry located in the Town of Cross.

County, Regional and State Economic Develop Programs:

County Programs:

- Revolving Loan Fund

Regional Programs:

- Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, Economic Development Program, Revolving Loan Fund

State Programs:

- Value Added Dairy Initiative
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection Milk Volume Program
- USDA – Rural Development

Local Planning Effort:

The planning committee identified some characteristics of businesses that would be desirable and likely to attract to the Town of Cross. The list of these business characteristics is listed below.

Ideal characteristics of a desirable Town of Cross business

- Employs local people
- Does not need to convert farmland (approximately 98% of County is zoned for agriculture)
- Minimizes damage to the environment, ie: “green”
- Sustainable
- Wages can support a family
- Jobs that could make use of the skills of County residents
- Jobs that would attract Buffalo County college graduates (County could retain the brains)
- Positive influence to the community, perhaps attracting additional business
- Produces a minimum of waste for disposal

What kind of businesses do these characteristics bring to mind and what businesses are needed in Town of Cross

- Service industries like grocery stores and appliance stores
- Finished products/value added products, ie: forest products
- Tourism
- Ag value added businesses
- Hunting businesses
- Businesses like La Crosse Milling and Great River Milling that could use local products
- Home based businesses

Realizing that most of the economic growth for employment will come from outside of the Town of Cross, the following goals and actions will be put into place.

Goals and Actions:

- Agricultural businesses have been the mainstay of the economy in the Town as well as Buffalo County. Continue to support traditional agricultural business development in the Town of Cross. These businesses include dairy, beef, poultry and traditional crops (hay, corn and soybeans).
- Support business ventures into agricultural enterprises that are not traditional in the Town of Cross. These businesses include small fruit production, vegetable production, energy production.
- Support home based businesses in the Town of Cross, including small office businesses, repair businesses, small value added agriculture businesses, etc. as regulated in the current zoning regulations.
- Support efforts to start a Buffalo County Economic Development Corporation and provide information resources to the organization to encourage small business development that meet the characteristics listed above.

VII. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ELEMENT:

State and Federal Agencies:

Wisconsin Department of Transportation:

The Town of Cross participates, in cooperation with the Buffalo County Highway Department in the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):

The Town of Cross has contact with FEMA following any natural disasters which affect the Town. The county works in cooperation with the Buffalo County Emergency Planning when working with FEMA.

Buffalo County:

Cooperation between governmental units is a normal activity. The Town of Cross currently cooperates with several other units of government on issues that can be better addressed as a group. The Town of Cross maintains positive relationships with several Buffalo County Agencies. They consult with the Buffalo County Highway Department on road issues, and meet with the Highway Commissioner each year to assess Town roads and bridges. They work with Emergency Government to have emergency plans in place. The Town of Cross is also under County Zoning. Finally, they are working with Buffalo County and the Buffalo County Towns Association in developing their Town and comprehensive county plans.

The Town of Cross has been part of the Buffalo County Recycling program since the program began. The Town also cooperates and helps to fund Emergency Response and Fire Protection with Fountain City and Town of Milton.

The Town of Cross is also an active member of the Buffalo County Towns Association and meets with them quarterly.

School Districts:

A majority of the Town is served by the Cochrane-Fountain City School District with a much smaller number of residents in the Arcadia School District. The residents of the Town of Cross are very supportive of their schools and have no conflicts with either district.

Goals and Actions:

- Encourage coordination and cooperation among units of government. Remain active with the Towns Association and discuss issues that can better be addressed as a group of towns, i.e. managed Forest Land and its effect on town tax base.
- Have a candid discussion with Buffalo County Highway Department and Buffalo County Towns Association of areas of possible cooperation on road maintenance and repair.
- Initiate discussions with Buffalo County Law Enforcement of how the Town of Cross and neighboring towns can have a more consistent Law Enforcement presence. This may best be accomplished at a Buffalo County Towns Association meeting.
- Maintain the strong relationship with the Fountain City Fire and EMS Services.
- Support County Efforts at economic development to improve the local economy and increase tax base.

VIII. LAND USE ELEMENT:

Existing Land Use and Zoning:

The Town of Cross is a rural town. Agriculture is by far the predominant industry. Table 2 displays the breakdown of property within the town.

Table 11: Town of Cross Property Assessment – Buffalo County Treasurer (2010)

Property Classification	# of Parcels	Total Value	Total Acres
Residential	150	13,425,000	246
Commercial	4	335,500	14
Manufacturing	0	0	0
Agricultural	733	1,507,400	11,490
Undeveloped	223	823,550	1,322
Productive Forest Lands	96	2,386,200	801
Agricultural Forest Land	340	6,877,300	4,721
Woodland Tax Lands	234	14,377,900	4,893
Exempt Lands	64	0	529
TOTALS	1,073	46,768,850	24,186
Arcadia Public School	20	775,000	
Cochrane-Fountain City	1,053	31,615,950	

All towns within Buffalo County participate in county comprehensive zoning as described in Wisconsin Statute 59.97. Zoning decisions are made by the Buffalo County Zoning Committee and Buffalo County Zoning Department. This document is evolving and will change as deemed necessary by the taxpayers of the Town of Cross. It will contain a description of the goals and objectives of the people in the Town as to how they would like to see change and development. The Town enacted a driveway ordinance in 2008 to address safety and emergency response concerns.

Existing Land Uses:

The Town of Cross is very rural. It is mainly agricultural and forest land. There is limited residential housing, with homeowners mainly building on old farm sites. Most of the land is steep soils with very productive land in the valley and along the bluff tops. Currently, there is one location that is zoned commercial with the remaining land being zoned agricultural. See map on page 39.

Topography:

The Town of Cross can be described as bluffs and valleys. Land that is not currently in productive farmland is mainly too steep to farm, or is in the limited areas of wetland found in the town.

Commercial/Industrial:

Only one property in the Town is not currently zoned agricultural. See future land use map on page 40. The Hilltop Bar and Ballroom is the only non-home based business currently operating in the Town of Cross.

Population and Housing Densities:

Population Density 9.7 people per square mile. Housing density 3.7 houses per square mile.

Land Demand and Prices:

Land sales values in Buffalo County have increased in the past 10 years. Until the last few years, this was driven by recreational land sales mostly to whitetail deer hunters. High farm commodity prices (especially corn and soybeans) have increased the demand for farmland sales to equal prices to forestland. Agricultural land sales in 2010 for Buffalo County were \$3,508 dollars per acre, the highest in the NC District, (Wisconsin Department of Revenue Statistics). The Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service shows similar numbers with farmland sales at \$3,718 per acre (2009 data) and forest land sales at \$3,453 per acre (2009 data). Both of these values were the highest reported in the North Central District.

Opportunities for Redevelopment:

The Town of Cross has had very limited development over history due to the Town's rural nature. No redevelopment opportunities were identified.

Land Use Projections:

The two major land uses in the Town of Cross are agriculture and recreation (hunting), both of these uses providing very little development pressure. There was no indication of commercial or industrial development due to the fact that the only state highway (State Highway 95) runs along the bluff top and requires travel up and down steep dugways to be accessible. Housing has only increased by a few houses each year, with no sub-developments currently or planned. This is due to longer commutes to local jobs in Arcadia, La Crosse and Winona, MN and that building in Towns and Cities closer to these areas is lower cost. One factor in building cost is that a private well on a bluff top will cost about \$25,000 currently.

If current home building trends continue (as assumed by the planning committee) about 3 houses would be built each year or about 60 in 20 years. Committee members agreed that the average housing lot would be about 2.5 acres or a total of 150 acres of land taken out of other uses. If current trends continue, 75% (112 acres) of these homes would be constructed on agricultural land, the remaining 25% (38 acres) on woodland or undeveloped lands.

Forest Land:

Forest land in the Town is generally land that is too steep for other uses. The committee sees very few, if any opportunities for land to be taken out of forest and put into row crop production. The exception is some areas that have been planted to trees through the Conservation Reserve program (NRCS).

Managed Forest Law (MFL) enrollment is a concern throughout Buffalo County. Currently, the Town of Cross has 4,837 acres of forest land enrolled in the MFL program. This accounts for about half of the woodland acres in the Town. MFL continues to be a major concern because of falling property tax base for the Town and County.

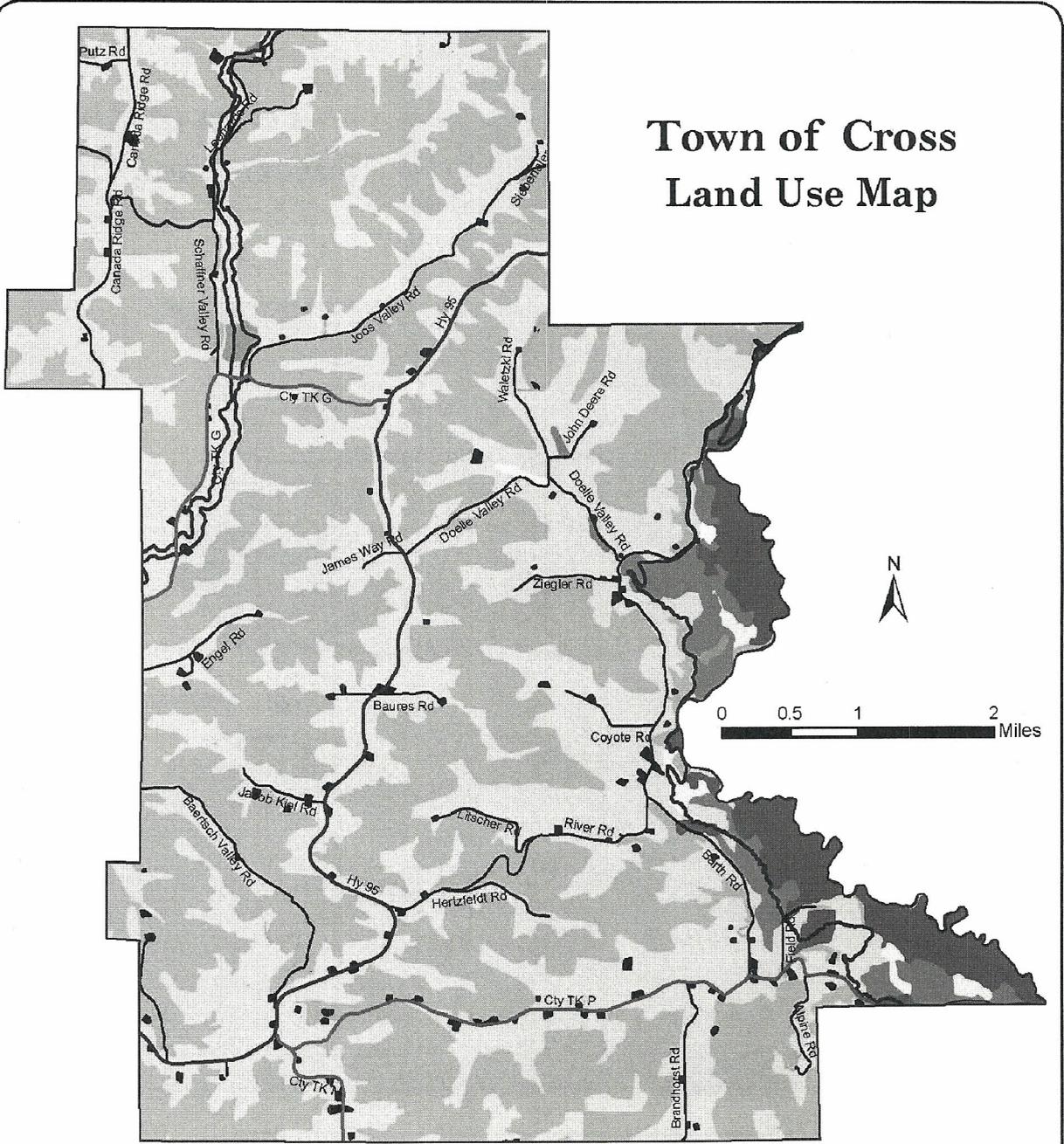
Current Zoning:

Currently, all Towns in Buffalo County are under the county zoning rules. The Town of Cross desires to maintain this relationship, but would like to have a say in rezone changes and in conditional use permits. At this time, Town residents do not want to implement any protections for farmland, natural areas or any other land use area. They would like to encourage landowners to voluntarily participate in programs to preserve farmland, such as land conservancy organization.

Goals and Actions:

- The Town of Cross is currently not interested in putting any programs in place to protect farmland from housing or other kinds of development. They will revisit the possibility of Farmland Protection in 2016 at their annual Town meeting.
- Maintain current relationship with Buffalo County Zoning, but does not support more restrictive zoning laws for agriculture, housing, or business development.
- The Town of Cross would like the MFL program to be reevaluated. The Town board will work with the Buffalo County Board, the Towns Association and their local legislators to have a change made in how woodland is taxed. The board will report annually to the Town residents at their annual meeting of steps taken and progress to date.
- The planning committee indicated that the Town had many building sites for individual family dwellings that would have very limited impact on agricultural production. These areas were on field boarder, fence rows, etc. They also designated one area as having more potential for residential because of its location in the valley with light to sandy soils. See map on page 40.

Town of Cross Land Use Map



Legend

Roads		Emergent/wet meadow		Scrub/shrub	Forest
— Federal	— Village	■ Filled/draind wetland	■ Upland		
— State	— Private	■ Flats/unvegetated wet soil	Land Use		
— County	□ FEMA Floodplains	■ Forested	■ Residential		
— Town	Wetland	■ Open water	■ Agriculture		
— City	Aquatic bed				

As with all public information derived from various sources, this data may contain errors or faults. Therefore, Buffalo County does not provide any warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy of this data. The recipient is encouraged to make an independent investigation or verification of this data. If an error is found, it is requested that the Buffalo County Information Services Director be advised of the particulars so this data can be examined and corrected. This map is not a substitute for an accurate field survey.

IX. IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT:

Goals and Actions in Implementing Plan:

- The Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed at each annual meeting of the Town. Updates that are needed will be the responsibility of the Town of Cross Board and will be incorporated by notification of public meetings, surveys if necessary and public hearings.
- The plan will be updated at least every ten years.
- The implementation of the plan will be the responsibility of the Town Board of the Town of Cross, Buffalo County Zoning and the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors.
- The Town Board of the Town of Cross will work together with other Towns and Buffalo County to implement other portions of the plan.

Appendix A

Code of Cross

Boundary fences are the responsibility of both parties sharing a common border WHETHER OR NOT THEY HAVE LIVESTOCK. The responsibilities are shared equally and are outlined in state statutes (Wisconsin Chapter 90). These boundaries are also not to be moved without consent or agreement of all parties involved. It is wise to have a survey completed before you purchase land.

Remember, if you are planning to build a home or move to the Town of Cross, that you are moving into an agricultural area. Along with the beautiful landscape and wonderful country setting comes livestock odors, manure and noise from agricultural equipment and activities, which during busy times, can last into or through the night and on weekends. (The farmer faces many weather-related time constraints and must get things done when the weather is right.)

Before moving into an agricultural area, consider the possibility of your new neighbors expanding their farming operations and the noise odors and other issues that will increase with that expansion. Agriculture, like any other business, has to expand to meet family living expenses, inflationary pressures, low market prices, and to keep the bankers happy.

Anticipate that alternative agricultural businesses will develop over time. These businesses could have an impact on traffic, odor, and noise, year round or seasonally.

Animals must be restrained. There are three Wisconsin Statutes (Chapters 172- 174) on owner's responsibility for their animals. Stray dogs, for example, may pose a risk to children, or pose a disease transfer risk. The Town also requires that you pay a dog tax and that each dog has a dog tag and license.

Livestock, at times, have a way of finding their way through a fence. Don't be surprised if you see cattle on the road or maybe even in your yard or garden. If this happens, those of us who farm, would appreciate your patience and maybe even your help in rounding up our critters. Keep in mind that some animals can be dangerous--especially bulls (male bovines) and stallions (male equines). They may look cute, but they might not act cute.

Nature can provide you with some wonderful neighbors. Most, such as deer and eagles are positive influences on the environment. However, even "harmless" animals like deer can cross the road unexpectedly and cause a hazard. Rural development encroaches on the habitat of coyotes, deer, rattlesnakes, skunks, raccoons, mosquitoes, etc. Some of these animals can be dangerous and you need to know how to deal with them. The Wisconsin DNR is a good resource for information.

Wisconsin has “No Trespassing” laws (Wisconsin Trespass to Land Statute Sec, 943.13). You cannot enter another person’s property without consent. So, in an effort to show neighborly relations and to maintain the beauty of the Town, it is not necessary to plaster your property with NO TRESPASSING signs.

Caution is advised on rural roads. At times you will encounter large agricultural equipment that is moving slowly and taking up much of the roadway. Other considerations are wildlife and the occasional tourist enjoying the countryside.

At certain times of the year or depending on your location, emergency response could be slow due to driveway conditions and accessibility or the weather - even though we have an excellent voluntary fire department and first responders team. A hard-to-reach building site could affect the ability to obtain reasonably priced insurance because of the increased risk.

Police services are provided by the Buffalo County Sheriff’s Department. Although it is unlikely that you will be attacked in your home by roaming bandits, having your mailbox destroyed, your yard or field driven through or having litter tossed in your driveway can at times feel almost as terrible. Remember, that in a rural setting, police personnel have to drive long distances and may have other more pressing matters to deal with, so their response may be slow. However, they will get to you, so please show some courtesy and have patience.

Roadways are plowed in order of importance with consideration to school bus routes and major traffic areas. If you are going to move into an out-of-the-way area, you will probably not be the first to be plowed out. You also need to be aware that the roads are seldom kept open through the nighttime hours. Plowing on weekends is not always a priority in some areas. (Consider this if you anticipate having off-peak travel needs.)

School buses travel, for the most part, on maintained county and town roads that have been designated as bus routes by the school district. You may need to drive your children to the nearest route so your children can get to school.

Every effort is made to maintain our roadways and level of service that we have. However, in an effort to keep taxes as low as possible, we all have to realize that at times we have to temporarily put up with a bump in the road or a muddy gravel road.

Also, unpaved roads generate dust. Dust and dirty automobiles and trucks will be a fact of life for many rural residents. Please realize that most unpaved roads are likely to stay that way. Do not expect a high level of service as this all comes with a high cost.

Trash removal can be much more expensive in rural areas than in the city. It is illegal to create your own trash dump, even on your own land. It is best to find out the cost of trash removal before you move into the area. In some cases, you may need to haul trash to the designated landfill yourself. Recycling is also difficult, because pick-up is not available.

Not all land has decent, buildable sites. Steep slopes can slide in unusually wet weather. Large rocks can also roll down slopes and present a danger to people and property in some of the bluff areas.

The topography of the land will tell you where water will go in heavy precipitation. If you build in a ravine, you might want to consider that the water that previously drained through the ravine may now drain through your house.

With the development of alternative energy systems, it can be anticipated that one or more could be located in the Town of Cross. The Town of Cross will consider the effect on local aesthetics, wildlife, domestic animals, quality of life, traffic, etc, but the greater public good will also be considered.

Being aware of all of these points, know that the Town of Cross is a great place to live and work and we WELCOME you to our community!