

# Town of River Falls Comprehensive Plan 2024 - 2044



## Vision

"The Town of River Falls is a rural and agricultural community that values our quality of life. We recognize the importance of a clean environment, neighborliness, and responsible use of resources. Our town has a history of farming and careful land use, and we wish to preserve this heritage while allowing for well-planned growth into the future."

Prepared by the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission

Under the Direction of the River Falls Town Board  
and Comprehensive Plan Review Committee





The Town of River Falls  
Comprehensive Plan 2024 - 2044

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## Introduction

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The Town of River Falls Comprehensive Plan is being prepared under the State of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law contained in Section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. The law was adopted in 1999 and requires that zoning, subdivision regulations, and official mapping within the Town must be consistent with a comprehensive plan. To meet the requirements of the planning law a revised comprehensive plan is being prepared.

### Why Plan?

Planning allows the Town of River Falls to anticipate and address emerging challenges, growth, and upcoming issues effectively. Communities are constantly evolving, and planning enables the Town to stay ahead of any potential risks or conflicts. By conducting an analysis of current conditions, future trends, and potential risks, the Town of River Falls can proactively identify and mitigate issues such as population growth, infrastructure needs, environmental impacts, and economic shifts. With a well-crafted plan in place, the Town can adapt to changing circumstances with agility and purpose.

Planning also fosters the creation of a shared vision for the Town of River Falls. Engaging residents, businesses, community organizations, and other stakeholders through meetings and a community survey, the planning process allows for meaningful participation and collaboration. By discussing the perspectives of all of those who become involved, the plan can reflect the aspirations, values, and visions of the entire community. This inclusive approach not only strengthens community bonds but also cultivates a sense of ownership and pride among residents, who can actively contribute to shaping the future of their home.

Long-term planning plays a vital role in achieving sustainable growth and enhancing quality of life in the Town of River Falls. By considering the relationships between land use, housing, transportation, economic development, utilities and community facilities, intergovernmental relationships, and agricultural, natural, and cultural resources, the plan promotes a holistic approach to development. It strives to strike a balance between preserving the Town's unique character, protecting its most important resources, and fostering economic vitality. Through carefully crafted policies and strategies, the plan aims to create a harmonious and resilient community where residents can thrive, businesses can succeed, and future generations can enjoy a high quality of life.

### Planning Goals

The goals for the Town of River Falls Plan were established with consideration of the following elements: issues and opportunities discussed in the following sections of the plan, reference of the previous comprehensive plan, input from the advisory committee, public open house meetings, and public input from the Town survey. In addition, comprehensive planning goals identified in Wisconsin State Statutes were used and modified to support goals discussed for the current planning process. The Comprehensive Plan Review Committee considered the continued pursuit of goals from the previous comprehensive plan to be an important aspect of this updated plan. Below you will find the comprehensive planning goals, with methods and actions to achieve the goals detailed in the following plan sections.

## Implementation

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The comprehensive plan has been prepared to present a vision of the Town of River Falls and its relationship to population growth, land development, and infrastructure development.

### Role of Implementation

Local governmental bodies (elected and appointed) make decisions that determine how this plan can be realized. All of this affects how the plan relates to the future development of the Town. Over the Plan's twenty-year planning horizon (with a full update in ten years and possible element specific updates as needed), hundreds of decisions will be made which will impact its success. Therefore, it is important that each of these decision-making bodies accepts the basic recommendations of the plan and makes decisions and recommendations based upon it.

This plan recognizes several ordinances and regulations already in place to preserve the rural characteristics of the Town. It is the intention of the community to maintain these efforts while allowing for the needed growth moving forward.

### Management of Growth and Change

In lay terms, "growth" relates to the size of a community, measured by many different dimensions. "Change" relates to the character of a community, also measured by many different dimensions. Growth can influence change.

The management of growth and change has been defined in a publication of the Urban Land Institute as: "The utilization by government of a variety of traditional and evolving techniques, tools, plans, and activities to purposefully guide local patterns of land use, including the manner, location, rate, and nature of development."

### Implementation Strategies

To purposefully guide the management of growth and change requires a clear vision of what the community desires to be in the future. Achieving the vision, or implementing the plan requires a community to take a "proactive" position rather than a "reactive" position. These positions must be carried out within the parameters of federal and state constitutional law, and pursuant to local municipal ordinances or duly established procedures.

### Plan Administration

An effective planning program should be continually reviewed and updated to reflect the processes of actual development and the changing attitudes and priorities of the community. This Plan should be a living and working document for the Town. Information should be gathered and studied to determine trends and reevaluate projections, forecasts, and plans. The comprehensive plan should be regularly reviewed in depth to make any necessary policy and recommendation changes in relation to the direction and character of community development at that time.

The plan is based on variables that are dynamic and whose future direction cannot always be accurately predicted. Accordingly, such variables as population and urban development characteristics should be periodically compared against the plan's assumptions and recommendations. The updating process should

include gathering of most recent demographic information, updated building permit and land use data, analysis, and a public hearing before the Plan Committee and Town Board.

The committee plays a very critical role in the planning process and must be ever alert to the opportunities and needs of the community, bringing such needs to the attention of the elected bodies or other agencies within the community having direct responsibility for public improvements. The appraisal of local needs and the continuing application of the planning principals set forth herein will assure maximum benefits from the plan and will result in orderly and economical achievement of the goals which have been established in preparation of this plan.

Implementation depends upon both private and public action. Public action includes administration of the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations, long-range financial programming, and the review of proposals affecting the physical development of the community by the board-appointed committees and elected officials.

Close cooperation between the Town, surrounding city, and neighboring jurisdictions is essential to proper administration and implementation of the plan.

The greatest number of decisions affecting local development are made by citizens through private actions. Thus, it is essential that the public understands and supports the plan. Through involvement of citizens in the development of the plan's goals and objectives, as well as additional input at various other stages of the planning process, it is the express intent of the plan to reflect the views of the community.

The effort expressed in the previous elements is the preparation of the comprehensive plan. The plan is the instrument that the Town or River Falls will utilize to prepare for and guide the growth and development of the Town over the next twenty years.

The comprehensive plan is a flexible guide to decision making rather than an inflexible blueprint for development. Amendments should be made only after a realistic evaluation of existing conditions and the potential impact of such a change is made. Amendments should not be made merely to accommodate the daily pressures of planning and/or government. It is important to recognize that planning is a process that should occur on a continuing basis if the community is to take advantage of new opportunities as conditions change.

## Plan Adoption, Monitoring, Amendments, and Update

### *Plan Adoption*

The first official action toward plan implementation is adoption of the plan document by the Town Board. After the Committee adopts the Plan by resolution, the Town Board must adopt the plan by ordinance. This action formalizes the plan document as the current basic frame of reference for general development decisions over the next 10 years (with a forward view of the next 20 years). The plan, thereby, becomes a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and for coordinating various individual decisions into a consistent set of actions to harmoniously shape the area's continued growth in the desired manner.

### *Plan Use and Evaluation*

The Town will base all its land use decisions against this Plan's goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations, including decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions.

Future conditions cannot always be accurately predicted. Accordingly, such variables as community character and transportation safety and mobility should be periodically compared against the Plan's assumptions and recommendations.

This Plan should be evaluated regularly to determine the Town's progress toward implementing the Plan and identifying areas that need to be updated.

### *Plan Amendments*

This Comprehensive Plan may be amended at any time by the Town Board following the procedures set forth in Wisconsin Statutes § 66.0295(4). Amendments are generally defined as minor changes to the plan maps or text. Amendments may be needed for a variety of reasons including:

- Changes in Town goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations
- Changes in Town borders through annexation by the city
- Unique opportunities presented by private development proposals
- Changes in Town programs and services
- Changes in state or federal laws

Any proposed amendments should be submitted to the Plan Committee for their review and recommendations prior to being considered by the Town Board for final action.

### *Plan Update*

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the comprehensive plan be updated at least once every 10 years. An update is different than an amendment because the update is often a substantial rewrite of the plan document and maps. In addition, on January 1, 2010, "any program or action that affects land use" must be consistent with locally adopted comprehensive plans, including zoning and land division ordinances. The Town should continue to monitor any changes to the language or interpretations of the State Law over the next several years.

## Town of River Falls Action Plan

What	Who	When
Communicate the contents of the plan and land use issues to key stakeholders, citizens, surrounding communities, state, and regional entities.	Committee and Town Board	2024
Review and align any Town ordinances or policies with the plan.	Town Board, Advisors / legal	Ongoing
Base land use decisions against this Plan’s goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations, including decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions.	Town Board	Ongoing
Identify opportunities for projects included in this plan like parks and trails, land preservation, and public access to Town lands and resources.	Town Board and Staff	Ongoing
Begin long range planning for use of Town owned land to include new and upgraded facilities.	Town Board and Committees with Community Input	Ongoing
Work with surrounding government entities to implement elements of this plan. This includes the City of River Falls, Pierce County, other Towns, the Region, and the State of Wisconsin and their departments and divisions.	Town Board and Committees	Ongoing
Amend Plan as Needed	Town Board	Ongoing
Update This Plan Every 10 Years	Town Board	2034

The following details and data summarize background information as required for the nine planning elements to be included in comprehensive plans (per Wisconsin Statute 66.1001). The information was collected in the years 2023 and 2024 and is subject to change. The information is compiled at the Town level to the extent that such data is available or can be synthesized from standard data sources. Much of the data comes from secondary sources, consisting primarily of the U.S. Census. Caution should be given as most of the data that the US Census collects is from a sample of the total population; and therefore, are subject to both sampling errors (deviations from the true population) and non-sampling errors (human and processing errors).

### Nine Planning Elements

- Issues and Opportunities
- Housing
- Transportation
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources
- Economic Development
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Land Use
- Implementation

## Vision

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"The Town of River Falls is a rural and agricultural community that values our quality of life. We recognize the importance of a clean environment, neighborliness, and responsible use of resources. Our town has a history of farming and careful land use, and we wish to preserve this heritage while allowing for well-planned growth into the future."

## Town of River Falls Goals

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### Housing Goal

**Goal:** The Town will remain focused on the rural and agricultural character of the area and will plan for and permit housing that supports these ideals while allowing for projected growth and the needs of our seniors and persons with disabilities. In addition, the Town of River Falls has developed a Farmland Preservation Plan and Ordinances that control housing development in certain areas. It is the goal of this plan to continue to support these policies.

### Transportation Goal

**Goal:** Develop a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation network of roads, trails, and public transit options for moving people and goods that is affordable, and which provides support for the economy of the region. This system will be maintained by the Town and by working with the County, State, and surrounding communities.

### Utilities and Community Facilities Goal

**Goal:** Working with surrounding communities, the private sector and our citizens, the Town of River Falls will strive to provide the best available facilities and services for our residents while working to control costs and minimize impact on the tax rate for the Town.

### Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Goal

**Goal:** We will continue to encourage and support participation in our Farmland Preservation Program as well as various land conservancies, the Managed Forest program, watershed programs, and other entities that will restore and preserve our waters and prairies. We will also support our Parks committee.

### Economic Development Goal

**Goal:** The Town of River Falls is primarily an agricultural and residential community and will seek to develop our Town in support of this vision with limited availability for larger commercial and retail development.

### Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal

**Goal:** We will work with the City, surrounding Towns, County and State to maintain good relations, sound planning, citizen involvement, intergovernmental agreements, ETZ planning, and improved communication. The Town of River Falls will remain focused on preserving our farmlands, public spaces, and rural character.

### Land Use Goal

**Goal:** Preservation of sustainable agricultural lands to ensure a local food supply. The Town will also work to maintain the rural character of the community through sound planning, controlled growth, appropriate use of our soil types and topography, groundwater protection, and preserving both farmlands and the natural environment.

## History

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The Town of River Falls is a community located in the St. Croix River Valley, approximately 30 miles east of the Minneapolis St. Paul Metropolitan Area. The Town is located adjacent to the City of River Falls, and about 8 miles northeast of the City of Prescott. Although the Town has a rural atmosphere, it is connected to larger urban areas by its transportation routes. The major arteries of transportation are State Highway 35 (connecting River Falls to I-94) State Highway 29/35 (connecting River Falls with Prescott), and 65 which connects the area to Ellsworth (SE).

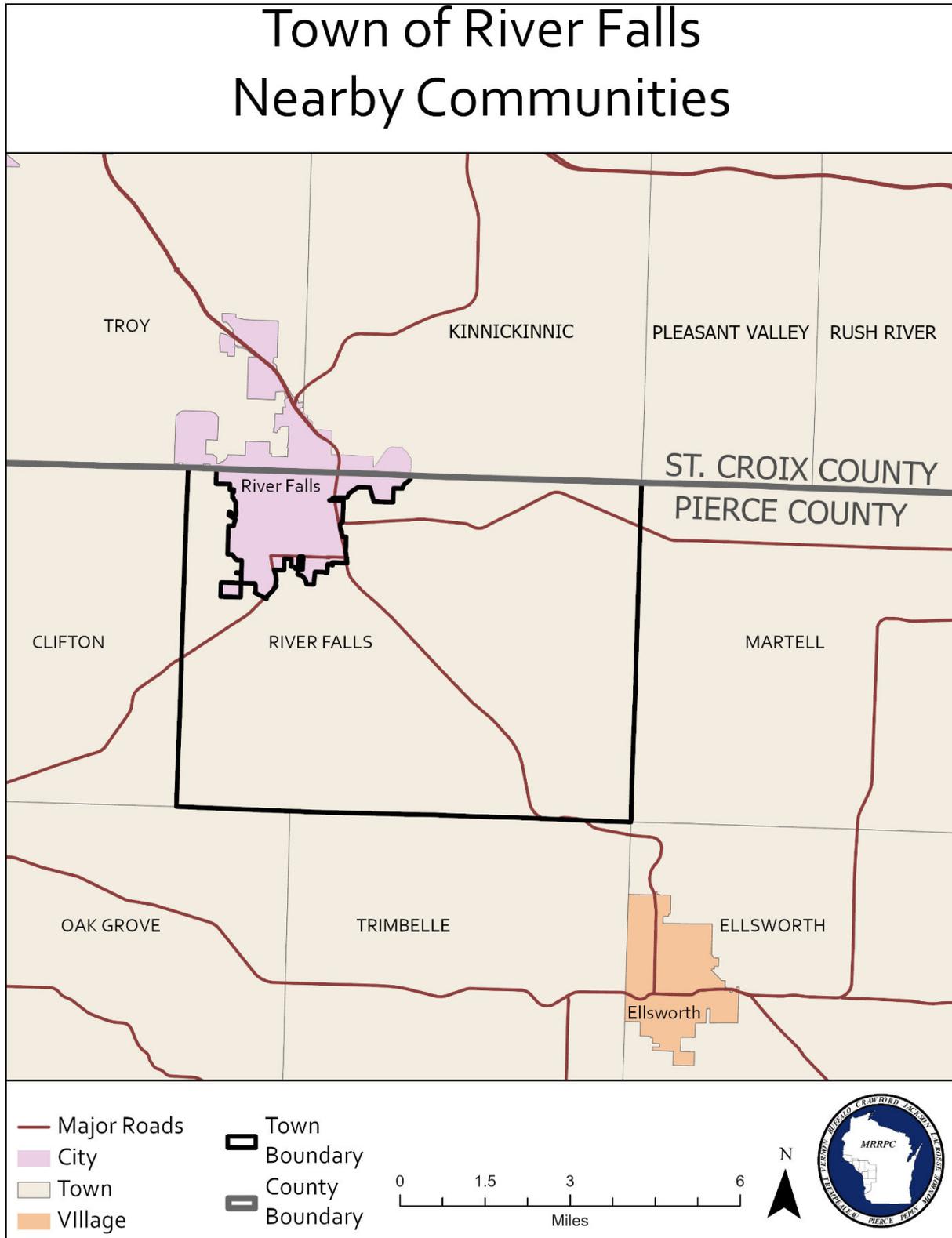
River Falls was originally organized as a Town in 1854 and named “Greenwood” in honor of Clark Green and Captain Joseph Wood who arrived in 1853. Since the name “Greenwood” was already in use elsewhere in the state, the Town changed its name to River Falls in 1858.

Joel Foster was the earliest settler arriving in 1848 at the junction of the Kinnickinnic River and the South Fork. Other early pioneers instrumental in the development of the Town include James and Walter Mapes and D. McGregor arriving in 1849, J. M. Cowan, Hosea Bates, and S. M. Davis.

Census figures for the year 1860 show a total of 3,252 acres of improved land and 6,007 acres of unimproved land in the Town of River Falls. Wheat farming led to considerable prosperity in Pierce County at this time with grain being shipped down the Mississippi River from Prescott. Over 19,800 bushels of wheat were produced in River Falls in 1860, along with 11,495 bushels of (Indian) corn, and 10,690 pounds of butter. Wheat farming eventually gave way to dairying in the 1900’s as the primary agricultural pursuit.

The 2000 census reports a population in the Town of 2,316 residents. Its rural character and proximity to the Twin Cities Metro Area, the St. Croix River and other sites of interest continue to contribute to the Town’s high quality of life.

Map of Town of River Falls and Surrounding Communities



## Issues and Opportunities

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The Town of River Falls is committed to the preservation of its rural heritage, agricultural lands, and well-planned development. Future housing and economic development will be considered that supports this vision. Their Town ordinances use soil type to identify lands suitable for new construction vs. land best preserved for present and future agricultural uses. The community is also cognizant of the challenges of their topography and the watersheds and aquifers in the area. Working with the DNR and others, this requires best practice farming to prevent runoff and source point contamination in the Town.

The proximity of the Town of River Falls to the City of River Falls and the nearby larger cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul presents both challenges and opportunities over the life of this plan. It is the goal of the Town to encourage denser development to serve the growing population and demand for new homes to take place in the City or close to the existing sewer and water systems. The Town is aware that this will require intergovernmental cooperation and planning. There is also a concern that larger annexations can reduce revenues needed for expanding parks, trails, roads, and other Town facilities. Finally, the Town recognizes that housing growth will continue in the Town and will seek the best planning options for this.

The Town of River Falls is a member of the River Falls Fire Association and contracts with the City of River Falls to ensure that quality Fire and Ambulance services can respond to the needs of the community. The Town also recognizes the importance of area hospitals, medical centers, ADRC, Veterans Center, senior residential facilities, Pierce County Sheriff's Department, and all the other facilities and organizations that contribute to the quality of life in the Town.

The Town has adopted some creative options for development in addition to the identification of soil types. These include the option for accessory dwelling units, denser housing that supports farmland preservation or conservation of lands, and some planned commercial or retail development on lands currently identified for this.

The Town has worked with its existing farmers to promote best practices and new innovations in farming. An anaerobic digester in the Town will combine the farm's dairy manure with organic food waste from food producers, restaurants and grocery stores. The digester process creates biogas which may be used as an energy product. The Town is supportive of renewable energy but is concerned about larger solar arrays and large transmission lines in the community.

Finally, this is a forward-looking plan and we have identified several things we can work on over the next twenty years. These include but are not limited to, adding brush and compost capacity, a new Town Hall, Town Shop, and Recycling Center, parks and trail expansion, land conservancies, agribusiness expansion, and a welcoming community for both residents and visitors.

## General Demographic Data

Table Population

Municipality	2000	2010	2020	Percent Change (2000 to 2020)
Town of River Falls	2,316	2,271	2,215	-4.4
Pierce County	36,804	41,019	42,212	14.7
Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	3,031,918	3,346,859	3,690,261	21.7
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	9.9

Source: US Census 2020 – Table P1 Race

### Population Characteristics

The Town of River Falls is predominantly White – 94.0% - a figure higher than Pierce County (92.3%), Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA, and Wisconsin.

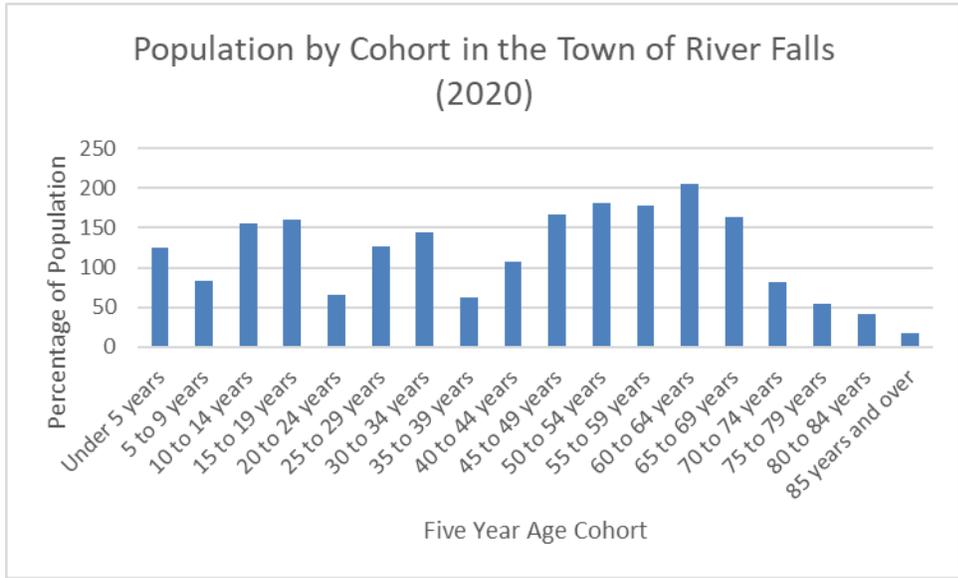
The median age of the Town is 46.7, which is almost a decade higher than Pierce County, the Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA, and Wisconsin. Correspondingly, the percentage of the population of the Town over 65 is 16.9%, which is higher than Pierce County (14.8%) and the Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA (14.1%), but smaller than Wisconsin (17.0%). The percentage of the population of the Town under 18 is 22.7%, which is higher than Pierce County (20.7%) and Wisconsin (22.0%), but less than the Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA (23.7%). The population of the Town of River Falls is continuing to age. The largest five-year age cohorts are 60 to 64, then 50 to 54, then 55 to 59.

Table Race

Race	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
White alone	2,083	38,964	2,692,366	4,737,545
Black or African American alone	13	406	337,652	376,256
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	6	228	28,161	60,428
Asian alone	10	291	265,575	175,702
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	1	18	1,365	2,199
Some Other Race alone	20	473	122,165	182,054
Population of two or more races	82	1,832	242,977	359,534
Total	2,215	42,212	3,690,261	5,893,718

Source: US Census 2020 – Table P1 Race

Graph Age by Five Year Cohort



Source: US Census 2020 – Table P1 Race

Age Compared to Other Communities

Age	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin				
Under 5 years	125	5.9%	1,999	4.7%	229,796	6.3%	329,324	5.6%
5 to 9 years	83	3.9%	2,212	5.2%	241,923	6.6%	353,613	6.0%
10 to 14 years	156	7.4%	2,930	6.9%	248,818	6.8%	379,887	6.5%
15 to 19 years	161	7.6%	3,886	9.2%	234,391	6.4%	387,828	6.6%
20 to 24 years	65	3.1%	4,526	10.7%	217,299	5.9%	393,324	6.7%
25 to 29 years	126	5.9%	2,151	5.1%	256,312	7.0%	369,922	6.3%
30 to 34 years	144	6.8%	2,291	5.4%	268,366	7.3%	365,233	6.2%
35 to 39 years	62	2.9%	2,341	5.5%	267,244	7.3%	382,375	6.5%
40 to 44 years	107	5.1%	2,581	6.1%	236,961	6.5%	346,339	5.9%
45 to 49 years	167	7.9%	2,497	5.9%	226,622	6.2%	348,683	5.9%
50 to 54 years	182	8.6%	2,705	6.4%	237,581	6.5%	383,896	6.5%
55 to 59 years	178	8.4%	2,875	6.8%	253,778	6.9%	427,743	7.3%
60 to 64 years	205	9.7%	2,984	7.1%	224,608	6.1%	406,416	6.9%
65 to 69 years	164	7.7%	2,173	5.1%	181,153	5.0%	336,877	5.7%
70 to 74 years	81	3.8%	1,790	4.2%	134,599	3.7%	262,310	4.5%
75 to 79 years	54	2.5%	1,025	2.4%	83,481	2.3%	160,625	2.7%
80 to 84 years	41	1.9%	688	1.6%	55,386	1.5%	113,539	1.9%
85 years and over	17	0.8%	550	1.3%	60,838	1.7%	123,727	2.1%
Total	2118	(X)	42,204	(X)	3,659,156	(X)	5,871,661	(X)
Median Age	46.7	(X)	37.4	(X)	37.4	(X)	39.6	(X)

Source: ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates – S0101 Age and Sex

Educational Attainment

The Town has a higher percentage of residents that are high school graduates or higher than Pierce County, the Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA, or Wisconsin. Additionally, the Town has a higher percentage of residents that have bachelor's degrees than Pierce County and Wisconsin, and a comparable percentage to the Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA. Overall, the population of the Town is highly educated.

Table Educational Attainment

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Town of River Falls</b>	<b>Pierce County</b>	<b>Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>
Less than 9th grade	0.3	1.0	2.8	2.4
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	0.7	3.9	3.3	4.7
High school graduate	19.6	31.0	20.5	30.0
Some college, no degree	23.6	22.0	19.4	20.2
Associate's degree	11.7	12.7	10.6	11.2
Bachelor's degree	31.5	19.7	28.3	20.7
Graduate or professional degree	12.6	9.7	15.2	10.8
High school graduate or higher	99.1	95.1	94.0	92.9
Bachelor's degree or higher	44.1	29.4	43.5	31.5

Source: American Community Survey 2021 – Table S1501 Educational Attainment

## Housing

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**Goal:** The Town will remain focused on the rural and agricultural character of the area and will plan for and permit housing that supports these ideals while allowing for projected growth and the needs of our seniors and persons with disabilities. In addition, the Town of River Falls has developed a Farmland Preservation Plan and Ordinances that control housing development in certain areas. It is the goal of this plan to continue to support these policies.

### Objectives / Policies:

The Town of River Falls will work with the surrounding communities to provide adequate housing stock for our current residents, projected growth, senior housing needs, and expansion of families in the Town.

The Town is firmly committed to farmland preservation policies currently in the Town Ordinances and strongly supports the use of soil types to identify agricultural land and thus restrictions as to the number of dwelling units in these areas.

The Town currently allows Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) a second home on an existing lot in the Town. These units are designated for family or caregiver use and require a special use permit prior to construction. We hope these units will allow for families to grow and residents to age on their current homesteads.

Working with the City, we will encourage higher density neighborhoods to seek water and sewer facilities inside or adjacent to the city limits. We will work with the city in the areas designated as extraterritorial zoning (ETZ) to allow development that conforms to their future use mapping.

The Town hopes to allow for a diversity of housing opportunities to serve all residents of the Town of River Falls. We will seek options like cluster development on lands not designated for agricultural use.

This plan has identified the need for additional rental properties and lower cost housing and again it is our plan to work with the City of River Falls and our community to address these needs.

Current Town zoning addresses farmland preservation. These policies restrict the development of these lands and limits housing on them. This plan is in support of that code, specifically:

*17.06 FARMLAND PRESERVATION DISTRICT (A-1).*

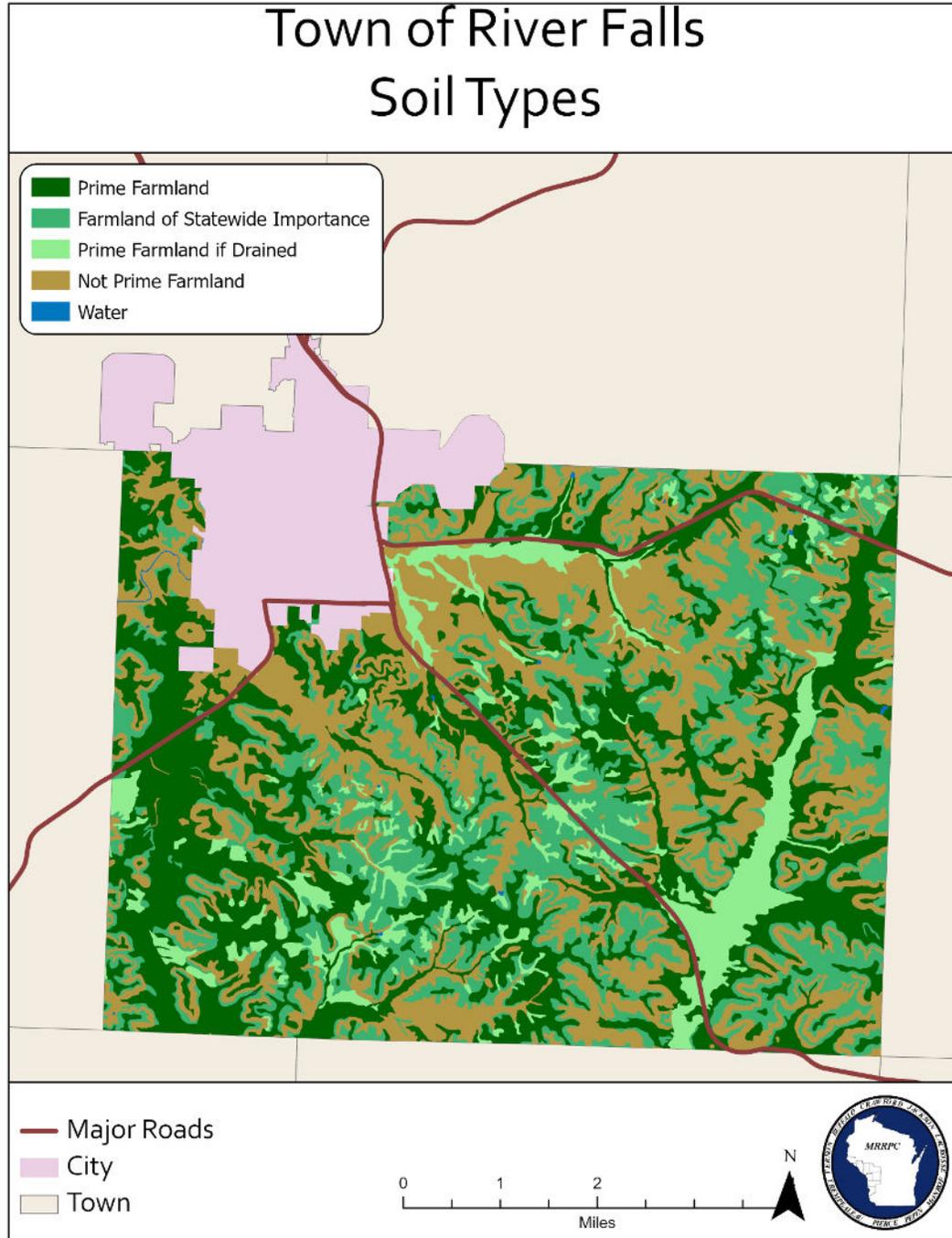
*(1) INTENT. The intent of the A-1 District is to preserve the more productive agricultural soils in larger tracts to maintain agriculture as a permanent, viable land use and to comply with the provisions of the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Law. Nonfarm residences will be rezoned to Ag-Residential A-2 as the situation arises. The Farmland Preservation Law permits eligible landowners to receive tax credits.*

*(2) DESIGNATION. The Farmland Preservation Lands Designated A-1 on the Town Zoning Map shall be for the purposes of this section ...*

<https://riverfallstown.com/Town-code/>

## Housing Data

Map Soil Types (used for zoning)



Housing Statistics

From 2011 to 2021, the reported number of housing units in the Town increased by 6.0%, from 815 to 864. This occurred while the Town was seeing a slight decline in population. This was a greater gain in housing units than seen in Pierce County and Wisconsin, but less than seen in the Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA.

86.1% of the Town’s housing units were single-family units. Pierce County, the Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA, and Wisconsin all had much lower proportions of single-family units in their housing stock. The next most frequent type of housing in the Town are structures with 3 or 4 units.

59.4% of housing structures in the Town were built in 1989 or earlier. This proportion is less than that of Pierce County, the Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA, and Wisconsin. In fact, out of all these the Town has the youngest housing stock.

Table Housing Unit Counts

Year	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
2011	815	16,038	1,350,717	2,609,819
2021	864	16,736	1,489,532	2,718,369
Percent Change	6.0	4.4	10.3	4.2

Source: American Community Survey 2021 and 2011 5-Year Estimates - Table B25001 Housing Units

Table Housing Structures by Type

Units in structure	Town of River Falls (Count)	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
Single Unit	884	86.1%	72.6%	61.0%	66.5%
2 units	32	0.6%	2.9%	2.3%	6.3%
3 or 4 units	50	5.8%	3.7%	2.0%	3.6%
Mobile home	3	.5%	4.1%	1.5%	3.2%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates - Table DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Note: Some data was updated to reflect the actual data on the tax rolls and corrected data based on assessor’s information and input.

Table Housing Stock and Year Built

Year Built	Town of River Falls (Count)	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
Built 2020 or later	20	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Built 2010 to 2019	58	6.7%	5.6%	7.0%	5.3%
Built 2000 to 2009	115	13.3%	18.4%	13.5%	12.2%
Built 1990 to 1999	178	20.6%	12.9%	13.9%	13.7%
Built 1980 to 1989	141	16.3%	11.8%	14.2%	9.6%
Built 1970 to 1979	214	24.8%	16.0%	14.3%	14.5%
Built 1960 to 1969	34	3.9%	6.6%	9.8%	9.7%
Built 1950 to 1959	25	2.9%	6.2%	9.5%	10.6%
Built 1940 to 1949	0	0.0%	3.2%	3.7%	5.5%
Built 1939 or earlier	99	11.5%	19.2%	13.8%	18.7%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates - Table DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

## Median Housing Value

The median value of a home in the Town was \$325,900 in 2021, which is more than \$70,000 more than the median value of a home in Pierce County, almost \$40,000 more than the median value of a home in the MSA, and more than \$125,000 more than the median value of a home in Wisconsin. This is likely due to several factors. For one, as the Town is a rural area, homes tend to have more acreage and land, which drives up property values. There are also quite large minimum lot sizes in the Town, which effectively raise the minimum value of a home – even a home in poor condition will be worth a decent amount due to the amount of land it’s built on. Nonetheless, the Town saw the greatest growth in median housing value from 2011 to 2021 compared to Pierce County, the MSA, and Wisconsin. The Town embraces a growing preference for living in a rural area.

Table Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units

	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
2011	255,800	197,400	234,000	169,700
2021	325,900	242,000	287,600	200,400
Percent Change	27.4%	22.6%	22.9%	18.1%

Source: American Community Survey 2011 and 2021 5-Year Estimates - Table B25077 Median Value (Dollars)

Occupancy Characteristics, Vacancy Rates

The Town has a higher percentage of housing units occupied by owners than Pierce County, the MSA, and Wisconsin. The proportion of renters in the Town is about half of what it is in Pierce County, MSA, and Wisconsin.

Concerning housing vacancies, when it comes to homeowner vacancies, the Town has a higher amount than the county, MSA, and Wisconsin. However, the vacancy rate of the Town – 1.9% - is still low. A vacancy rate of about 5% is a healthy target for the Town.

Even though 15% of homes in the Town are occupied by renters, there is very little inventory of available rental stock. In fact the Town often has a 0.0% rental vacancy rate – meaning no rental units were available. This is particularly a concern for young people, due to the rural exodus of young people. Young people are unlikely to be able to have the means to purchase a home or find rental units.

Table Owner-occupied vs. Renter

	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
Owner-occupied	85.2%	73.7%	70.8%	67.4%
Renter-occupied	14.8%	26.3%	29.2%	32.6%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates - Table DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Table Vacancy

	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.9	0.5	0.6	0.9
Rental Vacancy Rates	0.0	2.7	4.3	4.9

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates - Table DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Affordability of Housing

Affordability of housing is a major issue today. A cutoff of 30% of household income being spent on housing is a commonly given figure for what constitutes housing unaffordability. By this metric, 34.6% of Town residents with a mortgage are under financial strain. This is a much higher figure than the County (20.7%), the MSA (21.4%), or Wisconsin (21.8%). The reason for this is unclear but is likely related to the higher median home values seen in the Town. For homeowners without a mortgage, the picture is much different, with only 6.2% of Town residents without a mortgage spending more than 30% of household income on housing, which is less than in the county (9.3%), the MSA (10.7%), and Wisconsin (11.9%).

On the other hand, when it comes to rental affordability, the Town is doing better than other areas, although rental affordability is still an issue. 30.9% of renters in the Town are spending more than 30% of their household income on housing, which is more than 10% less than the proportion seen in the county, MSA, and Wisconsin.

Table Percent of Household Income Spent on Owner-Occupied Units

	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
Housing unit with a mortgage	462	7,663	707,826	1,016,013
Less than 20.0 percent	44.6%	50.1%	52.0%	51.9%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	11.5%	18.0%	16.2%	16.1%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	9.3%	11.2%	10.4%	10.2%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	1.9%	6.0%	6.2%	5.8%
35.0 percent or more	32.7%	14.7%	15.2%	16.0%
Housing unit without a mortgage	195	3,967	294,038	594,356
Less than 10.0 percent	45.1%	37.5%	49.7%	42.7%
10.0 to 14.9 percent	32.3%	24.3%	19.3%	21.9%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	4.6%	12.2%	10.5%	12.1%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	5.6%	8.8%	6.3%	7.0%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	6.2%	8.0%	3.5%	4.4%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	0.0%	3.3%	2.3%	2.9%
35.0 percent or more	6.2%	6.0%	8.4%	9.0%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates, DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Table Percent of Household Income Spent on Renter-Occupied Units

	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
Occupied units paying rent	110	3,988	398,609	735,869
Less than 15.0 percent	24.5%	21.4%	12.6%	17.2%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	15.5%	15.4%	14.2%	15.1%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	12.7%	13.4%	14.2%	13.7%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	16.4%	7.9%	12.9%	11.4%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	11.8%	8.3%	9.4%	8.4%
35.0 percent or more	19.1%	33.6%	36.7%	34.2%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates, DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Housing Tenure

Housing tenure, or how long residents have lived at their current residence, is an important factor for community planning. The Town of River Falls has statistically high housing tenure, simply stated residents who move here tend to stay. This creates a shortage of available housing stock on the market. Some planned development may benefit the Town in the long term.

Table Year Householder Moved In (Owner Occupied Units)

Housing Tenure	2011	2011 Percentage	2021	2021 Percentage
Moved Within Last Decade	690	40.5%	610	32.7%
Moved 1 or 2 Decades Ago	553	32.5%	555	29.7%
Moved 2 to 3 Decades Ago	223	13.1%	359	19.2%
Moved 3 or More Decades Ago	237	13.9%	342	18.3%

*Source: American Community Survey 2011 and 2021 5-Year Estimates, B25026 Total Population in Occupied Housing Units by Tenure by Year Householder Moved Into Unit*

## Transportation

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**Goal:** Develop a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation network of roads, trails, and public transit options for moving people and goods that is affordable, and which provides support for the economy of the region. This system will be maintained by the Town and by working with the County, State, and surrounding communities.

### Objectives / Policies:

All roads in the Town of River Falls will be constructed to conform to Town, county, and state development standards. The Town will approve the design of new roads prior to construction. A developer may turn roads over to the Town if the road conforms to all design standards and the transfer is approved by the Town.

New development will be required to submit a comprehensive road and pedestrian transportation plan prior to beginning construction. This may require both Town and City approval (if the development is in the ETZ).

The Town will also work with the county and state to ensure new and existing roads conform to the highest safety standards. Signals, signs, and traffic calming measures will be considered to maintain and develop safe roads. This will include planning ingress and egress for new development.

The Town will maintain all Town roads and will work with the county and state to ensure that all non-Town roads (county and state) are also maintained both seasonally and structurally. The Town will work with the state DOT to seek funding for road improvements:

#### Road and bridge assistance programs

The Town will take into consideration bike and pedestrian safety and the potential development of off-road trails, designated bike lanes, sidewalks, and road design to keep our non-driving population safe. The Town will also evaluate the bike pedestrian routes to schools and work to ensure safe transit for our young people. The Town will map corridors for future trails. The Town will work with the state DOT to seek funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvements:

#### DOT Funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities

The Town will also work with the City, ADRC, Veterans Administration, schools, senior facilities, and other regional resources to provide transit options for its citizens who do not drive or have access to transportation. The Town will work with these entities to communicate both availability and how to access these resources to its citizens.

## Transportation Data

### Public Road Inventory

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

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

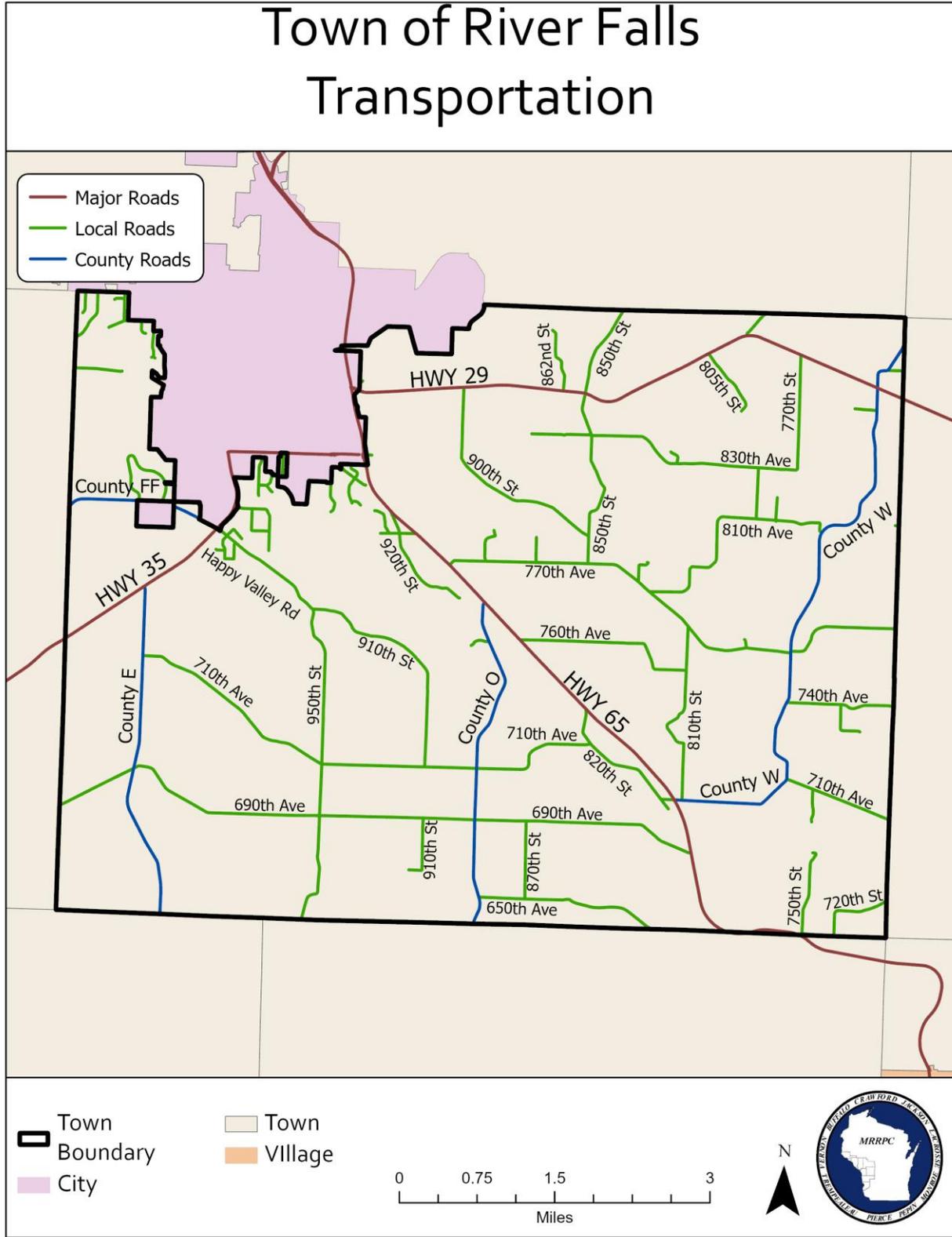
- Minor Arterials: Those streets and highways that are used primarily for fast and heavy traffic (State Highway 65, State Highway 29, State Highway 35).
- Major Collectors: Those roadways which carry traffic from minor streets to the system of major streets and highways, including the principal entrance streets of a residential development and streets for circulation within such a development (County Hwy E).
- Minor Collectors: Those streets which are used primarily for access to abutting properties (County Highway O, County Highway FF).
- Local Streets: Minor streets which are parallel or adjacent to major streets and highways and which provide access to abutting properties and protection from through traffic. All other public roads in the Town that are not classified by the DOT are local roads.



### Highways

State Highway 29/35 passes through most of the Town of River Falls, as does State Highway 65.

Map Town of River Falls Roads



## Non-Driving Population

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation defines the non-driving population as “can include aging adults, students, low-income individuals, those with physical, mental or intellectual/developmental disabilities, those who cannot drive, those with no access to a vehicle, or those who prefer not to drive.” The non-driving population in the Town of River Falls is estimated to be between 0 to 10% of the total population.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

Bicycle and pedestrian traffic are important components of the River Falls transportation system. Some people use this form of transportation for commuting or other utilitarian purposes, while others walk or bike for recreation. Whatever the reason, bicycle and pedestrian use is used by Town residents. As a result of this need, sidewalks, trails, and other linkages are needed to enable safe, efficient travel for bicyclists and pedestrians.

## Railroad

There are no rail routes directly serving the Town.

## Airports

Airports, aviation, and aviation-related industries play a significant role in the economic success of many Wisconsin communities. There are several airports located approximately 20-40 miles from the Town. Airports located near the Town of River Falls include New Richmond Municipal, and Menomonie Municipal-Score Field. The Red Wing Municipal Airport is in southwestern Pierce County, near Hager City. The Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport is also within a relatively convenient driving distance from the Town. This major airport is one of the largest in North America and serves almost every major airline.

## Snowmobile Trails

Wisconsin snowmobilers are proud of the statewide trail system that ranks among the best in the nation. This trail system would not be possible without the generosity of the thousands of landowners around the state as 70 percent of all trails are on private land. Trails are established through annual agreements and/or easements granted by these private property owners to the various snowmobile clubs and county alliances throughout the state. Under Wisconsin State law, Sections 350.19 and 895.52, landowners are not liable for injury on their property when they have granted permission for snowmobiling.

## Existing Transportation Plans

The following transportation plans were reviewed as part of the Town of River Falls planning process. The plans were reviewed to ensure consistency with other governing jurisdictions regarding future transportation improvements.

- Active Transportation Plan 2050
- Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030
- Wisconsin State Freight Plan
- Connect 2050
- Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050
- MRRPC Regional Freight Study

## Utilities and Community Facilities

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**Goal:** Working with surrounding communities, the private sector and our citizens, the Town of River Falls will strive to provide the best available facilities and services for our residents while working to control costs and minimize impact on the tax rate for the Town.

### **Objectives / Policies:**

We will maintain and improve (see new facility below) our Recycling Center for those wishing to bring their waste and recyclables to our facilities. We will also seek a new option for compost and yard waste disposal either in the private sector or by partnering with a neighboring community. We will continue to allow properly licensed private sector providers to contract for services directly with residents. We will regularly communicate all these service options to our residents.

The Town seeks to maximize recycling in the disposal of solid waste to minimize the need for landfills and reduce the occurrence of illegal dumping.

We will maintain and improve our parks and trail systems. We will work with the State, County, DNR, and surrounding communities to both enhance existing facilities and develop new opportunities for public access as appropriate. Some of our park facilities, cemeteries, and public lands are maintained and supported by private entities, and we are pleased to support those relationships. We are happy to make our parks, trails, and public lands available to both our residents and visitors alike.

The South Fork of the Kinnickinnic River and Trimbelle River watersheds have been identified by the DNR as a potential area for improvements, trails, and better public access and we will work with our partners to develop this over the next several years.

The Town will work with existing utilities and new providers to maintain and improve access to utilities and services including natural gas, electricity, internet, and clean water (both well and city).

We will also partner with surrounding communities, the county and the private sector to provide services including police and fire protection, internet, waste disposal and recycling, park and cemetery maintenance, animal control and other services mentioned above.

There is a Hazardous Mitigation Plan being developed for the county and we will work with all of the entities identified in this plan to ensure the Town of River Falls is ready for any contingency.

**Potential New Facility.** While not in our immediate plans, the Town of River Falls has acquired 30 acres of land for future use. Development of this property could include a new Town Hall, Storm Shelter, Composting Facility, Recycling Center, Shop, Park, and other facilities for public use. We will continue to work with our residents to plan and develop this project in the future.

The Town will work to improve communication with our residents regarding our services as well as seeking their feedback as we move forward. This will include improved website, signage, social media, newsletters, and more.

## Utilities and Community Facilities Data

Community facilities are buildings, lands, services and programs that serve the public. Examples of community facilities are parks, schools and fire and police protection. Public works such as water resources, sewer systems, storm water facilities and power generation and distribution make up the physical components of the community. Together, community utilities and facilities allow the Town to function and add to the community's quality of life. The Town of River Falls oversees several community facilities and utilities to support a high-quality environment and level of service to its residents.

The inventory divides community facilities and utilities into two categories.

- Community Facilities - public buildings and grounds that provide space, services, or programs, or from which services or programs are coordinated, that are aimed at improving the quality of life, safety, and general welfare of community residents, and;
- Utilities/Infrastructure – the physical systems, networks and/or equipment necessary to provide for and support the basic needs of urban land uses, including systems, networks and equipment, but excluding transportation infrastructure, which is described within the Transportation Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

### Public Schools

The Town is located mostly in the River Falls School District, with a small portion in the Ellsworth School District. The River Falls School District contains seven schools, all located within the City of River Falls.

### Child Care Facilities

Within Pierce County there are a total of 36 regulated childcare facilities. Data generally shows that childcare demand outstrips supply locally, statewide, and nationally. The cost of care plays a big part in household decisions about childcare arrangements.

### Town Hall

The building that is now the Town Hall was originally constructed in 1901. For many years, the building was used as a school.

The Town has purchased the building with two acres of property and made numerous improvements to the building, including wheelchair access, high speed internet, air conditioning, restrooms, steel siding, a new roof, a second exit, insulated windows, and a gas furnace. The Town garage and recycling center is located at N7750 State Road 65.

### Libraries

There are seven public libraries in Pierce County, all part of the Indianhead Federated Library System. Two of these libraries are near the Town. One is in the City of River Falls, and one in the Village of Ellsworth. In addition, the River Falls School District provides library resources through its school-based library facilities.

### Electric and Natural Gas

According to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, electricity in the Town of River Falls is provided by Pierce-Pepin Cooperative Services based in Ellsworth and River Falls Municipal utility. Natural gas is provided by St. Croix Gas.

### High Speed Internet

There are multiple providers of internet in the town, but Pierce, Pepin, St. Croix and parts of Buffalo Counties have contracted with SwiftCurrent Connect, a wholly owned subsidiary of Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services. SwiftCurrent looks to connect every home that is currently without access to fiber and high-speed internet. The service currently serves most of the Town of River Falls.

### Water System

Private wells serve homes and businesses in the Town. Unlike public water systems, protection and maintenance of private wells is largely the responsibility of homeowners. The Town encourages homeowners to use Pierce County Extension water specialist services to aid in ensuring that water quality is tested regularly. The entire community needs to work together to develop a protection plan that safeguards everyone's water supply. Good construction and proper location are critical in ensuring a safe drinking water supply.

Although portions of the Town are located within the City of River Falls Sewer Service Planning Area, currently the city sewer system does not extend beyond city boundaries. The Sewer Service Area Plan is discussed in more detail in the Land Use Element.

### Wastewater Facilities

There are currently no public wastewater facilities in the Town of River Falls. Residences and businesses rely on private or shared septic systems. Septic systems are wastewater treatment systems that use septic tanks and drain fields to treat wastewater and dispose of it in the soil. Septic systems are generally used in rural areas or in areas that have large lot areas where sanitary sewer services are not available. Pierce County reviews and permits wastewater treatment systems.

The Town has developed a land-division ordinance that will require a developer to, in certain designated areas, install a shared septic system that is compatible with the city municipal sewer-water system. This will allow for smooth hook-up to city services if the area is annexed. In addition, the Town is also seeking to cooperate with the City of River Falls to require that new and repaired septic systems in the ETZ conform to city water/sewer connections.

### Solid Waste and Recycling

The Town of River Falls is dedicated to reducing the amount of solid waste going to landfills as much as possible and supporting all recycling efforts that support that goal. The Town of River Falls has been directly involved in recycling efforts since 1976. The Town, with the support of its citizens, regards the merits of recycling as being both environmentally and economically valid. The Town operates a recycling drop-off center located at the Town garage. It is one of only two responsible units in Pierce County. Residents may also obtain a permit to burn brush.

The recycling center is constantly trying to improve facilities and services while keeping costs as low as possible for residents. Future plans include the proposal for a compost center.

### Health Care

The [Allina Hospital](#) located at 1629 East Division Street, in the City of River Falls, is an important local health care resource. Hospital programs include cardiac rehabilitation, diagnostics, a sports rehabilitation and wellness center, emergency room, and in-and-outpatient surgeries.

Additional health care resources include the Allina Hospital, Allina Health Clinic, M Health Fairview Clinic and the Kinnick Long Term Care Facility, Pierce County Reproductive Health Clinic, and The Free Clinic of Pierce and St. Croix Counties. The City of River Falls is also home to several assisted living facilities and independent living facilities.

### Law Enforcement

Town law enforcement is provided by the Pierce County Sherriff's Department and the River Falls Police Department.

### Fire Services

Fire services to the Town of River Falls are contracted with the City of River Falls Fire Department. The Rural Fire Association includes the Towns of River Falls, Clifton, Kinnickinnic, Troy, and Pleasant Valley and contracts with the City for service. The overall level of service for fire protection is adequate. Fire services from River Falls include fees based on fire numbers and community charges to the Town of River Falls and charges for individual fire calls. Therefore, the Town will continue to seek ways to maintain and increase its influence on the policies and operations of the providing agencies.

### Emergency Medical Services

Ambulance service is also contracted with the City of River Falls. The Town will continue working with the City of River Falls and surrounding Towns to continue quality service and to maintain equality of cost of operation.

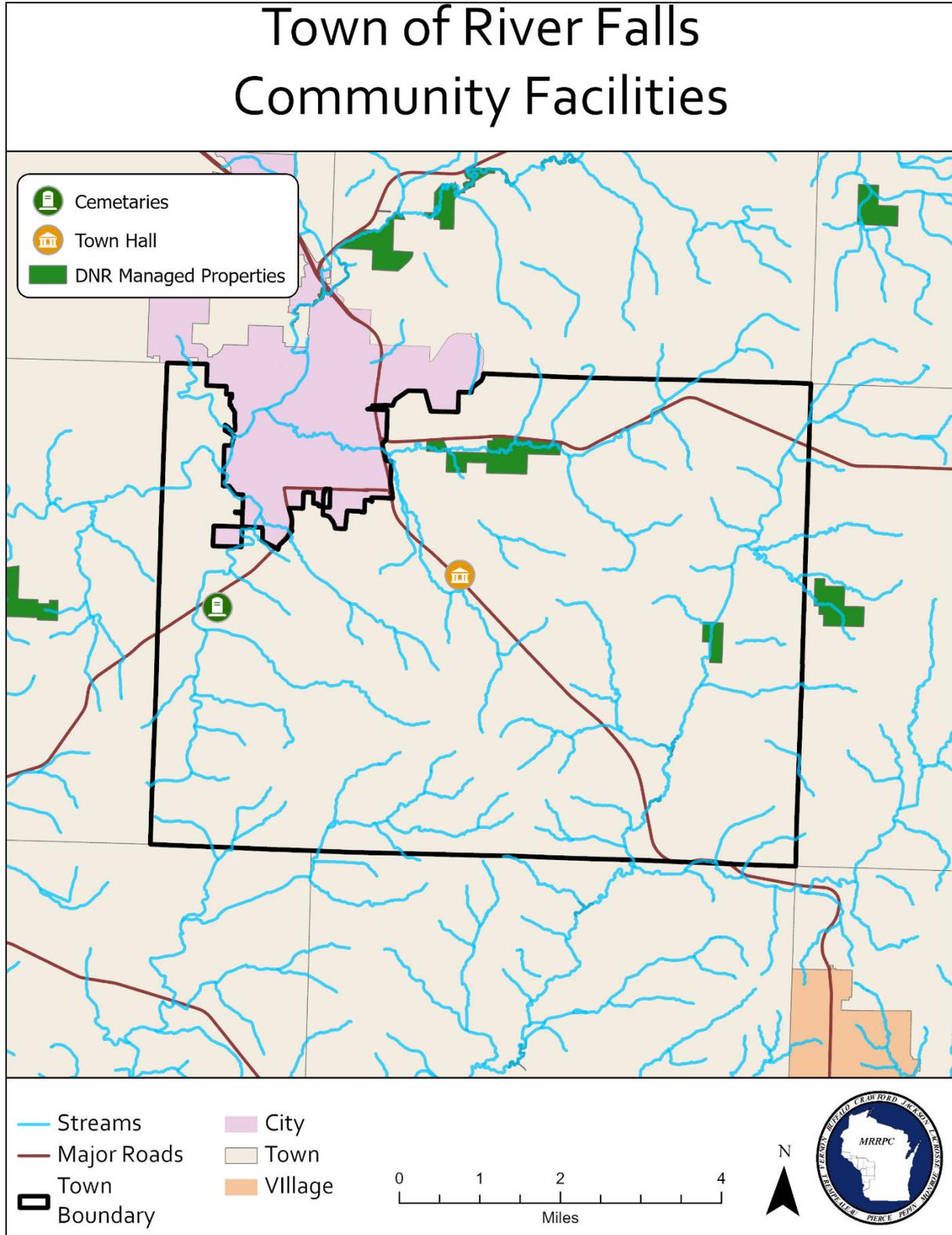
### Recreation Facilities

The Town has a program of park development and currently has a few public parks, conservancy areas, and trails. More than 250 acres adjacent to the South Fork of the Kinnickinnic River, just east of the City of River Falls, is protected under the Stream Bank Protection Program for fish management. Another 65 acres in the eastern portion of the Town, along the Trimbelle River, is managed for wildlife. In addition, some private lands have been placed into conservation easements.

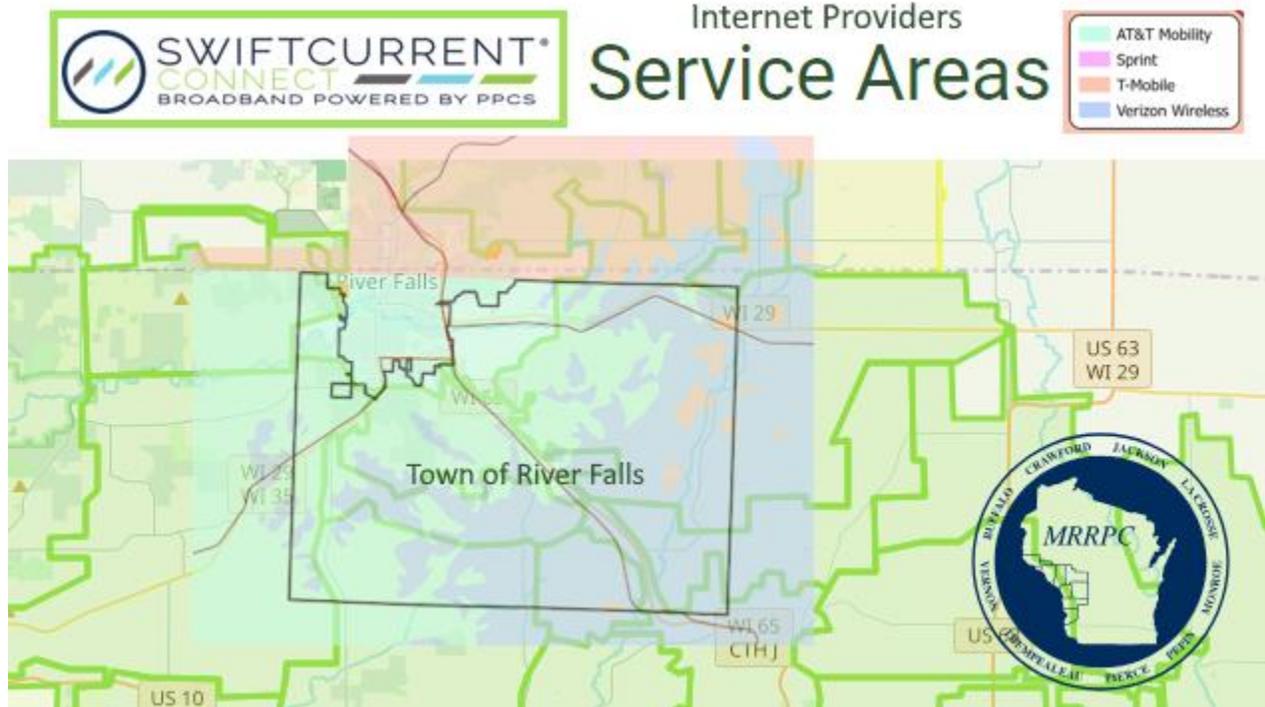
### Cemeteries

The Town currently is responsible for two cemeteries. Both were started in the mid 1800's. The Town currently has lots for sale at Glass Valley Cemetery located on County E. A Town Cemetery Committee was formed in 2010 to oversee Glass Valley Cemetery. Maintenance on Glass Valley Cemetery is performed by the local 4-H Club and has been for over 60 years. Mount Zion Cemetery, located at the Eastern edge of the Town, has been surveyed but there are no current plans for its development.

Map Town of River Falls



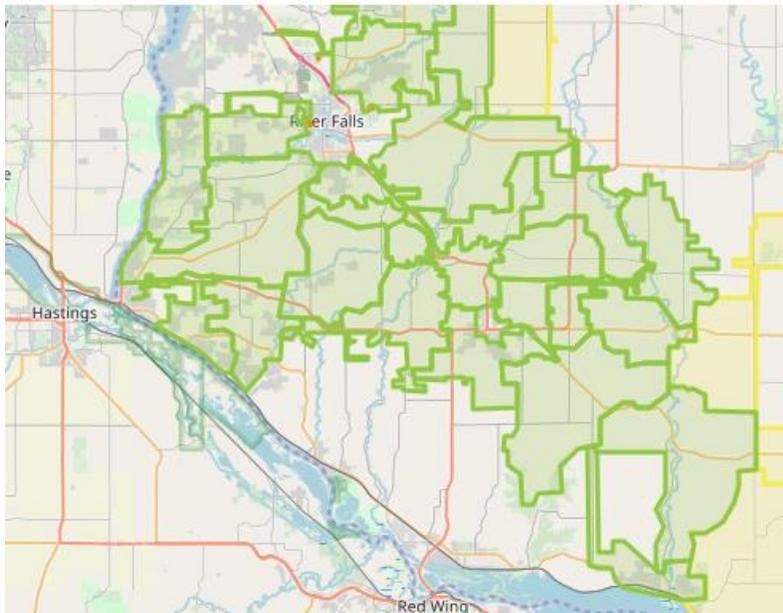
Map Town of River Falls Internet Providers



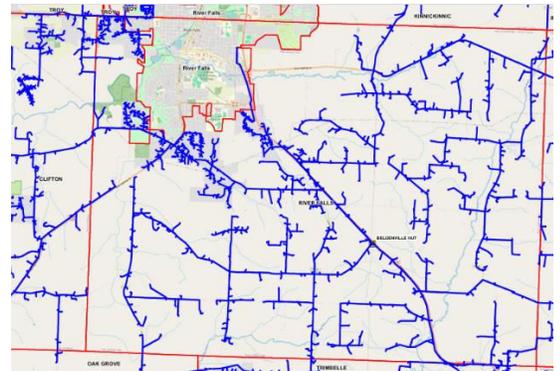
Service Areas



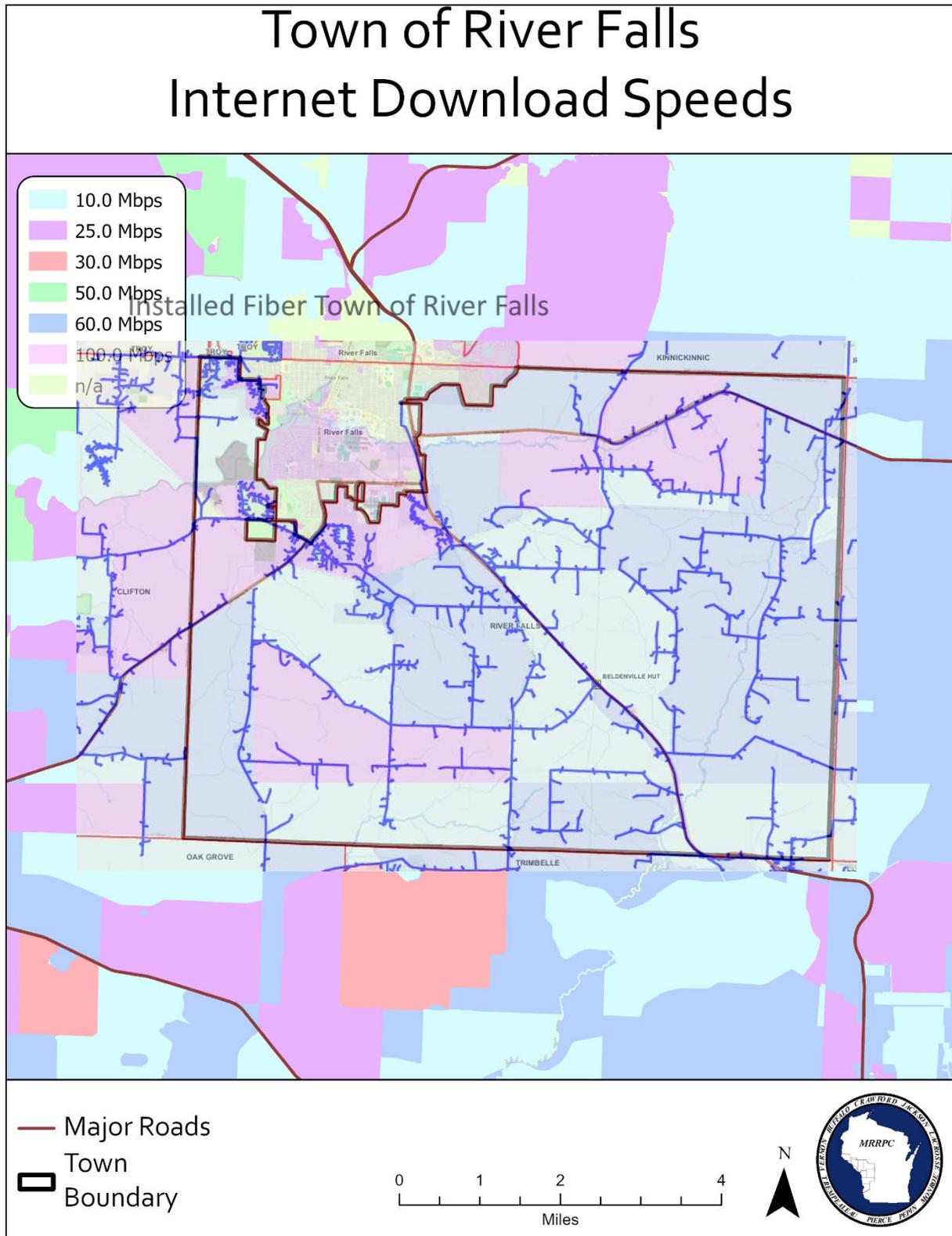
This is a 250 to 2,000 Mbps Service using fiber. Wireless and phone services are slower but less expensive.



Installed Fiber Town of River Falls



Map Download Speeds (NOTE: Homes with Fiber 250 to 2,000 Mbps)



## Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources

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**Goal:** We will continue to encourage and support participation in our Farmland Preservation Program as well as various land conservancies, the Managed Forest program, watershed programs, and other entities that will restore and preserve our waters and prairies. We will also support our Parks committee.

**Objectives / Policies:**

The Town of River Falls is committed to preserving its agricultural heritage. It is with this in mind that the Town is focused on its farmland preservation program and limiting both commercial and housing development on farmlands where the soil type is suitable for agriculture.

The Town also actively works with the private sector and public entities dedicated to protecting public access and the preservation of lands in the Town for future generations. This would include land conservancies, managed forests, watershed programs, wetland conservation, and the development of trails and parks along the rivers and streams in the Town.

## Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Data

### Productive Agricultural Areas

Much of the land in Pierce County is considered potentially productive farmland. Based on soil characteristics, 85 percent of the county is potentially productive (including 34 percent “prime” farmland, 32 percent of “statewide importance”). According to the Pierce County Land Management Plan, much of this prime soil is in the northern part of the county, including the Town of River Falls. The Town considers soils classed I, II, or III by the NRCS maps to be prime farmland.

Encompassing what was once a virgin prairie, the Town of River Falls has some exceptionally good soils for an area this far to the north. Today, the landscape is characterized by extensive, gently rolling uplands, with well-drained and easy-to-till soil. Farming is a major land use activity here, with over 60% of land being classified by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue as agricultural.

### Natural Resources Topography

This ecological landscape is located on the far western edge of the state just below the "tension zone" and contains some of the best prairie potholes in the state. This is the easternmost extent of the vast prairie pothole region that stretches across Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Montana, and south-central Canada.

The area is characterized by generally open, gentle to moderately rolling hills with pothole lakes, ponds, and wet depressions. A ribbon of forest occurs along the St. Croix River. Soils consist of a mosaic of silty, shallow and stony alluvial sands and peats, with a red clay subsoil.

Pre-settlement vegetation was comprised of dry to mesic prairies in the broad rolling areas and wet prairies in the wide depressions. Open oak savannas were found on the hilly topography with small inclusions of sugar maple-basswood forest in the steeper sites protected from fire. Prairie pothole-type wetlands were most prominent in St. Croix County. Barrens were found along the river terraces of the St. Croix River. Floodplain forests, marshes, and wet prairies occurred within the floodplain of the St. Croix.

### Forests

According to WisDOA, forests (both agricultural and forest lands) make up a substantial portion of the land in the Town.

### Soils

The majority of land in the Town of River Falls is considered Class II type soils by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and is concentrated in the central and southern sections of the Town. Class I, II, and III type soils, considered to be prime agricultural land, comprise 74% of the land in the Town with only 3% being Class I. The area immediately south of, and along State Highway 29, contains the highest proportion of other soils not suited for farming. Depending on slope and the amount of wooded acreage, these areas are primarily used as grazing or pastureland, woodlands, or wildlife cover.

## Groundwater

Wisconsin is a state with an overall ample quantity of groundwater. There have not been any concerns about the availability of good quality groundwater in or near the Town. Groundwater pollution has the potential to become a serious problem due to high nitrate levels, which affect health. There are several reasons for the reduction in water quality including agricultural practices, failing septic systems, erosion, changing land uses, and probably some unknown causes. Since groundwater travels for miles underground, it is difficult to isolate specific sources.

A Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey map delineates groundwater susceptibility to contamination based on five physical resource characteristics. These characteristics are the type of bedrock, depth to bedrock, depth to water table, soil characteristics, and surficial deposits. Based on these characteristics, the area near the Town is moderately to highly susceptible to contamination. According to the State of the Basin reports, the Kinnickinnic River watershed has the highest contamination potential in the St. Croix Basin, with numerous wells having pesticides detected, and high levels of nitrates. The Trimbelle River and Isabelle Creek watershed also had a high level of nitrate and pesticide contamination.

## Surface Water

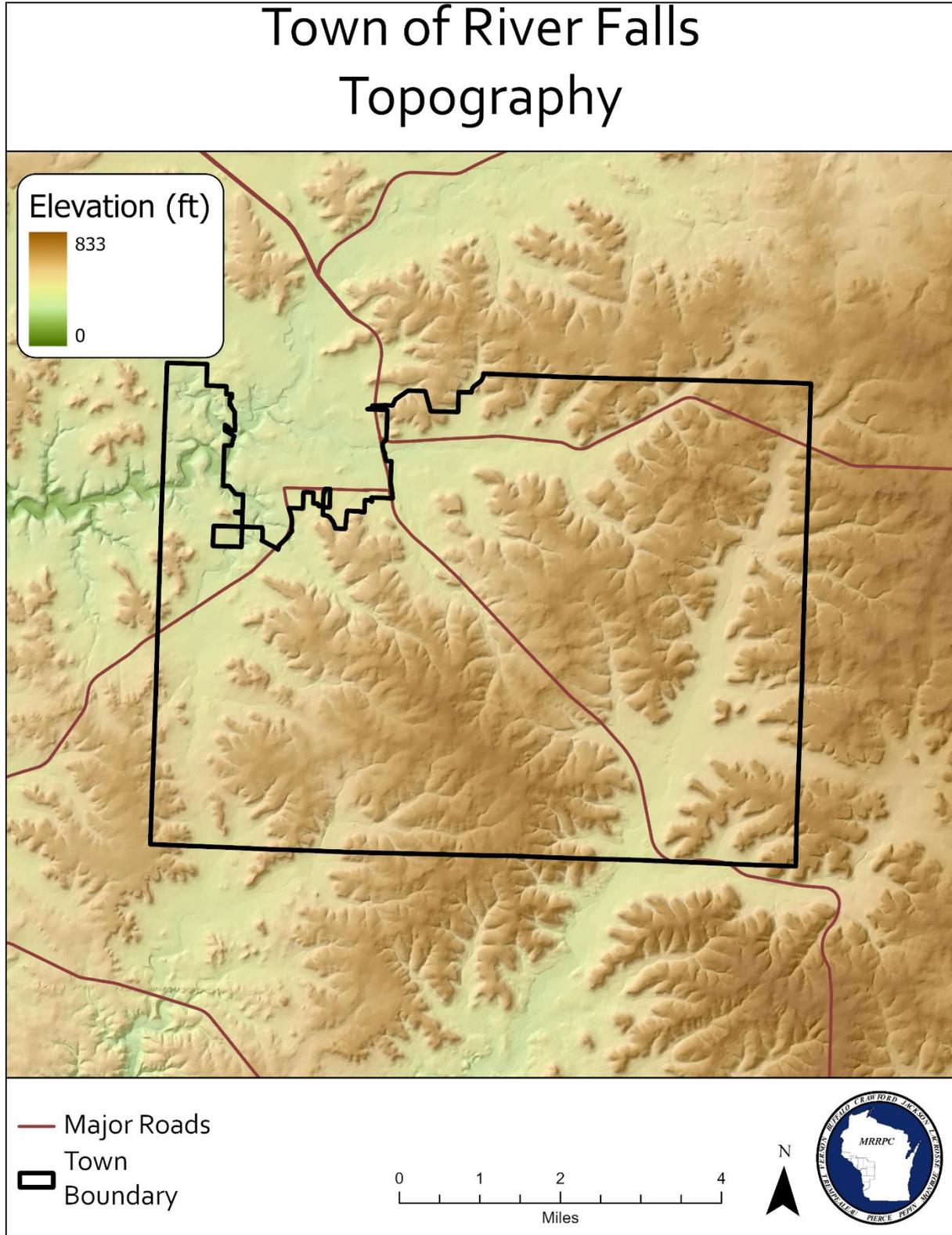
The Town is located partially in the Kinnickinnic River Watershed (of the St. Croix River basin), and partially in the Trimbelle River and Isabelle Creek (of the Lower Chippewa River basin). Three streams within the Kinnickinnic River Watershed are classified as exceptional resource waters, one outstanding resource water, and six of nine streams are cold water class II or higher. The Kinnickinnic River Watershed was also designated as a priority watershed project. The primary impacts are agricultural runoff, storm runoff, and sedimentation. Within the Trimbelle River and Isabelle Creek Watershed, the Trimbelle River has been designated as an exceptional resource water. There are no lakes within the Town.

## Air Quality

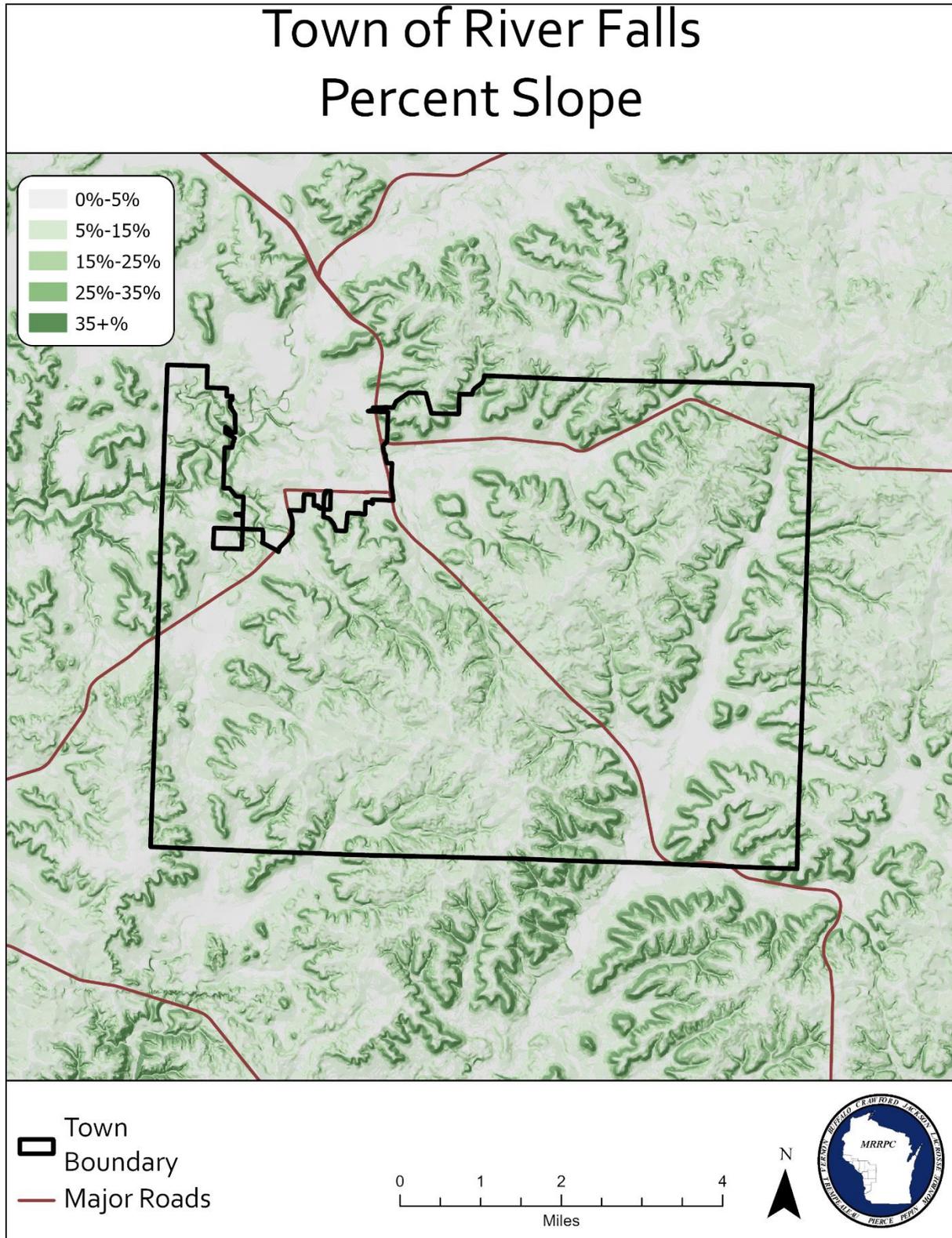
National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) have been established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to protect public health and the environment. The pollutants regulated by these NAAQS include suspended particulate matter, carbon monoxide, ozone, oxides of nitrogen, oxides of sulfur, and lead. Some counties in southeastern Wisconsin have been designated as non-attainment areas for one or more NAAQS. Pierce County is considered an attainment area\* for all pollutants.

\*If the air quality in a geographic area meets or is cleaner than the national standard, it is called an attainment area (designated "attainment/unclassifiable"); areas that don't meet the national standard are called nonattainment areas.

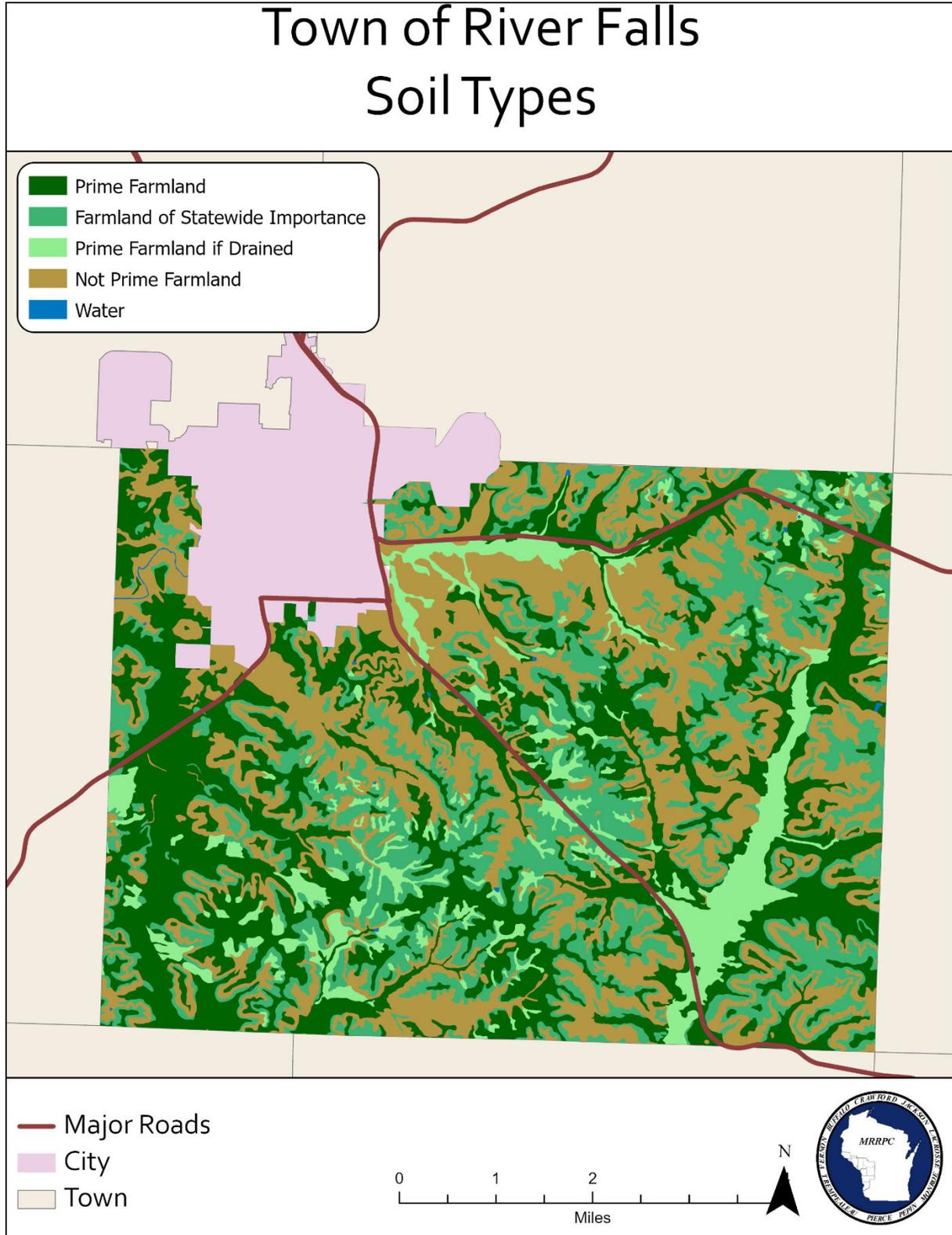
Map Topography



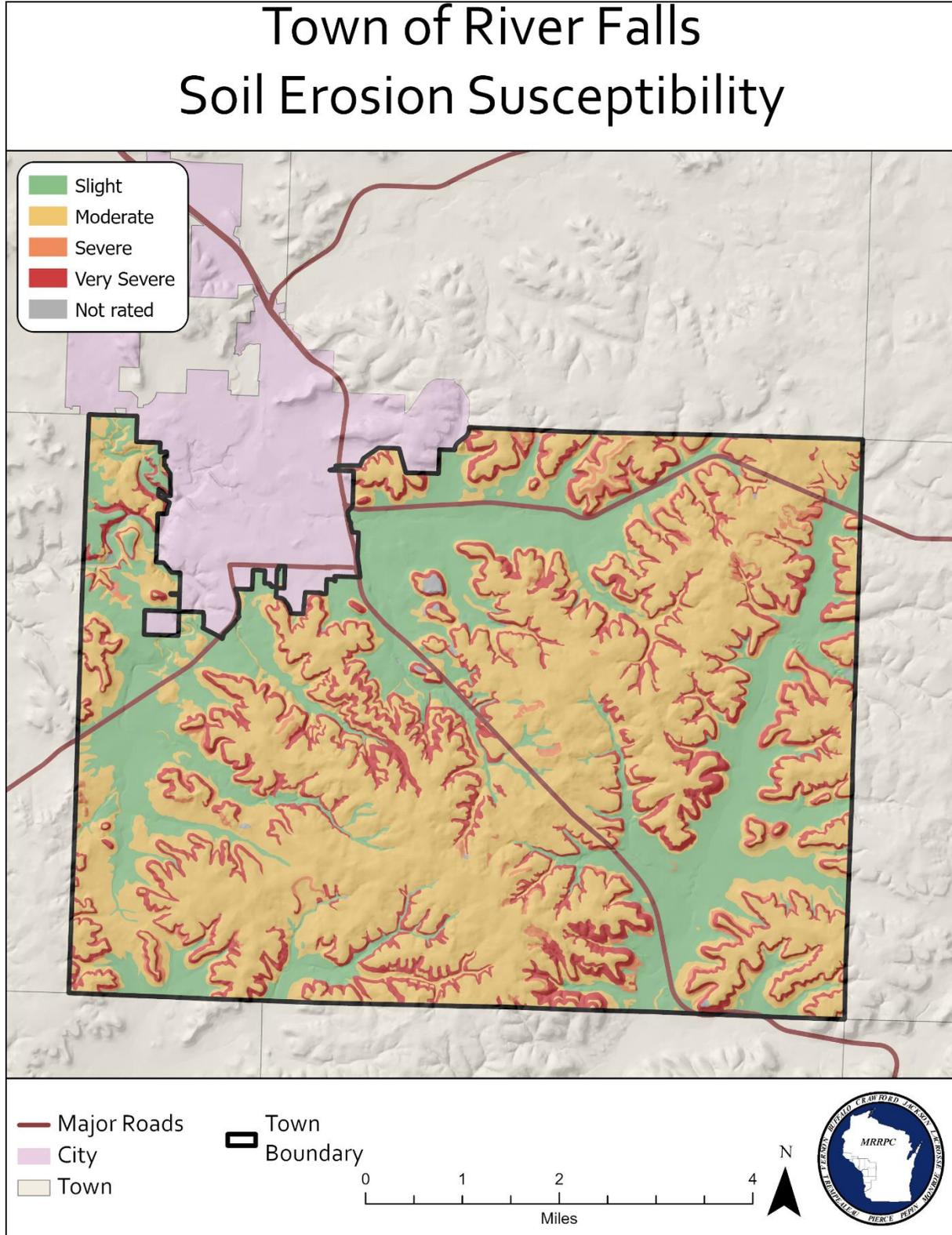
Map Slope



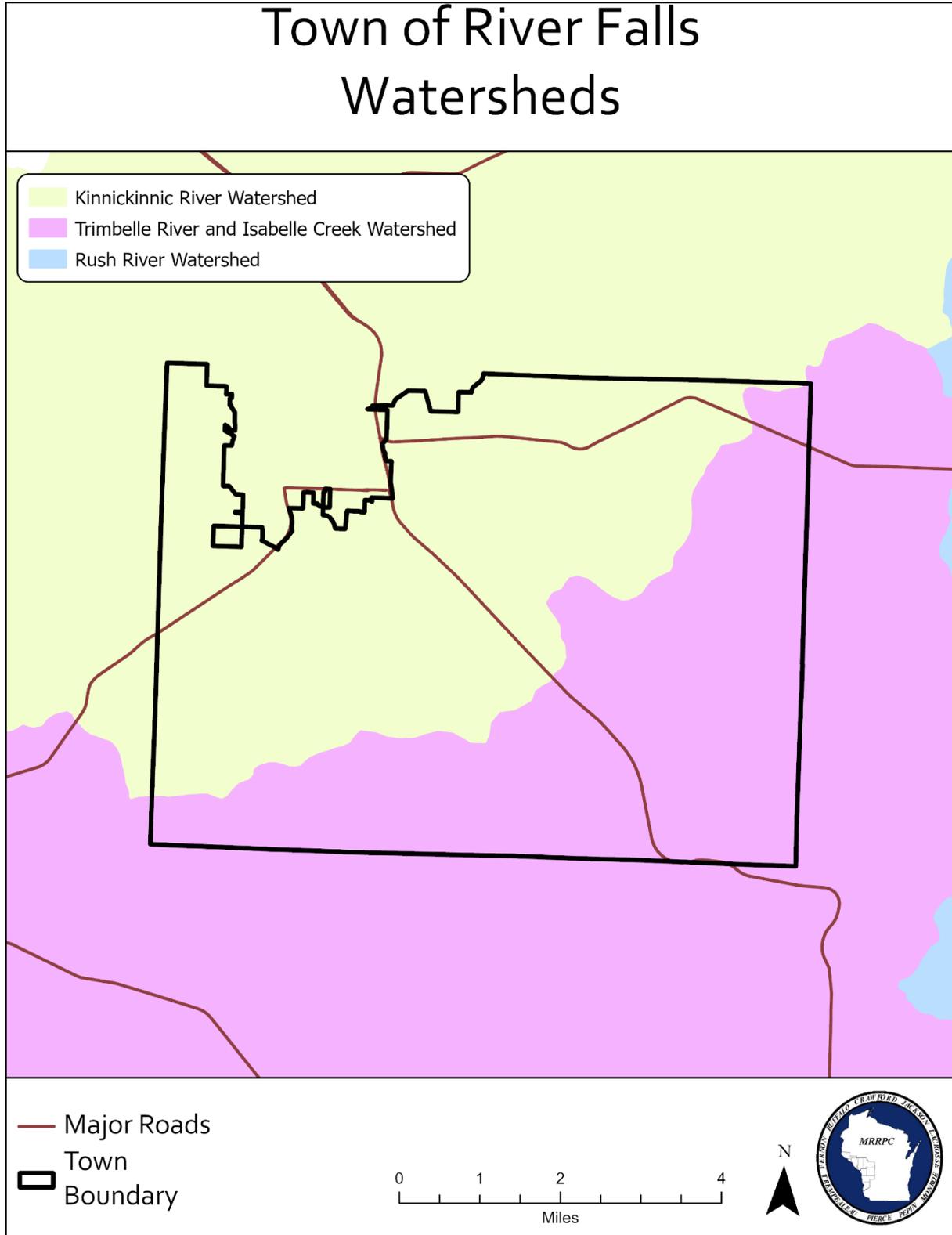
Map Town of River Falls Soil Types



Map Potential Soil Erosion



Map Town of River Falls Watersheds



## Economic Development

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**Goal:** The Town of River Falls is primarily an agricultural and residential community and will seek to develop our Town in support of this vision with limited availability for larger commercial and retail development.

### Objectives / Policies:

We are aware of our proximity to the City of River Falls and hope to create a buffer between the two communities. We hope to work with the City of River Falls to ensure that any industrial or nonagricultural manufacturing is developed within the existing city boundaries or in the ETZ where sewer and water are planned and could be made available.

The Town of River Falls will continue to maintain our natural resources and watersheds for the benefit of the entire region. Our business development will focus on agriculture, tourism, well defined enterprise areas, cottage industries, and ag related businesses.

To support home-based businesses the Town will seek to work with the State to improve internet access in support of those working from home.

The Town currently has some commercial / retail developments. One area has four existing businesses. Another parcel is currently undeveloped. There are also a number of established businesses along highway 65 South. Any additional non-agricultural development will require rezoning by the Town.

The Town of River Falls will first seek to protect our natural environment while allowing for agriculture using best practices and smaller businesses to thrive in our community.

On the agricultural side of economic development, we have several crop and dairy farms, a winery, an approved anaerobic digester, cottage/home based businesses, certified organic farms, honey and maple syrup producers, and farm to market producers.

## Economic Development Data

This element provides a baseline assessment of the Town of River Falls' economic development and contains the information required under Wisconsin Statute SS66.1001. Information includes labor market statistics, economic base statistics, strengths and weaknesses for economic development, analysis of business and industrial parks, and environmentally contaminated sites. This information provides a basis for creating goals, objectives, policies, maps, and actions to guide the future economic development activities in the Town of River Falls.

Although agriculture employs a small percentage of Town residents, agriculture continues to be the major economic stimulus within the Town. Dairying, and livestock and crop production are vital to the economy of the area and are the source of many other agriculture-related businesses and services. Field crops (corn, beans and hay) and dairy are the leading source of farm income. Dairy is shifting from small to large farms with larger herds.

Within the County, three major agricultural trends have been recognized. The constant shift from farm to non-farm uses, fewer and larger farms, and more row-cropping of production acreage. However, with the implementation of use value assessment, agricultural properties are now taxed based on their agricultural productivity, rather than market value. This is expected to reduce the pressure for small acreage farmers, particularly those in urbanizing areas, to shift their land into non-farm uses.

Employment

The Town of River Falls has 1,209 residents in the civilian labor force. Employees of private companies made up the largest percentage of workers, at 61.0%. Government workers made up 18.3% of the workforce. The largest occupation group was educational services, and health care and social assistance with 315 workers.

Table Industry by Class of Worker

Class of Worker	Total	Employee of private company workers	Self-employed in own incorporated business workers	Private not-for-profit wage and salary workers	Local, state, and federal government workers	Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers and unpaid family workers
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,209	61.0%	4.1%	9.3%	18.3%	7.3%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	61	65.6%	23.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%
Construction	114	81.6%	15.8%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%
Manufacturing	216	92.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%
Wholesale trade	14	71.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%
Retail trade	53	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	63	81.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.0%
Information	11	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	60	68.3%	6.7%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	90	66.7%	4.4%	5.6%	7.8%	15.6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	315	21.3%	0.0%	27.9%	48.9%	1.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	107	90.7%	9.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other services, except public administration	48	29.2%	0.0%	10.4%	0.0%	60.4%
Public administration	57	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates, S2407 Industry by Class of Worker for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

## Poverty

The Town has a lower rate of poverty than Pierce County, the MSA, and Wisconsin. The median household income (\$94,196) is also higher than that of Pierce County, the MSA, and Wisconsin.

Table Poverty by Community

	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
Percent Below Poverty Level	1.5%	9.2%	8.1%	10.7%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates, S1701 Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months

Table Income Levels

	Town of River Falls	Pierce County	Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	Wisconsin
Less than \$10,000	0.9%	3.2%	3.5%	4.2%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	0.5%	2.1%	2.6%	3.8%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	5.2%	5.7%	5.2%	7.6%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	3.5%	7.9%	6.1%	8.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	8.6%	10.4%	9.7%	12.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20.8%	19.1%	16.0%	18.8%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.9%	13.7%	13.7%	14.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	18.5%	22.2%	20.2%	17.2%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	15.0%	9.0%	10.8%	6.9%
\$200,000 or more	12.1%	6.7%	12.4%	6.1%
Median income (dollars)	94,196	78,341	87,397	67,080

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates, S1901 Income in the Past 12 Months (In 2021 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

Commuting to Work

In 2021 the latest data available, most workers drove alone, at 80.5%, while only 2.8% carpooled, and 14.7% worked from home. Most of the Town’s workforce commuted to the urban centers of the Twin Cities or the City of River Falls for work. A recent National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) study estimates that at least two-thirds of jobs in each of five major sectors (educational services; finance and insurance; information; management of companies and enterprises; and professional, scientific, and technical services) can be done fully or partially from home. Jobs in those sectors tend to require higher education levels and pay relatively high wages. It is safe to assume that this is having an impact on the Town and the number of hybrid workers is increasing in the area.

Table Commuting to Work

	Worker Count	Percent
Car, truck, or van - drove alone:	961	80.5%
Car, truck, or van - carpooled:	34	2.8%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab):	7	0.6%
Walked:	12	1.0%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, or other means:	5	0.4%
Worked from home	175	14.7%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates, B08101 Means of Transportation to Work by Age

Table Industry Types

Industry	Projected Percent Change from 2016 to 2026
Goods Producing	2.7
Natural Resources and Mining	7.9
Construction	10.3
Manufacturing	-0.1
Services Providing	8.4
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	9.2
Information	-11.7
Financial Activities	12.8
Professional and Business Services	13.1
Education and Health Services	8.7
Leisure and Hospitality	9.8
Other Services (except government)	6.1
Government	2.5
Self-Employed	8.9

Source: Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, WIOA Local Plan 2020-2023, Table 1

## Intergovernmental Cooperation

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**Goal:** We will work with the City of River Falls, surrounding Towns, County and State to maintain good relations, sound planning, citizen involvement, intergovernmental agreements, ETZ planning, and improved communication. The Town of River Falls will remain focused on preserving our farmlands, public spaces, and rural character.

### **Objectives / Policies:**

We hope to foster a good working relationship with the City of River Falls and nearby Towns, school districts, special districts, and other government entities. We plan to discuss common issues and solutions in the best interest of all concerned. This includes the location of, building design, and best use of land and resources for new homes and businesses in the Town.

We understand that the City can annex lands when property owners and residents are supportive of this. The Town will work with the city to ensure that the fiscal impact of this is not a burden for the Town. This may include revenue sharing agreements, boundary agreements and other cooperative measures between the Town and the City.

The Town understands that the City of River Falls has extraterritorial powers in the Town, and it is our goal to work with the City to ensure any dense development is in this zone and can be serviced by City water and sewer. In exchange we will ask that the City respect our decision to protect farmlands and control development in the Town.

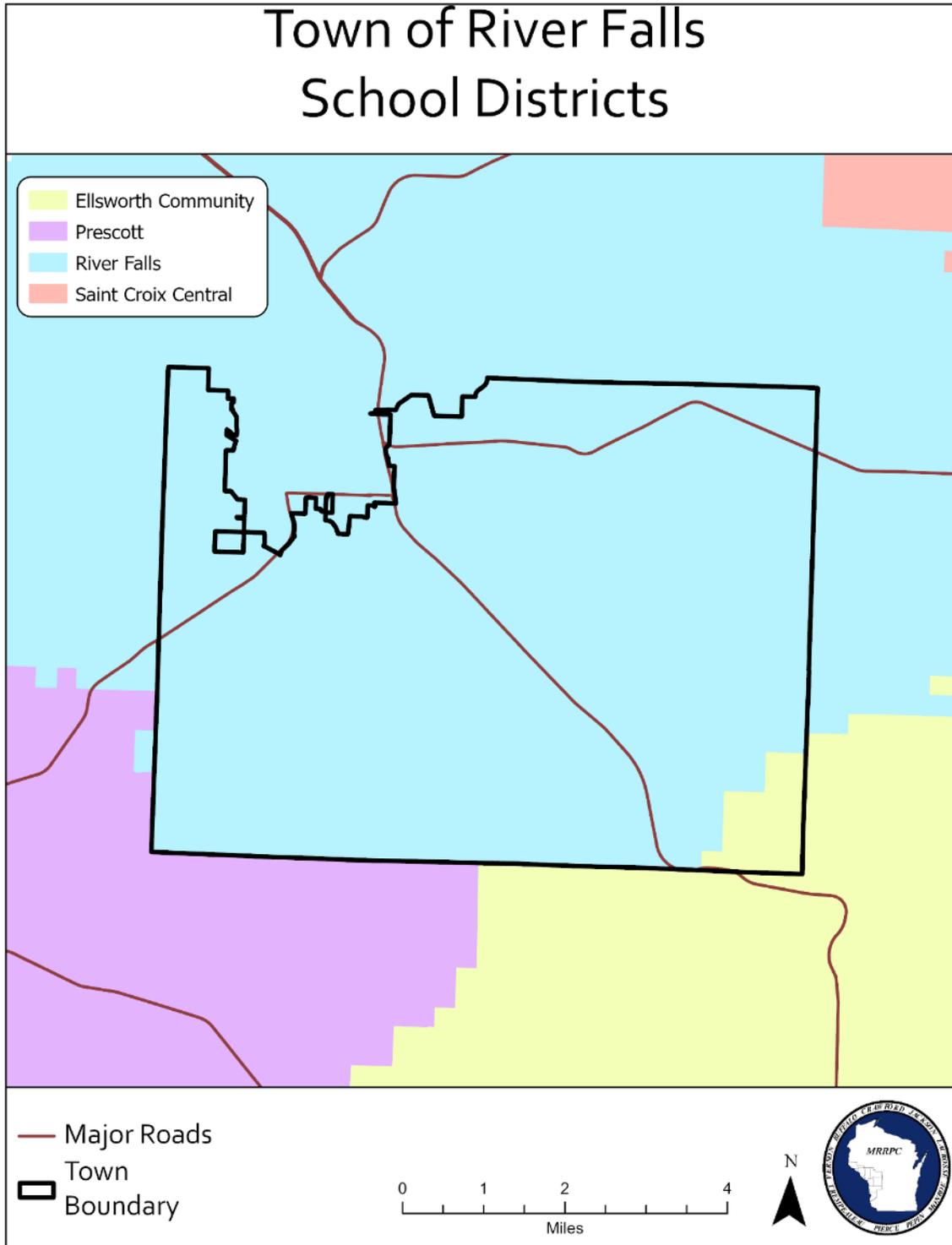
The Town of River Falls will continue to enhance the coordination of programs and communication with the DNR, DOT, and other state agencies.

The Town will work with the city and county in assessing land-use plans, policies, ordinances, and enforcement options.

The Town will work with the state and county to develop standards regarding large scale farming, CAFOs and other factory farming operations.

## Intergovernmental Relationships Data

Map School Districts



## Land Use

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**Goal:** Preservation of our agricultural lands and rural character through sound planning, controlled growth, appropriate use of our soil types and topography, groundwater protection, and preserving both farmlands and the natural environment.

**Objectives / Policies:**

We will maintain and preserve our productive agricultural lands by identifying the most productive soil types and restricting or limiting housing or development on these lands. This will allow the Town to direct non-farmland uses to less productive lands.

The Town will support best management practices for soil and water conservation on all lands. The Town will also promote agriculture and agricultural activities in line with our vision of protecting our watersheds and maintaining the rural atmosphere of the community. As dairy and other livestock facilities get larger, we hope to ensure their management plans provide for storms and other events that may cause issues. We support the digester currently being installed in the Town.

The Town will seek to provide buffering between all conflicting land uses including visual, noise, and traffic. In addition, we are supportive of renewable energy.

## Land Use Data

The Town of River Falls consists primarily of farmland and residential land uses, mixed with small amounts of commercial and industrial lands. It is a community with a strong rural character, abundant farmland, and natural resources. While growth is inevitable, the Town has positioned itself to shape and direct this growth. Citizens have expressed a desire to retain open space and preserve the Town's rural character and productive farmland.

Among the most effective tools a community possesses to influence its future environment and quality of life is the ability to control and direct future growth patterns through its zoning and development ordinances, and its provision of infrastructure to serve newly developing areas. Misguided use of these tools, however, can lead to undesired results in terms of land use conflicts, inefficient service delivery, and a decreased quality of life. The foundation for sound decision making and implementation of these tools is a clear land use plan based upon sound planning principles and the community's vision for its future.

This land use plan is intended to illustrate the Town's vision and guide its future growth and development over the next 20 years. It will serve as a guide for the Plan Commission and Town Board when making land use, zoning, and infrastructure related decisions. It will also provide direction for property owners and potential developers when making decisions about the future of their properties within the Town of River Falls.

The Town studies the suitability of land to effectively plan for efficient and environmentally sound growth. Therefore, the land-use analysis and future land-use plan considers areas that might be appropriate for growth over the next 20 years. The relationship between the future land-use plan and the other sections of this plan is extremely important, and coordinating this information is essential in developing an effective comprehensive plan that is useful to the Town and its constituents. As noted elsewhere in this plan, it will be necessary to periodically review and update this plan, and potentially the future land-use map to ensure that local development preferences are maintained.

### Existing Land Use

Although the total acreage in agriculture has been declining countywide, agriculture is currently the predominant land use within the Town of River Falls. Exclusive agriculture, with a maximum density of 1 unit per 35 acres, is a major land use and is found throughout all areas of the Town. Agricultural/Residential allows for both agricultural uses, and rural residential. Minimum lot size is 2 acres, with a maximum density of four lots per 40 acres. Smaller-lot residential uses are found primarily within the 1.5-mile extraterritorial zone surrounding the City of River Falls. Agricultural/Residential and Exclusive Agriculture are currently the predominant zoning categories in the Town.

Within the Town, agricultural and agricultural forest land uses make up most land uses, 60.2% and 16.2% respectively, for a total of 76.4%. Residential is notable as well, at 10.7%. Very little land is devoted to commercial or manufacturing use.

Table Land Use

Land Use	Number of Acres (2016)	Percent of Land (2016)	Number of Acres (2021)	Percent of Land (2021)	Change from 2016 to 2021 (Acres)	Change from 2016 to 2021 (%)
Residential	2,633	10.6%	2,631	10.7%	-2	0.0%
Commercial	78	0.3%	55	0.2%	-23	-0.1%
Manufacturing	9	0.0%	9	0.0%	0	0.0%
Agricultural	14,644	59.2%	14,840	60.2%	196	1.0%
Undeveloped	1,913	7.7%	1,777	7.2%	-136	-0.5%
Agricultural Forest	4,173	16.9%	3,989	16.2%	-184	-0.7%
Forest Lands	1,079	4.4%	1,127	4.6%	48	0.2%
Other	200	0.8%	209	0.8%	9	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,729</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>24,637</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-92</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue 2021 Statement of Assessment for Pierce County

Commercial and industrial uses are a very small portion of the Town’s land area and are concentrated in a few areas. An industrial area is located adjacent to the eastern border of the City of River Falls, south of Highway 29. A smaller light industrial area is located southeast of the city, at Highway 65 and 770th Avenue. A commercial area is adjacent to the southeastern border of the city, adjacent to Highway 65.

### Land Use Trends

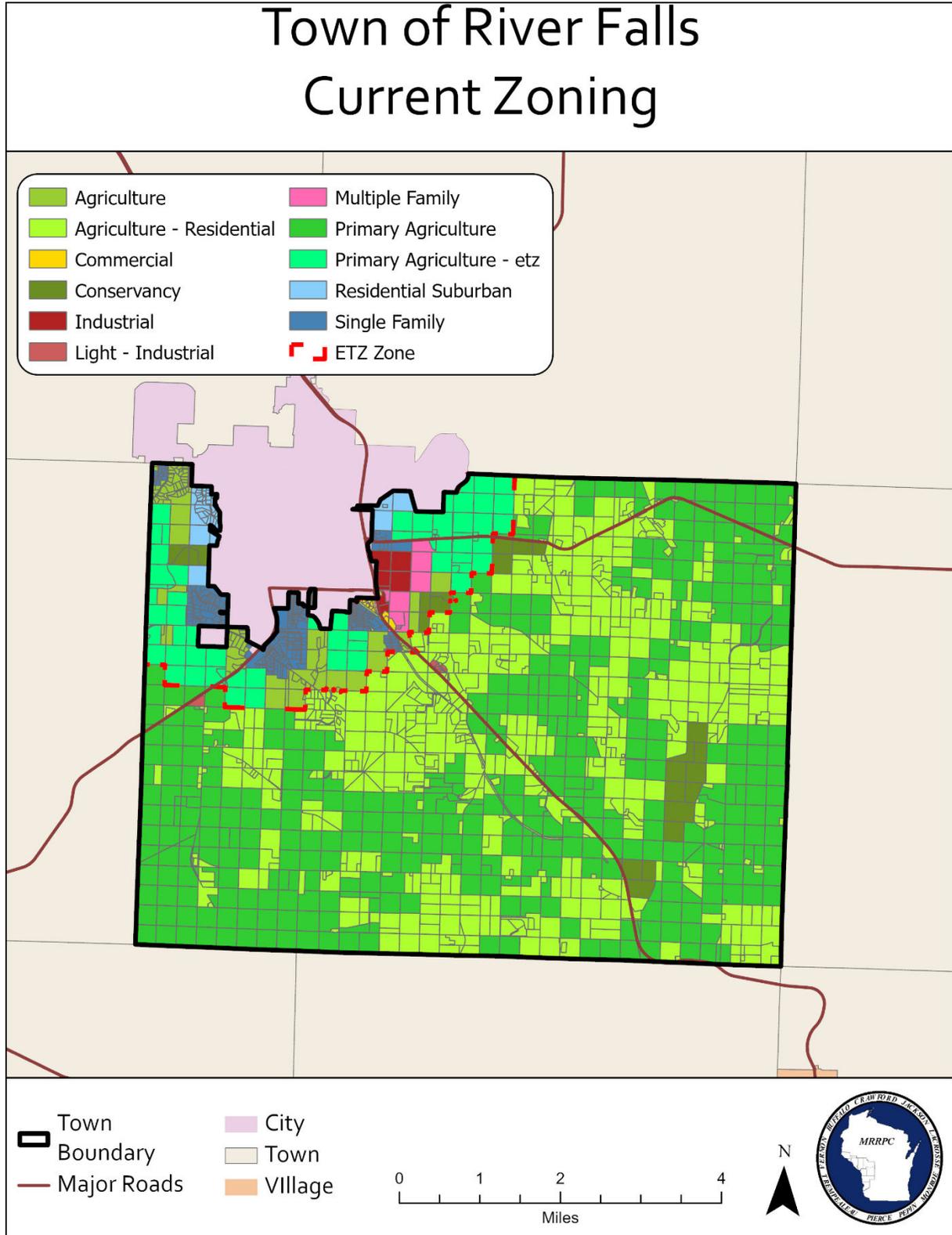
To predict future land use trends, it is best to look at changes over recent years. Land use in the Town has been relatively stable. Only agricultural land saw meaningful growth, of 196 acres or 1%. Forest lands saw growth as well – 48 acres or 0.2%. These came at the expense of undeveloped and agricultural forest lands, which decreased by 136 and 184 acres, respectively. These trends are likely to continue – with more land in the Town for which agriculture is possible being used for agriculture. Also of note is the fact that the Town continues to decrease in acreage, due to the annexation by the City of River Falls.



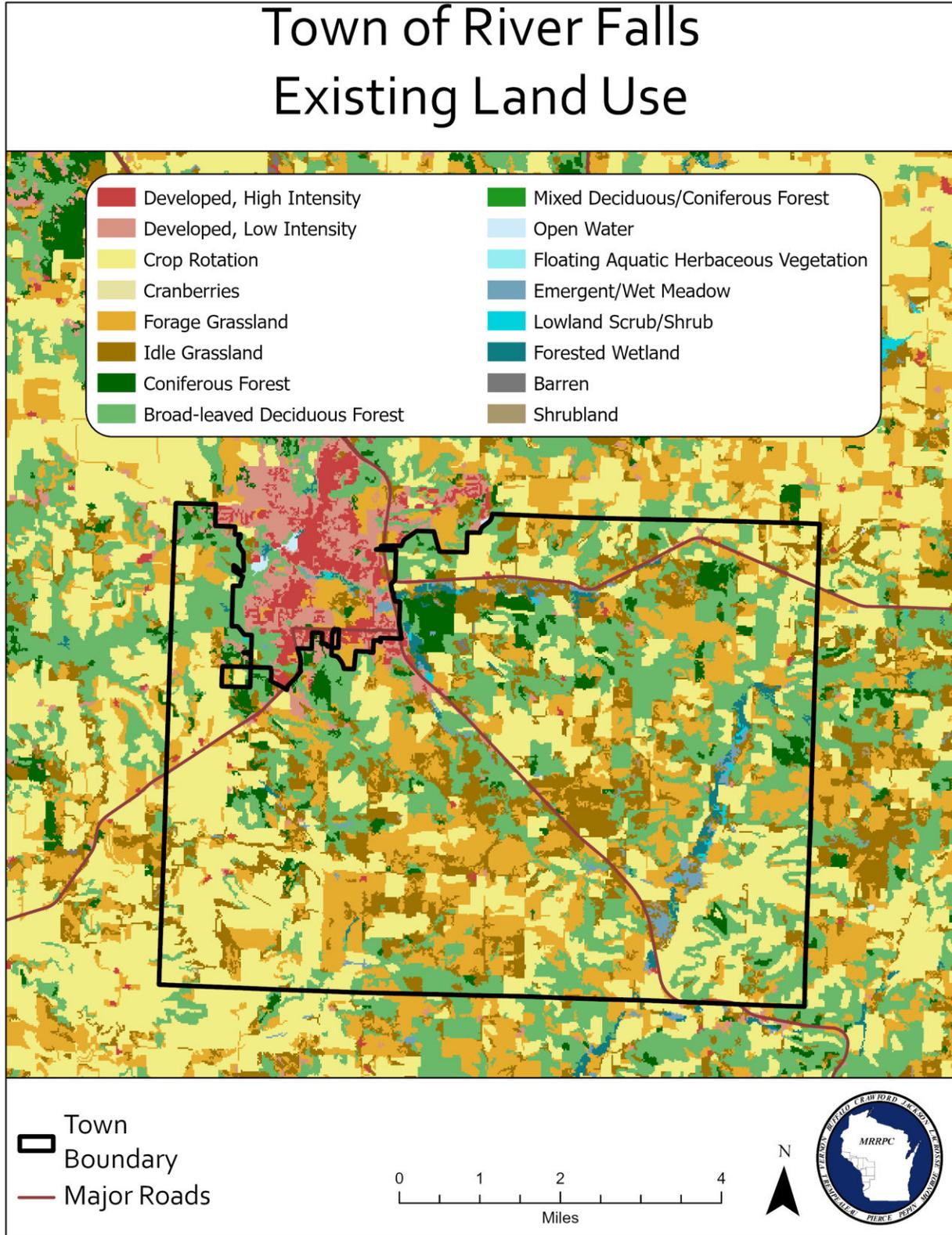
### Zoning and Other Land Use Regulations

The Town of River Falls is a zoned Town. The Town manages its own zoning through the Zoning Administrator and Plan Commission. The Town Zoning Ordinance consists of seven districts – the Residence District, the Farmland Preservation District, the Conservancy District, the Agricultural Residential District, the Commercial District, the Industrial District, and the Light Industry District.

Map Town of River Falls Current Zoning



Map Town of River Falls Existing Land Use



## Appendices

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### Appendix A – Municipal Survey

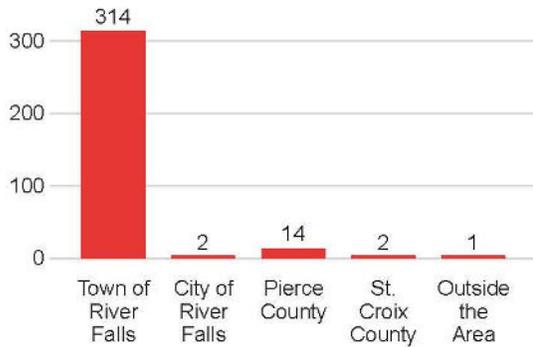
1

# Town of River Falls Comprehensive Survey Results

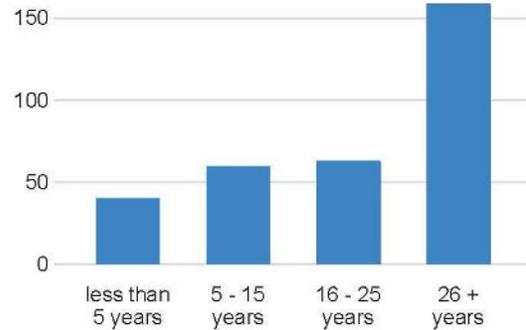


### 1. Where do you live?

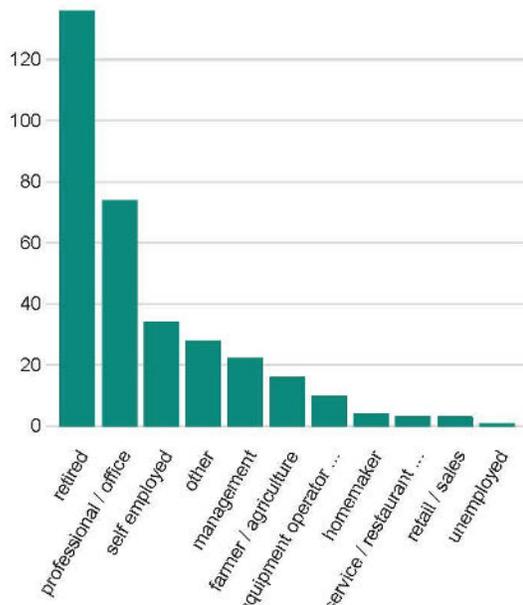
333 Responses



### 3. If a Town resident, how long have you been a resident of River Falls?



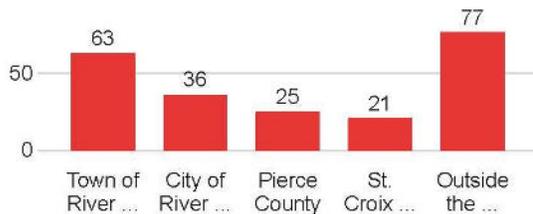
### 4. What is your occupation?



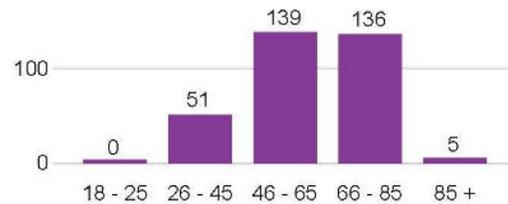
other - Text

- disabled
- Child Care Provider
- Construction
- substitute school staff
- Small Business Owner
- Park Ranger- Federal
- Energy
- school admin
- Healthcare RN
- Educator
- coach
- Horticulturist
- Registered Nurse
- semi retired
- Hospital
- I fit in several categories. Retail sales, farmer, self employed, homemaker, management and...retired?
- Also, self-employed and Management. Wish I could multi-select on this question.
- Flood/Fire Restoration

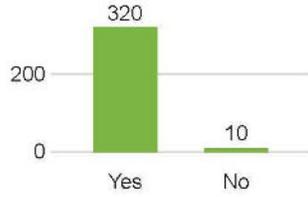
### 5. Where do you Work?



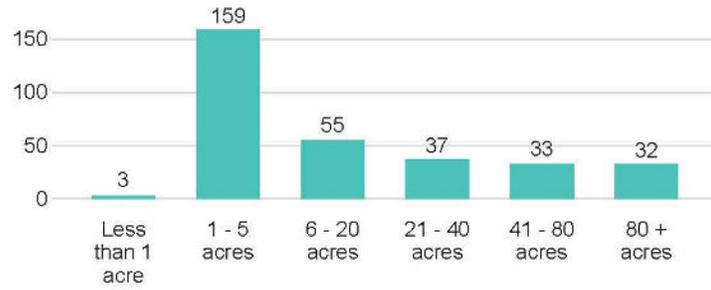
### 8. Your age?



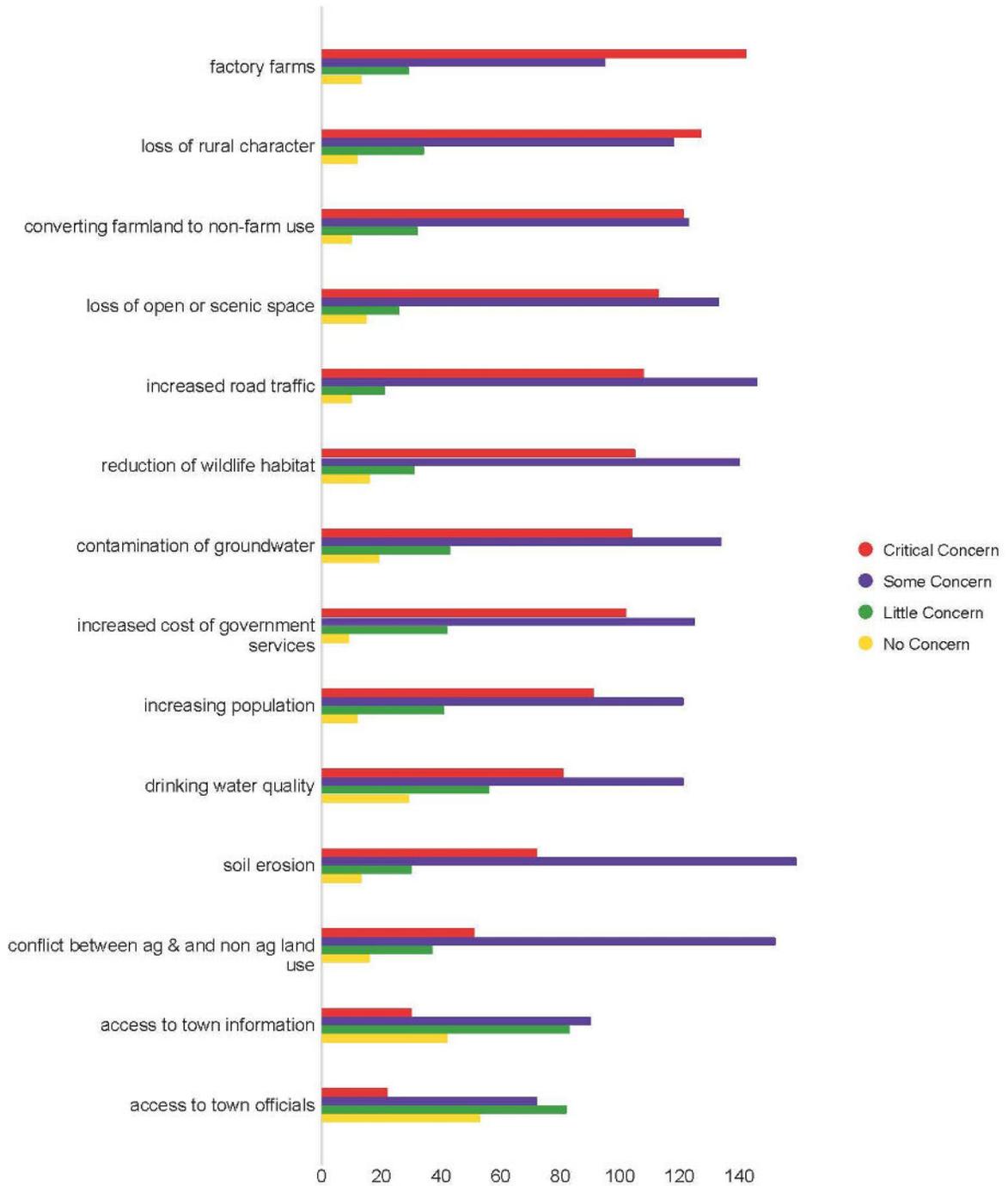
6. Do you own property in the Town of River Falls?



7. If Yes, how much land do you own?



9. Please provide your level of concern regarding the following items...



## 10. Other Issues of Concern...

### 10. Other Issues of Concern...

town officials not responding to obvious

The lack of a noise ordinance mainly allowing private property to be used as a shooting range or used as a race track. Sometimes the shooting is so loud and for so long we are not able to sit outside because of the noise and the shooting is so close to our home that we are seriously concerned for our safety from stray bullets.

Lack of a clean air ordinance potentially allowing outdoor burning units to causing localized smoke for long periods of time which affects air quality for neighbors.

Overuse and poor quality positioning of "security" lighting causing night sky pollution

Updates and online access

Becoming a suburb of St. Paul without the people working here to accommodate the increased population.

Succession plan for the town board and committees as the current groups leave office.

Policing of rural roads with suspicious activity at all hours of the day with the understanding of limited personnel

Future Zoning, Low impact zoning should always be considered.

Preserving productive farmland to feed many future generations. Our actions now directly affect the future generations.

None at this time.

Nuisance noise

City of River Falls annexing town property

increasing/high property taxes, decreasing family farms in the area, building apartments vs. single family homes

poor planning

voting rights

Farmers with liquid manure on fields and how that affects our drinking water. Also, irrigation systems used on farms and how that affects our well water levels.

Why are the township roads in such bad shape such as the pavement being really bad and the over grown trees and brush encroaching on our driving lanes.

Too much residential housing and no stores

NA

Increased development and loss of rural, small town feel. Do not want to see the town develop with multi-unit housing/transient housing. Increased traffic on the highways, level of noise from highway traffic.

Rural fire issues with city of River falls



## 12. What do you like LEAST about living in the Town of River Falls...

12. What do you like LEAST about living in the Town of River Falls...

The potential ability of people to skirt the number of homes per acreage by saying that the additional home is for family use only and then selling the home later after the "family use" is no longer "needed".

Allowing homes to be built in low land areas that are water shed regions.

Zoning rules are different depending who you are

nothing.

Nosey neighbors. Neighbors who expect everyone else to follow all the rules, but they don't follow the rules themselves. I also feel that too much of the town has been lost to city development.

Nothing. I love it here.

There seems to be more concern for those moving into the area from larger cities than those who have lived here for years and want to keep it rural.

Lack of diversity

Road upkeep and winter driving conditions.

The housing for college students is not affordable. All the new apts and housing that is being built out by Tattersall is not affordable for the common man.

Having to go to Hudson or Woodbury to buy clothes and shoes.

The encroachment of the RF city sprawling outward

Encroachment of the city of River Falls and their aggressive development.

Future annexation to city of RF

I enjoy everthing about it.

The Town of River Falls is too close to the City of River Falls.

Too land being annexed by City of River Falls

Nothing at this time.

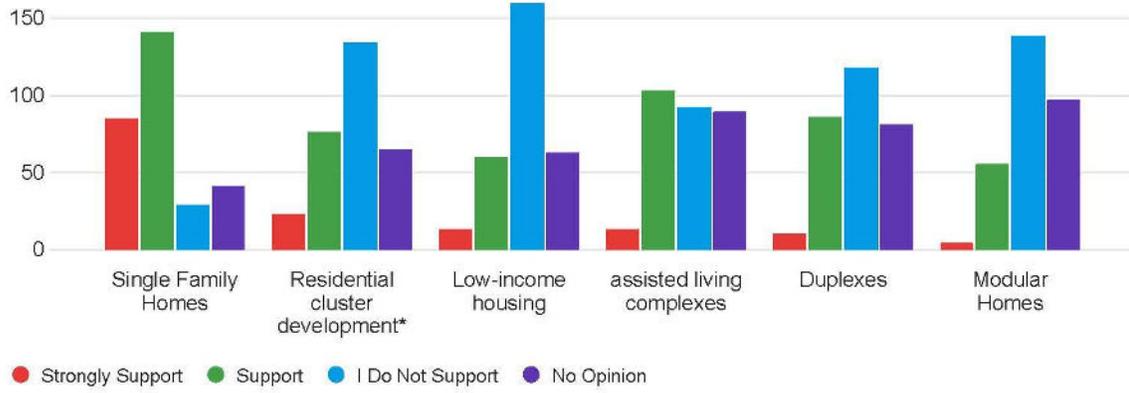
My area turning into a suburb

loss of scenery and increasing population, town is losing it's small town character and feel

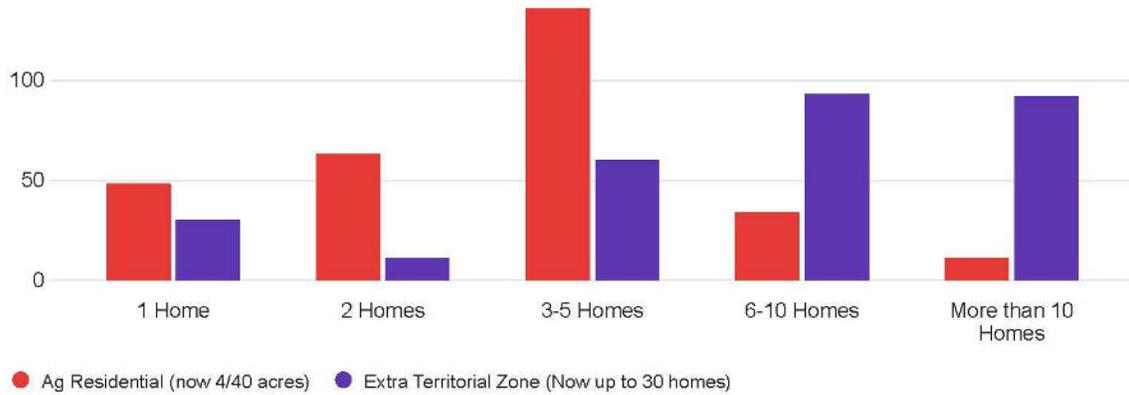
No complaints

Double click to edit

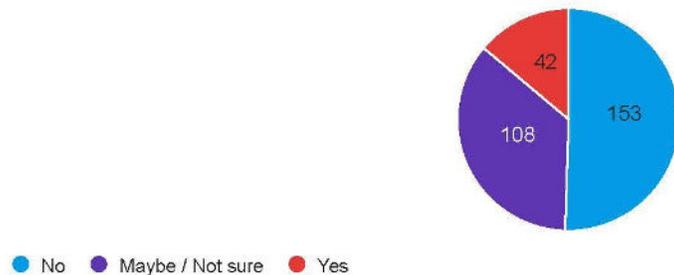
13. Which of the following types of housing do you feel are needed in River...



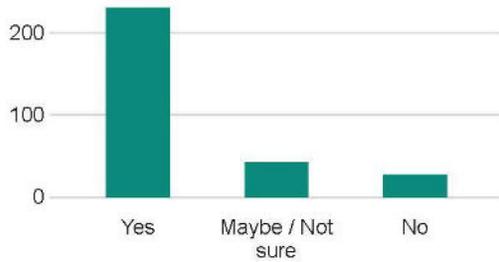
14. How many houses should be allowed in each of the 2 zones?



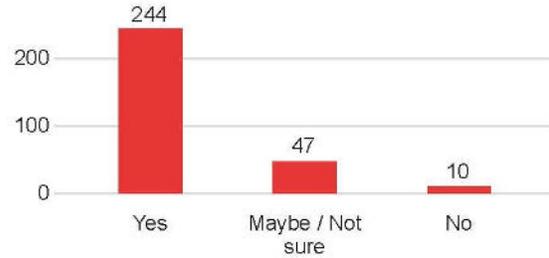
1. Outside the ETZ, should the Town consider planned higher density development where appropriate.



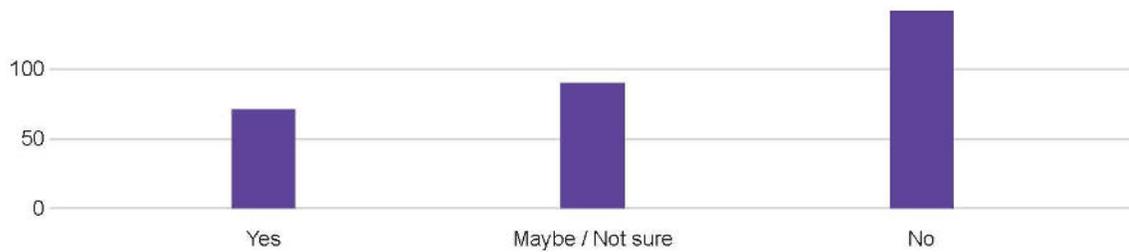
16. Should high density residential development be required to provide open space (parks, nature areas...



17. Currently impact fees are based on increased demand on town infrastructure. Should the Town charge developers impact fees?

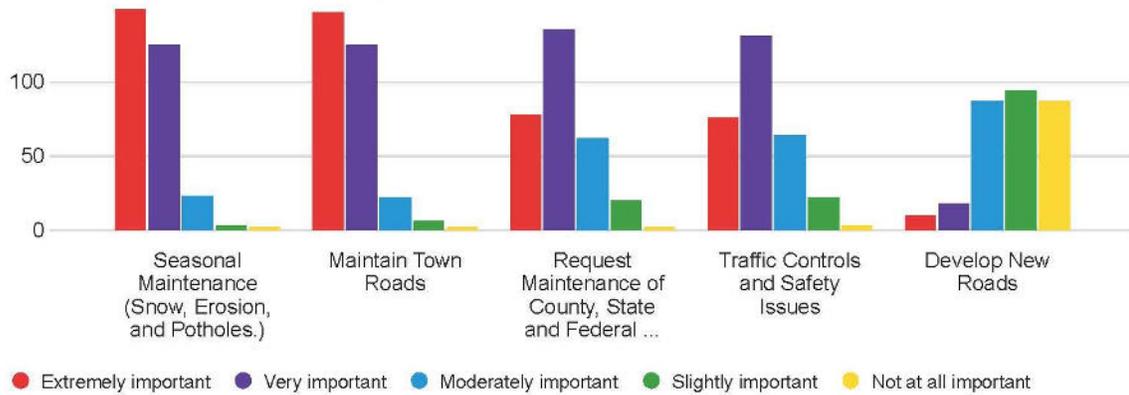


18. Should your neighbors be able to use their property in any way they desire?



Double click to edit

### 19. What Road and Transportation issues should th...

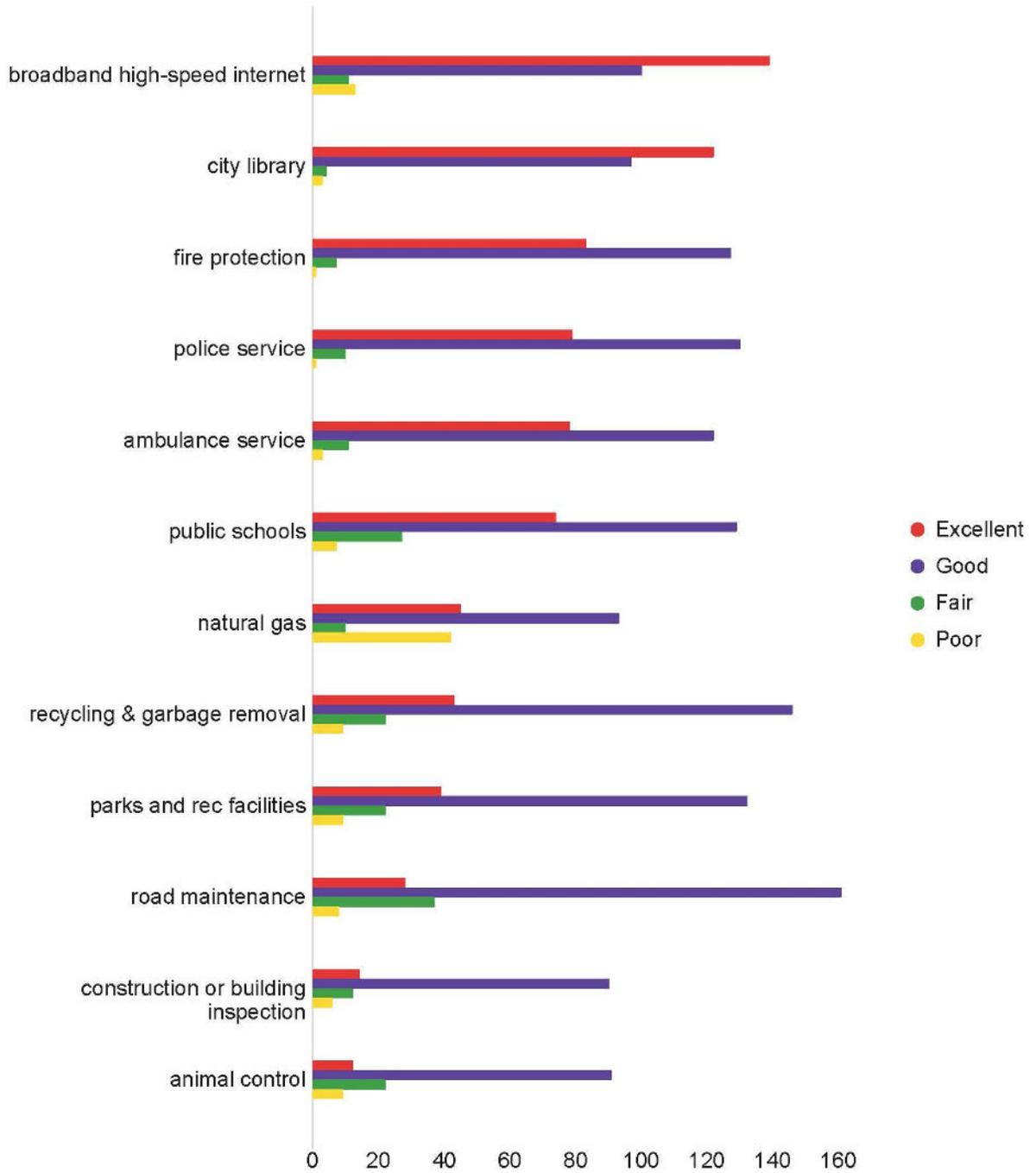


Other - Text

- Road expansion
- None at this time
- Illegal dumping in ditches
- Safety, Speed
- Take care of existing rds
- Seems like there are too many big towing trucks driving in Randall Road
- High traffic on 65 causing dangerous conditions. No passing on right signs needed at intersections.
- this is why we pay taxes
- Decrease traffic and noise- reduce speed on highway near Town Hall.
- Maintaining the right of way on the township roads like the county has done recently
- Signage blindspots
- Township should work with the county to clean up debris made by trimming trees/ditches.
- Upgrade road s
- New blacktop on badly deteriorated roads
- Replace existing. Do not just apply a gravel and oil coating which is a band aid and temporary.
- Trash cleanup in ditches
- None
- Communication to town residents
- Ditch brushing and mowing
- Resurface roads that were blacktop



22. Listed below are several area community services offered in the Town....



## 23. How can the town improve services?

23. How can the town improve services?

Our town does a great job with services they provide and the quality of the work all the board members do. Just please try to keep River Falls the rural community that brought us here so many years ago and resist the short-term benefits of long-term destruction of our rural heritage.

hire someone or contract out services for stray dogs and cats.

Road maintenance could be a little better. Sheriff's department seems to be slow to respond to the town. Some of the town parks could use improvement. For some reason there is excellent high speed internet on my phone while I'm in the city limits, but as soon as I get out of the city limits and into the town, the Internet service is very poor.

Its difficult to comment on some of these as i have not needed police, fire, ems, inspection services, or animal control  
Provide site for disposal of yard waste, tree branches

Do not rely on City of River Falls for infrastructure, housing, industry, police, fire, quality of life, or land management. As their current vision is to have Micro Breweries. Distilleries, Second hand shops millions invested in empty industrial lots . While relying on RFSD to bear the weight of a pool , athletic fields and green space.

Encourage the Town Board to free up the committees to manage the discussions and some of the minor decisions for their committees. Don't handicap the committees by too much micro-managing from the Board.

We have a lot of pot holes

Not sure but having natural gas in the country would be nice!

I would like there to be an emphasis on preserving open spaces, scenery and wildlife

1. Monitor the ambulance service closer. Now that it is a private service, response times to rural settings seem to be increasing.

2. Several roads in the town are very poor and need attention. Roads are needed for people to commute to and from work in a safe manner.

3. Natural gas needs to be offered to more residents throughout the town.

Fix damage in the spring after town plow makes a mess

Again fugue a compost site or a way we can pay to use the city of River Falls site

Better road maintenance.

Recycling center open more days maybe less hours- we understand the difficulty in this though. Roads have potholes and speeds should be posted and enforced.

these are services our town should provide

Cheaper trash/recycling removal services. (Town dump is great) removal services were less than half when we lived in the town of Warren)

Not tear up the village de sac when plowing snow. Our neighborhood maintains the village de sac in summer and mowing over ruts isn't easy on our lawnmowers.

Ban farm chickens from ETX

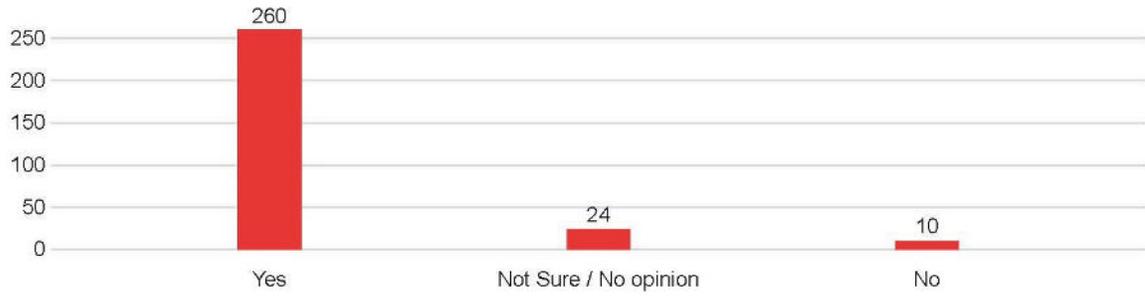
Recycling and garbage disposal

Animal control

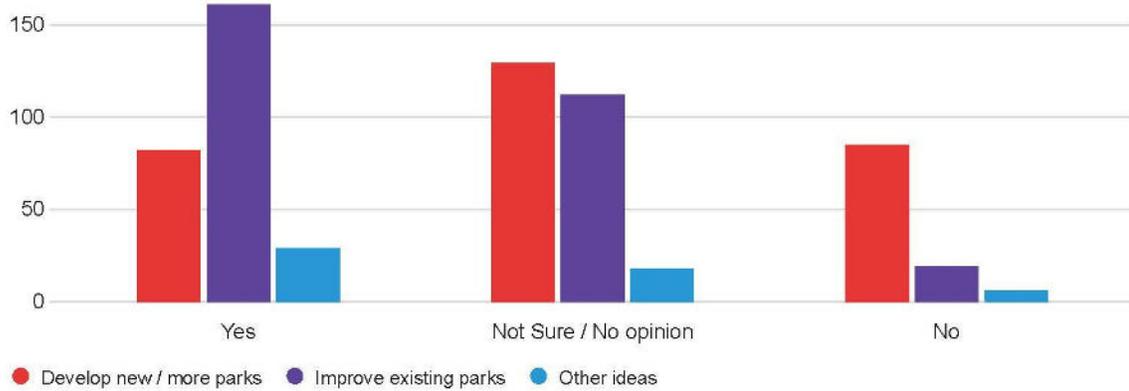
Q30 - 24. How do you handle trash and waste? - Selected Choice



25. Should the Town continue to preserve productive farmland?



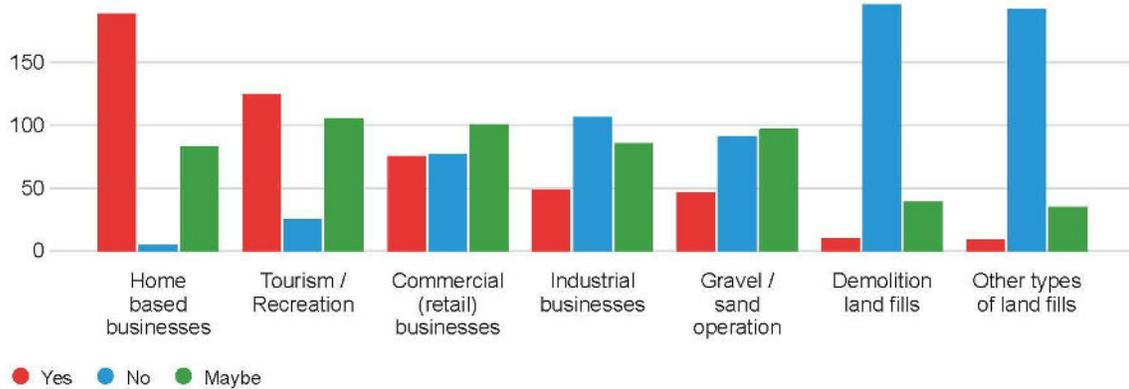
26. Currently the Town has 8 parks. Should there be more Town parks...



Other ideas - Text

- work with local organizations to help purchase and protect the low lands surrounding our streams
- Better communication to/from neighborhood parks to residents would likely improve their use. Engaging residents to care/use their parks needs improvement.
- Do not improve areas that may be taken over by City of River Falls
- None at this tome
- Would love to see more hiking/biking trails
- Volunteer groups for pick up. More information as to where they are to residents with their tax statements or email communications
- Playgrounds, walking trails or a baseball field would be great!
- take care what ever you build
- More walking and hiking trails
- Need more signage to prevent trespassing on land that borders halverson park....
- Improvements would be preferred over creating new parks.
- As a Town of River Falls living north of Highway 29 we have no access to ATV TRAILS unless we trail our machines!
- Picnic areas, playgrounds, sports fields with facilities
- Acquire more land so there are more natural areas and find ways we can connect trails.
- I live next to the park in the south valley neighbor hood. No one really uses it. Mowed monthly or bi weekly.
- Plant more trees and plants for wild life.
- I don't know where the parks are
- A trail system in coordination with other towns and the both Pierce and St. Croix Counties.
- Better signage on park property saying what's allowed in that particular area.
- Buy large tracks of land for wildlife habitat.
- Do not build multi housing units next to them as was promised not to.... More dog friendly.

27. Which of the following should be allowed in the Town of River Falls?



Other business - Text

Mega dairy or other mega livestock operations

No stripper clubs, or drug related retail.

Low impact businesses

Farm related businesses like home grown produce, honey, grapes (wine made from actual grapes grown here)

None at this time

Low impact commercial businesses would be fine. Commercial operations that pollute, smell or are noisy would not be fine. Land fills, mining, truck repair shops, factory farms are examples of things that should not be allowed.

this is already happening

The Town of River Falls is extremely close to all of these types of businesses within the City of RF. No need to take away the rural feel of the Town.

outdoor rifle ranges (private, semi- private or public)

Organic recycling digester

Hemp manufacturing

Ag businesses/ agrotourism / farm stays

Unknown

All businesses should be considered as long as they can meet our zoning/other ordinance requirements, however, the devil is in the details of scale, location, etc.

Farms are bring regulated out of existence.

Camping & VRBO & ARNBNS

No confined animal feeding operations!

Digesters NO NO and NO. We are becoming a garbage dump for the Twin Cities.

It all depends on impact. Town code & regulations should be specific about reasons to prohibit any business operations (waste, noise, odors, smoke, vibration, traffic, road impact, hours of operation, etc.).

Home based business must be regulated so they do not reduce the value of neighboring property.

## 28. What "big Idea" would you like to see in the Town of River Falls?

28. What "big Idea" would you like to see in the Town of River Falls?

Work with regional and national organizations to purchase the land adjacent to the South Fork River where the race track was proposed to be built. We need to preserve these beautiful streams that are a rare occurrence in our country.

Stop classifying land that has severe limitations for agriculture as prime agricultural

Not sure about any "big ideas" It would be nice to see some commercial development. Preserve good agricultural land. Limit the amount of the town being lost to city development. Improvements to the parks.

More public art displays.

Focus on keeping it rural. Peace and quiet, that's why we live here.

Composting site similar to the city of River Falls.

Information about home based business within our township highlighted in a web page, a link, a flyer or something to help us know what is here and promote it.

Listen to 49% of Land owners of 20 acres or more. They have the smaller voice but the bigger ownership of land along with the passion of what they want for the future, good or bad!

Would like to see as many products as possible be able to be recycled.

A thoughtful approach to expansion and development.

Continue, in every possible way, to PRESERVE THE FARMLAND, and thus the rural character. Educate new residents moving to our township about what it means to live among farms, what they can expect, how to acclimate living in a rural area. Basically, how to be a good neighbor.

Get young people who care about living in this beautiful township of farms and open areas to become involved in our local town government, they are the future leaders who will be responsible for maintaining this land.

Expand hours of operation for recycle center when we move to new facility

Make it more available

Thanks

Not sure currently!

A new town hall on the land that we currently own. Would be nice if the place is large enough to hold 200 people. I think we should work on making use of it before it never gets used.

New government center with park around it.

Prevent the city from expanding.

Compost and communication through email blasts or Facebook/social media

Work to lower taxes!!!!

Town picnic or gathering

Acknowledgement of climate change and enforce designs of structures and land use accordingly, for example require higher building codes and protections for the environment.

We love the town as it is. If we are discussing tax revenue, then possibly a restaurant. Most ideas destroy the beauty that we've been blessed with and increase our taxes with increased road use & needs for other services.





## Appendix B – Public Participation Plan

MRRPC Staff met with the committee several times and solicited outside opinions from both the public in person and via a survey above. Several drafts were reviewed by both the committee and board. A duly posted (30 Day) public hearing was held and several observations from this meeting and recommendations from the board were included in the final draft. Finally, the housing table on page 16 has been revised to reflect that actual assessor / tax roll data for the Town of River Falls.

## Appendix C – Ordinance Adopting Plan

### Ordinance No. 2024-1

#### An Ordinance to Adopt the Comprehensive Plan of the Town of River Falls, Wisconsin.

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

Section 1. Pursuant to section 62.23(2) and (3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of River Falls, 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 of River Falls of the Town of River Falls, 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 River Falls, by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to [common council/village board/town board/county board] the adoption of the document entitled "Comprehensive Plan of the Town of River Falls," containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 4. The Town 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 River Falls, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "Comprehensive Plan of the Town of River Falls 2024 - 2044," 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 posting as required by law.

Adopted this 21st day of October, 2024

Deana B. Smith  
Town Board Chair

(Published/Posted):[date] 10/21/24  
(Approved, Vetoed): Approved

Attest: Sarah Meyer  
Town Clerk