Town of Maiden Rock

Comprehensive Plan
2026-2046



Prepared by the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission

Under the Direction of the Town of Maiden Rock and the Plan Committee

DRAFT

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Executive Summary

The Town of Maiden Rock Comprehensive Plan 2026–2046 establishes a 20-year framework for land use, development, and public services in accordance with Wisconsin Statute § 66.1001. The plan was prepared by the Town of Maiden Rock Comprehensive Plan Committee in coordination with the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission.

The Town of Maiden Rock is a small, rural community of approximately 609 residents (2025 estimate) located in the southeast corner of Pierce County, bordered by Lake Pepin, the Great River Road (Hwy 35), and Pepin County. The Town's defining character is its blend of working farmland, wooded valleys, scenic Mississippi River bluffs, and peaceful rural residential areas.

Population projections from the Wisconsin Department of Administration indicate a modest, gradual decline in population by 2050, consistent with broader rural trends in the Upper Midwest. This plan is designed to manage that change thoughtfully, preserving what makes the Town of Maiden Rock distinctive while supporting the needs of a changing community. The Town is also aware that population can be impacted by unforeseen changes in and around the township.

The plan addresses nine statutory elements: Issues and Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities and Community Facilities, Agricultural and Natural Resources, Economic Development, Intergovernmental Cooperation, Land Use, and Implementation. Each element includes goals, objectives, and action steps grounded in community input, data analysis, and Wisconsin planning law.

The plan's central themes are: (1) protecting prime agricultural land and natural resources including bluffs, woodlands, wetlands, surface, and groundwater; (2) maintaining a "service-neutral" growth philosophy that prevents municipal service expansion; (3) supporting small-scale ag-tourism and rural economic development; (4) coordinating with the Village of Maiden Rock, Pierce County, and state agencies; and (5) ensuring fiscal responsibility in all development decisions.

Setting

The Town of Maiden Rock is located in the southeast corner of Pierce County and surrounds the Village of Maiden Rock, Wisconsin. It is bordered to the south and east by Pepin County, and by the Mississippi River (Lake Pepin) and the Great River Road (Hwy 35) to the southwest. Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 50 miles to the northeast, and Saint Paul Minnesota, 60 miles to the northwest are the two largest cities in the region.

History

Evidence of the first inhabitants of the land that is now The Town of Maiden Rock dates back approximately 10,000 years. Many indigenous people lived in the area over the millennia, with the Dakota being the most recent and most recognized in modern times.

Early history and naming

European settlers arrived beginning around the time Wisconsin was granted statehood in 1848, and the area was surveyed by the U.S. government. Many Swedes, Norwegians, and Germans were among those who settled and established farms. The area developed rapidly during the second half of the nineteenth century. Some major events were:

- 1853: Albert Harris and J.D. Trumbull purchased the land that would become the Village of Maiden Rock.
- 1854: The area began as a logging settlement.
- In 1856, J.D. Trumbull was appointed postmaster and began bringing mail across the river from Wacouta, MN.
- 1857: The Town of Maiden Rock was officially organized.
- Name origin: The Town is named after a tall bluff along the Mississippi River. It is the site of the Dakota legend of Winona, a maiden who leaped to her death from the cliff. The bluff is located four miles south of the Village of Maiden Rock along the Great River Road and is currently part of a Wisconsin State Natural Area.

Development and modern era

The Town and surrounding area have a strong history in farming and agriculture. The Town's natural beauty is valued by residents and visitors alike, and three Class 1 trout streams lie within its borders. Ag-tourism has gained popularity in recent times, allowing visitors to see working farms and purchase local farm products.

The Village of Maiden Rock is a separate village within the borders of the Town. It is the only village or city within the Town's geographic borders.

References

1. Mather, C., Hart, J.F., and Johnson, H.B., 1975. *Upper Coulee Country,* Trimbelle Press, Pierce County Geographical Society, Prescott, WI.
2. Pierce County Historical Society, (Website) https://piercecountyhistorical.org/county-history/pre-1800s/

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Planning Process

The Town of Maiden Rock Comprehensive Plan was developed through a community-driven process led by the Town of Maiden Rock Comprehensive Plan Committee, appointed by the Town Board in 2025. The committee met regularly over approximately 12 months to gather community input, review data, and draft the plan language.

Public participation included a community survey distributed to Town residents, open public meetings, and comment periods at Plan Committee and Town Board meetings. Survey results and public comments are documented in Appendix B and these results were used by the committee to develop the goals and objectives throughout this plan.

The Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission provided planning and technical assistance, data analysis, and document preparation support throughout the process. The plan was reviewed by the Town Board and Plan Committee prior to a public hearing held pursuant to Wisconsin Statute § 66.1001(4).

Government entities, including the Village of Maiden Rock, the Unincorporated Community of Lund, the Village of Ellsworth, the school districts, and Pierce County were notified of the planning process as required by state law and were given the opportunity to review and comment on the draft plan.

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Implementation

> ***Implementation element****. A compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence, including proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, or subdivision ordinances, to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs contained in pars. (a) to (h). The element shall describe how each of the elements of the comprehensive plan will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive plan and shall include a mechanism to measure the local governmental unit's progress toward achieving all aspects of the comprehensive plan. The element shall include a process for updating the comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan under this subsection shall be updated no less than once every 10 years.*
>
> *Source Wisconsin Statute 66.1001: Comprehensive Planning*

Implementation Overview

The implementation strategy for the Town of Maiden Rock Comprehensive Plan focuses on establishing the plan as the framework for local governance and future development over the next 20 years.

The primary goal is to create a transparent and proactive system where the Comprehensive Plan guides ordinance updates, development reviews, and intergovernmental cooperation. The strategy emphasizes protecting the Town's rural character by steering residential growth away from environmental corridors and prime farmland.

The Town Board will review the existing zoning and ordinances along with new development and expansion to ensure they are consistent with the plan's long-term vision. Development will be managed to prevent the fragmentation of agricultural lands and sensitive natural areas.

Per Wisconsin State Statute, the plan must be updated at least every 10 years, though earlier revisions may occur if economic or demographic conditions change significantly. The Town maintains a commitment to transparency by encouraging public input during official meetings.

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Implementation Goal

"To ensure the Town of Maiden Rock Comprehensive Plan serves as the primary guideline for all local decision-making by establishing a transparent, consistent, and proactive system for updating Town ordinances, reviewing development proposals, and fostering the intergovernmental partnerships necessary to achieve the Town's 20-year vision."

Implementation Objectives

- Direct new residential development away from or minimize the impact on prime agricultural land and identified environmental corridors to prevent fragmentation of our rural character.

- The Town Board should review the existing Town Zoning (provided by the county) and any new Subdivision plans or ordinances to see if they align with this plan and/or if changes should be made by the Town moving forward.

- The Town Board should conduct a periodic review of this plan and discuss progress. This Comprehensive Plan should be updated at least once every 10 years (as required by Wis. Stat. § 66.1001), or sooner if significant demographic shifts or economic opportunities arise.

- Encourage ongoing public input at Town Board meetings. This input may be restricted by time for each speaker or time allotted in the meeting agenda.

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Issues and Opportunities

> ***Issues and opportunities element***. *Background information on the local governmental unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs of the local governmental unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local governmental unit over a 20-year planning period. Background information shall include population, household and employment forecasts that the local governmental unit uses in developing its comprehensive plan, and demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local governmental unit.*
>
> *Source Wisconsin Statute 66.1001: Comprehensive Planning*

Issues and opportunities Overview

The Town aims to manage growth through long-range, coordinated planning that balances four core values: preserving rural and agricultural identity, protecting natural resources, meeting community needs, and maintaining fiscal discipline.

All new development proposals — regardless of type — must be evaluated for their effects on watersheds, viewsheds, and other natural assets. The Great River Road, Rustic Road, scenic bluffs, woodlands, and farmland are explicitly named as assets to safeguard.

The Town sees opportunity in helping family farmers diversify without leaving the land. Farm-to-table operations, cottage industries, ag-tourism, and new agricultural products are highlighted as ways to strengthen the farm economy while connecting to broader tourism trends.

Town development should follow existing infrastructure, not the other way around. This is fundamentally a cost-control principle — keeping services efficient and avoiding the fiscal burden of extending utilities and roads to undeveloped areas.

The Town of Maiden Rock has two challenges related to population age groups. First, the Town is seeing a growing senior population wanting to stay in the community. The Town will focus on services and resources for this population demographic. Second, the 20–40-year-old demographic is underrepresented in the community. The Town encourages exploring opportunities for new jobs and business development.

The Town is also home to a significant number of residents who work remotely or commute outside the township for employment. Specifically, the Town's proximity to the Twin Cities metropolitan area makes the Town of Maiden Rock attractive to those seeking a rural lifestyle. As this continues the Town will need to ensure housing and development preserves agricultural land and natural resources.

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Land-use decisions and local ordinances must stay aligned with the Comprehensive Plan and existing Town ordinances. This objective is to build confidence among both residents and potential new businesses that the Town will grow carefully and preserve the natural assets and rural character that makes the Town of Maiden Rock distinctive.

The Town has also identified larger agricultural entities impacting land use and natural resources in surrounding communities. To address this, this plan supports efforts to protect the rural character and natural resources of the Town.

Recognizing their responsibility to protect the Town of Maiden Rock, Town supervisors appointed a commission to study CAFOs and operations ordinances. This commission drafted an operations ordinance, and the Town has adopted it. It was passed on December 9, 2024, and that ordinance is in line with this plan. The adopted ordinance is detailed in Appendix E of this plan document.

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Issues and Opportunities Goal

"To guide and manage future growth and development in the Town of Maiden Rock through a coordinated, long-range planning framework that preserves the rural character, protects its agricultural heritage, and ensures environmentally responsible land-use decisions, while proactively addressing the evolving needs of a changing population through fiscally responsible public services and sustainable land use practices."

Issues and opportunities Objectives

- Protect the key attributes of the Town of Maiden Rock as defined by existing farms and farmland, the Great River Road and Rustic Road, scenic bluffs, woodlands, and residential areas by ensuring new residential, agricultural, commercial or industrial inquiries are vetted for environmental impact on the Town's watersheds, vistas and views, and other natural assets.

- Facilitate the creation of "value-added" agricultural opportunities (e.g., farm-to-table, cottage industries, ag tourism, new agricultural products) that allow family farmers to remain on their land while diversifying their income streams and participating in tourism and other revenue sources.

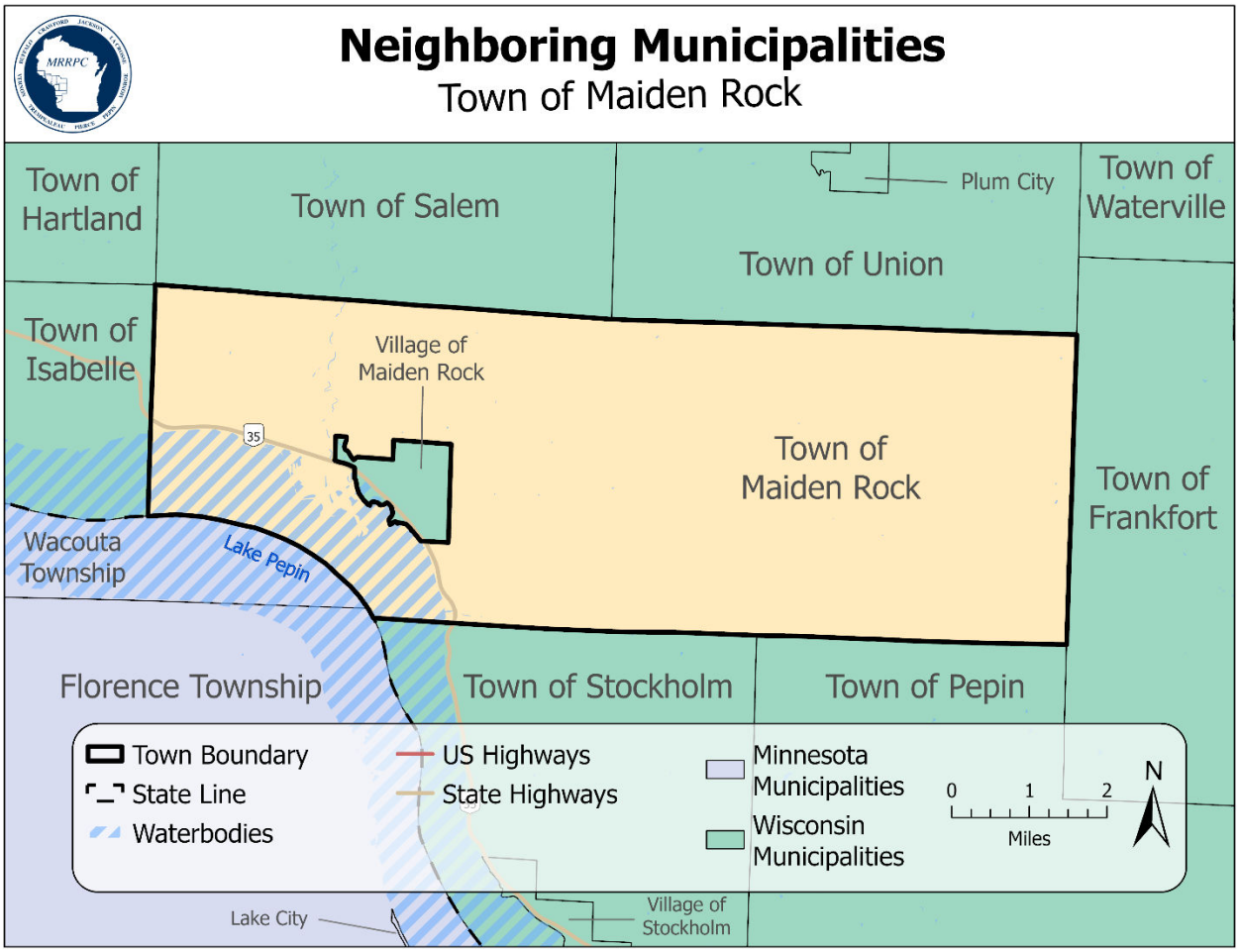
- Maintain growth policies that direct development to areas that can be served by existing infrastructure.

- Ensure that land-use decisions and local ordinances are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, providing a predictable and stable environment for both long-term residents and potential investors.

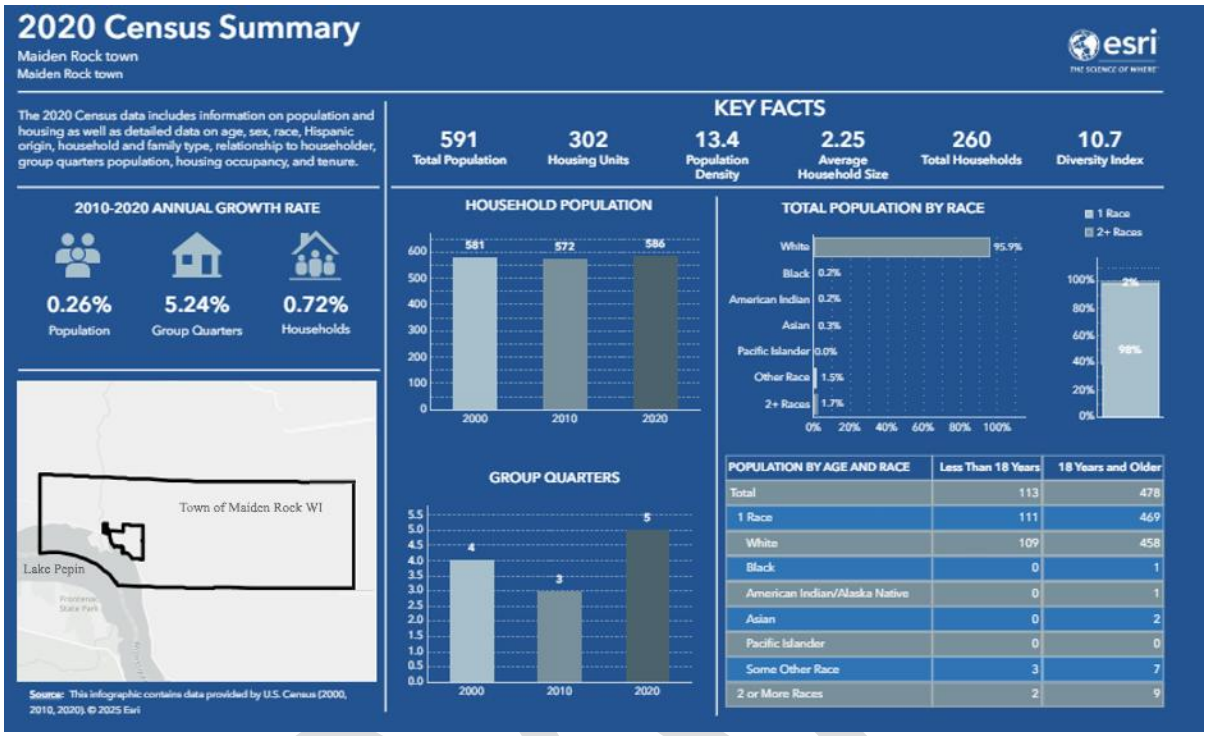
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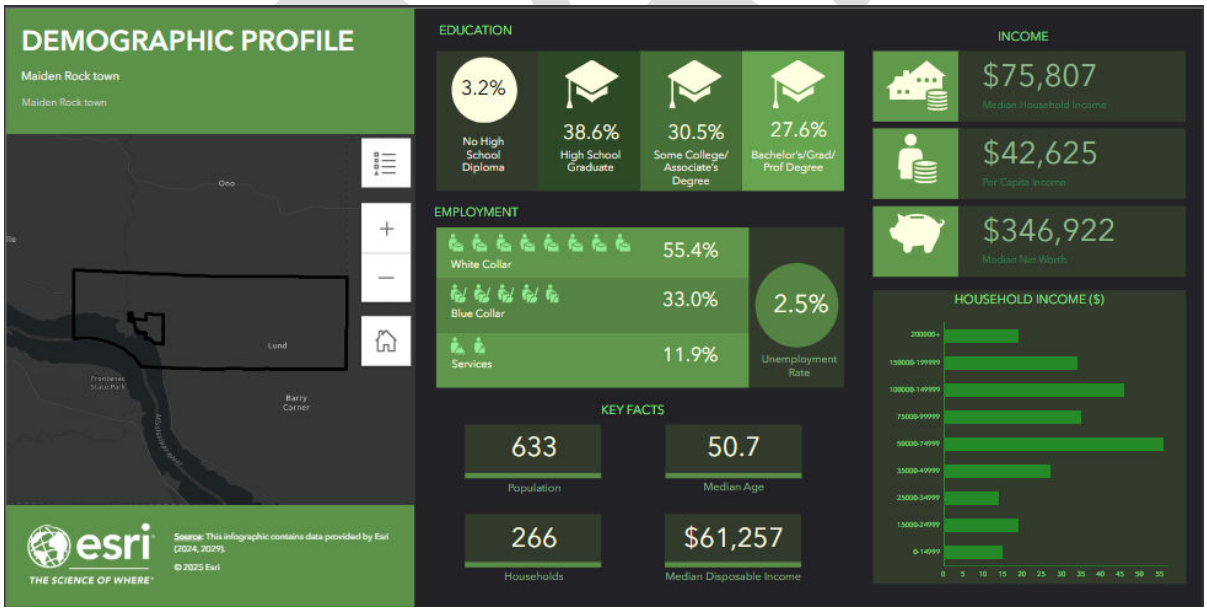
Neighboring Municipalities

The Town of Maiden Rock has three neighboring Towns in Pierce County and three neighboring Towns in Pepin County. The Village of Maiden Rock is a separate municipality.



2020 Census Data





Population Trends and Projections

The following tables and figures show some population trends, income, and other demographic data for the Town. Of particular note is the advanced age of the population, with a median age of 55.7 years and more than 40 percent of the population 60 years or older.

Population

DOA Code	Place Name	County Name	Final Estimate 2025	Census 2020	Numeric Change	Percent Increase
48016	T Maiden Rock	Pierce	609	591	18	3.05%

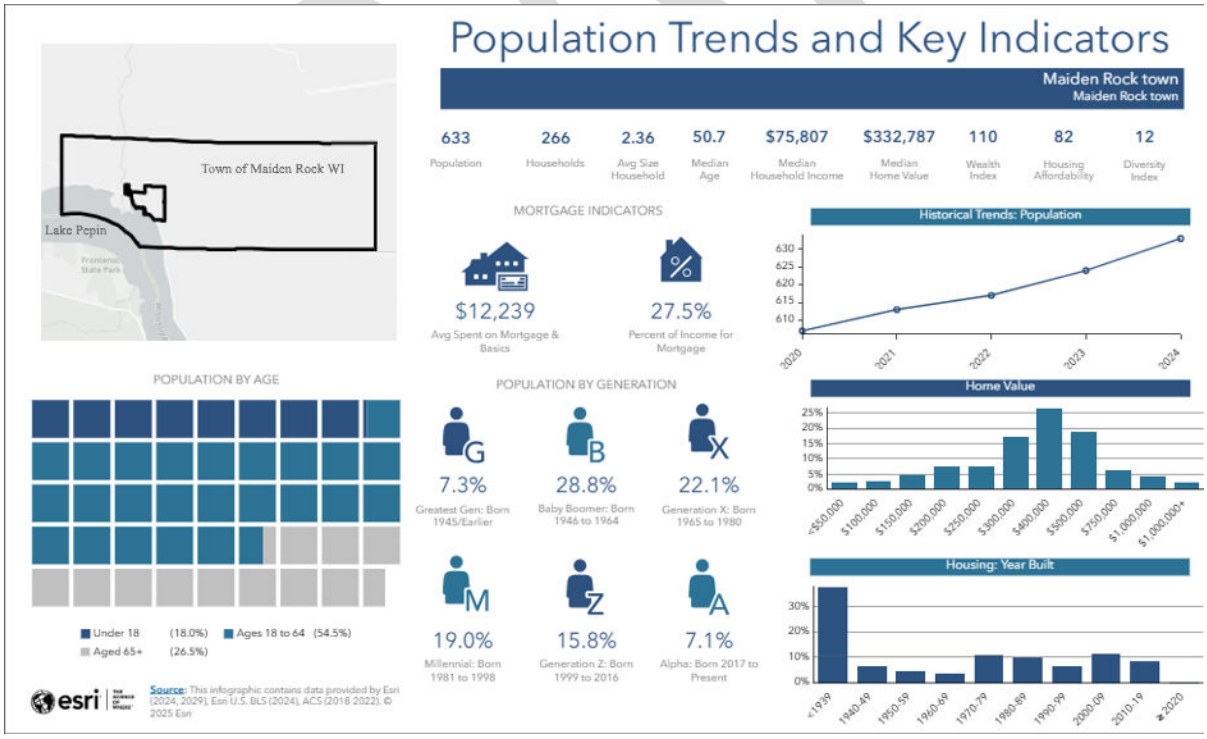
Wisconsin Department of Administration Population Projections

Population Projections

DOA Code	Place Name	County Name	2020 Population	2030 Projection	2040 Projection	2050 Projection
48016	T Maiden Rock	Pierce	591	593	579	551

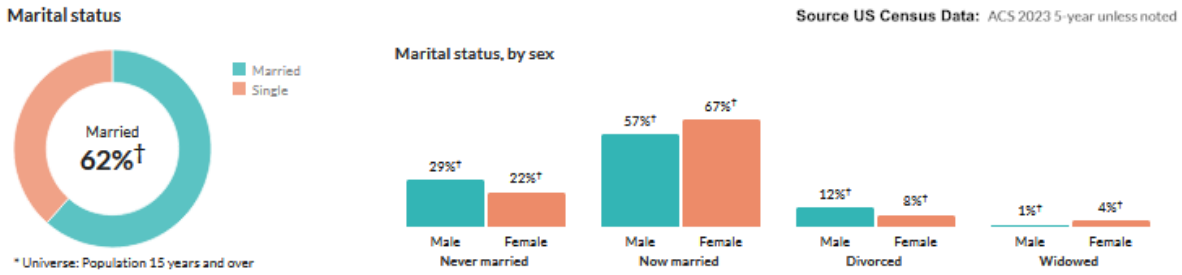
Wisconsin Department of Administration Population Projections

Population Trends

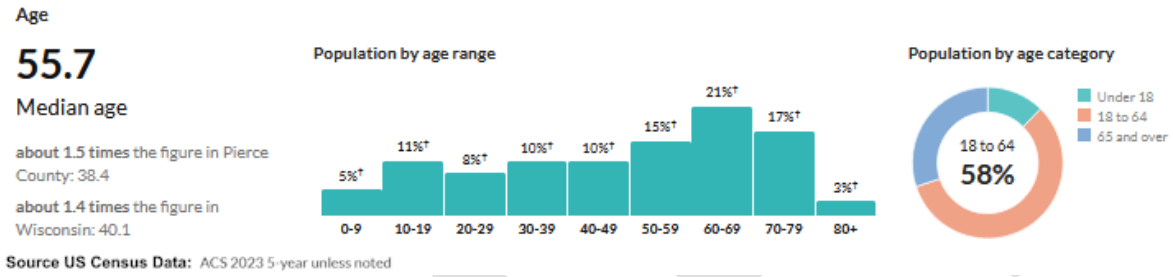


Population 2022 Estimate – 605
Equalization Values 2022- $87,827,900

Graphic - Marital Status



Graphic - Age Distribution



Graphic - Income

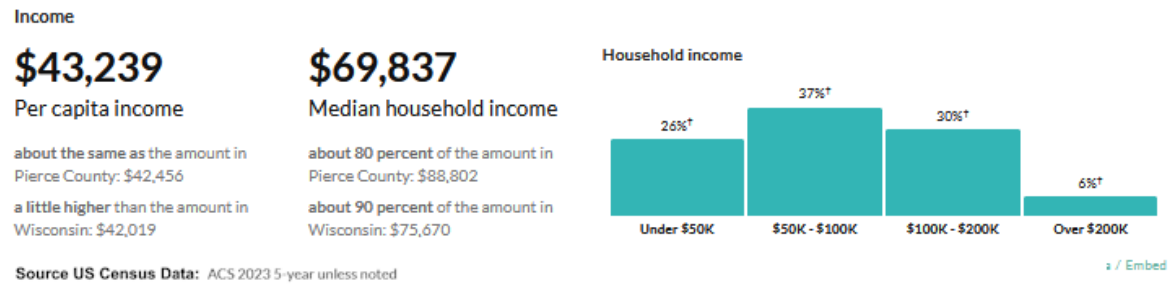


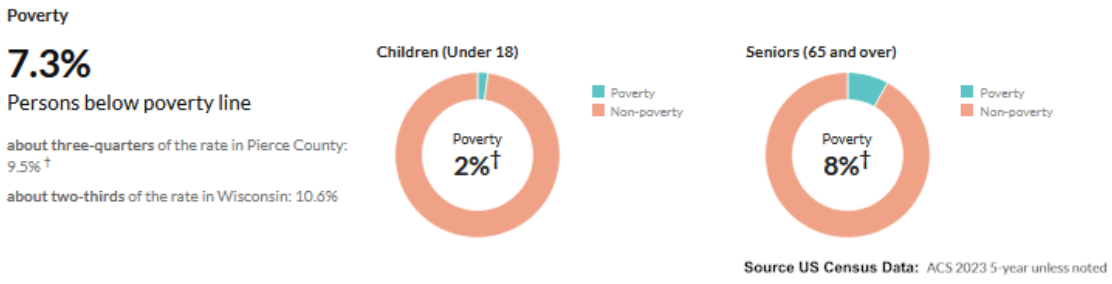
Table - Income

Household Income Distribution

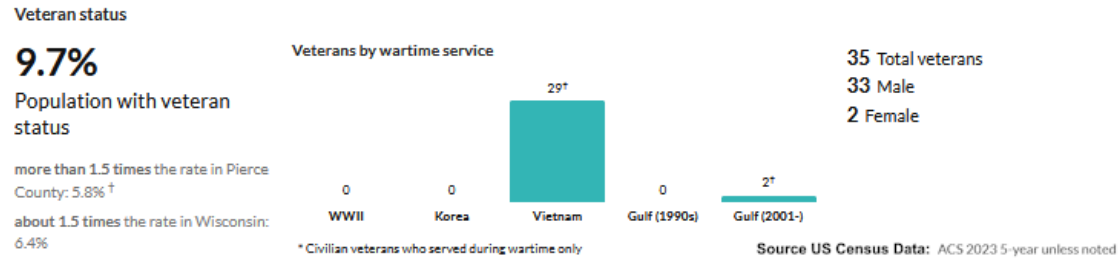
Income Bracket	Number of Households	% of Households
Less than $10,000	14	7.6%
$10,000 – $14,999	4	2.2%
$15,000 – $19,999	2	1.1%
$20,000 – $24,999	2	1.1%
$30,000 – $34,999	4	2.2%
$35,000 – $39,999	5	2.7%
$40,000 – $44,999	13	7.0%
$45,000 – $49,999	5	2.7%
$50,000 – $59,999	13	7.0%
$60,000 – $74,999	43	23.2%

Source US Census Data: ACS 2019–2023

Graphic - Poverty



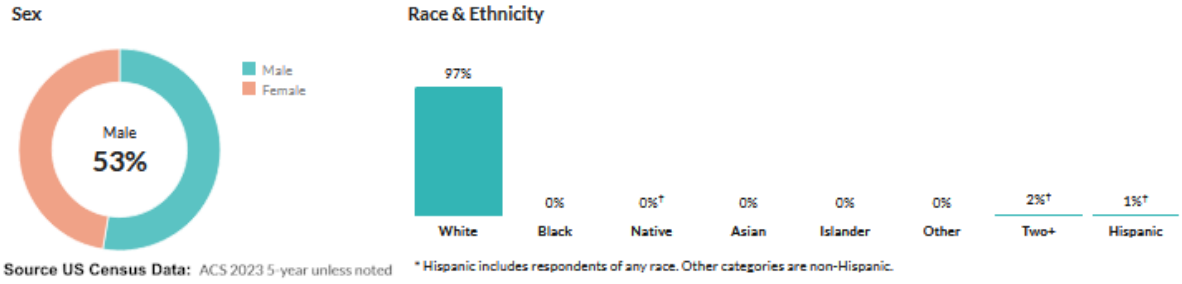
Graphic - Veteran Status



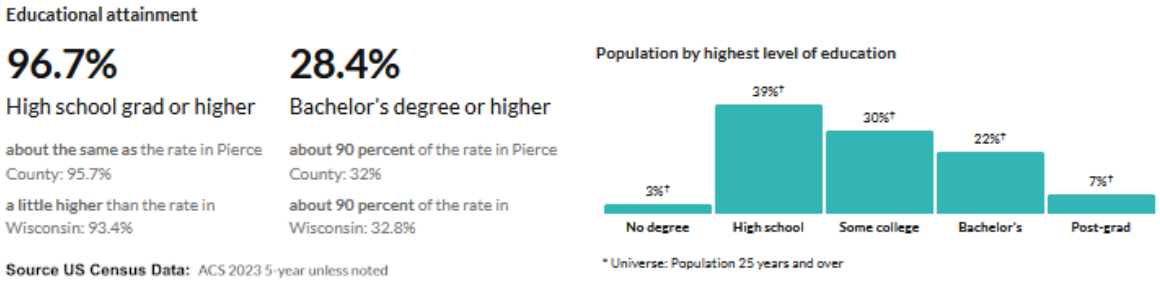
Population Characteristics

The following tables and figures show some population characteristics of the Town. The Town of Maiden Rock is predominantly white with educational level comparable to Pierce County and the State of Wisconsin overall.

Race, Ethnicity and Sex



Graphic - Educational Attainment of Population Over 25



Income and Poverty

Based on U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates (2019–2023), the household income in the Town of Maiden Rock area is broadly middle-income. The median household income for ZIP Code 54750 is approximately $93,750 (ACS 2020–2024), above both Pierce County ($88,802) and Wisconsin ($75,670) medians. Per capita income is approximately $44,693. The poverty rate is approximately 4.0%—well below Pierce County (9.5%) and Wisconsin (10.6%) averages.

Table - Median Income

2024 Median Household Income (Esri)

for this area

75,807 which is less than the average for United States

Area	Value ▼	0 — 100,000
Minnesota	86,801	
Pierce County	86,730	
Goodhue County	85,282	
United States	79,068	
This area	**75,807**	
Wisconsin	75,654	

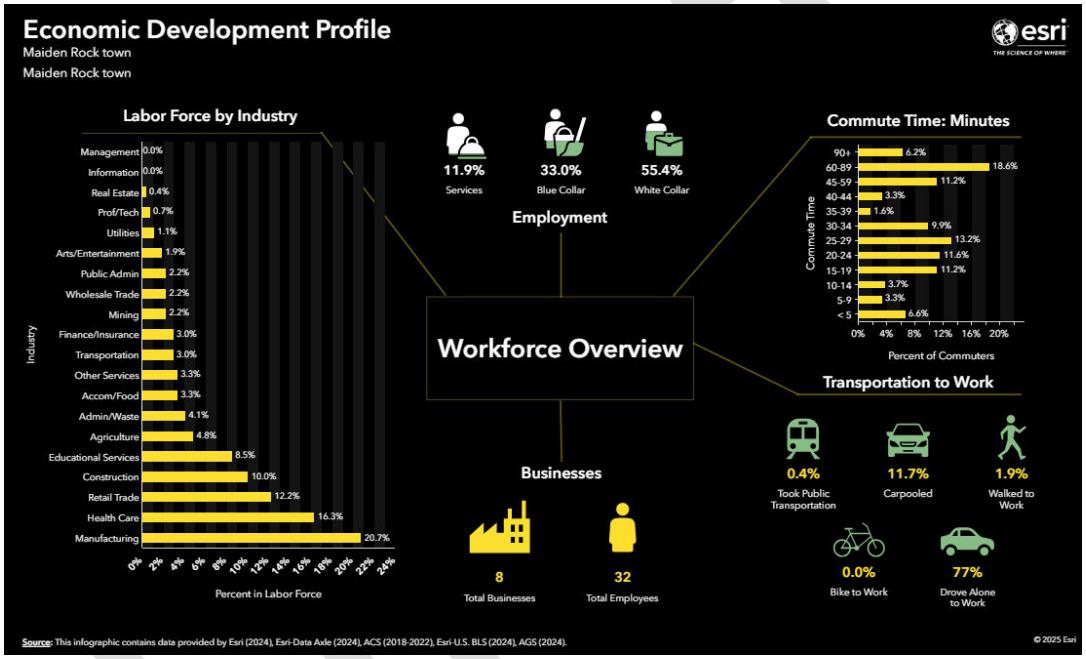
Table – At Risk Population Profile



Employment

Residents of the Town of Maiden Rock primarily commute to employment in the Twin Cities metro area and the River Falls/Ellsworth corridor. Mean travel time to work is approximately 41.4 minutes, nearly double the Wisconsin state average of 22.2 minutes. Agriculture is the foundation of the local economy. The largest employment sectors include agriculture/forestry, construction, manufacturing, educational services, and retail trade. A growing share of residents work remotely, a trend that may support modest in-migration of remote workers seeking a rural quality of life.

Table - Employment by Industry



Housing

> ***Housing element.*** *A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs of the local governmental unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the age, structural, value and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental unit's housing stock. The element shall also identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs, policies and programs that promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing, and policies and programs to maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit's existing housing stock.*
>
> *Source Wisconsin Statute 66.1001: Comprehensive Planning*

Housing Overview

While not anticipating substantial growth, the Town of Maiden Rock is committed to developing a housing landscape that balances residential growth with the preservation of its agricultural and natural heritage. The Town's strategy focuses on three core ideas: a variety of housing options, land conservation, and collaborative oversight.

Housing Options

The Town of Maiden Rock aims to move beyond a "one-size-fits-all" housing market. By encouraging a variety of housing types — including smaller, affordable starter homes and senior-friendly options — the Town seeks to support a robust workforce and allow older residents to age in place.

Land Conservation & Agricultural Preservation

To maintain the Town's rural economy and scenic character, residential development will be intentionally directed away from active farmland. Housing growth is managed through planned home placement and density, quality home design, and protecting agricultural tracts from residential encroachment. The Town of Maiden Rock will encourage best building practices and design review to ensure new builds align with the Town's unique cultural and rural identity.

Proactive Governance and Partnerships

The Town Board will take an active role in housing by reviewing developments and expansions for approval. The Town of Maiden Rock will also actively seek out regional, state, and federal grants—partnering with both public and private providers.

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Housing Goal

"To foster a diverse and inclusive housing market in the Town of Maiden Rock by promoting the development of varied housing types for all income and ability levels, while prioritizing land conservation through planned home placement and design and the preservation of productive agricultural and natural resources."

Housing Objectives

- To protect farmland, the Town of Maiden Rock will direct residential growth away from active agricultural tracts to maintain the Town's rural economy.
- Use best practices and work with homeowners to protect The Town of Maiden Rock's unique cultural, rural character, and natural landscapes.
- Allow for a variety of housing stock to provide homes for residents with various housing needs, including smaller more affordable homes and homes for entry level employees, seniors, and a quality workforce.
- Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a permitted use on residential properties. This creates affordable housing for family members, singles or seniors.
- Work with housing programs/providers: Identify housing grants, resources, and other support from a variety of regional, state and federal organizations or programs both in the public and private sectors.
- Create and strengthen the role of the Town Board in the review process, allowing them to make recommendations on new or expanded development in housing, commercial development and conditional use permitting.

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Table - Housing Units

Households

185
Number of households

Pierce County: 15,765

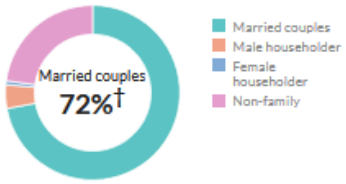
Wisconsin: 2,446,028

2.2
Persons per household

about 90 percent of the figure in Pierce County: 2.5

a little less than the figure in Wisconsin: 2.4

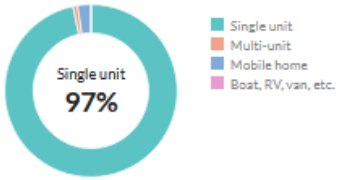
Population by household type



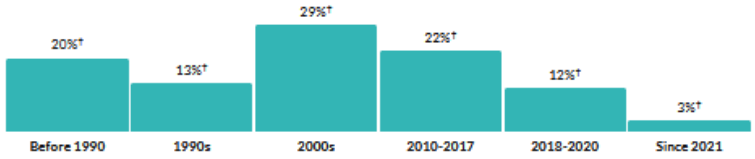
Source US Census Data: ACS 2023 5-year unless noted

Graph - Housing Structures by Type

Types of structure



Year moved in, by percentage of population



Source US Census Data: ACS 2023 5-year unless noted

Median Housing Value

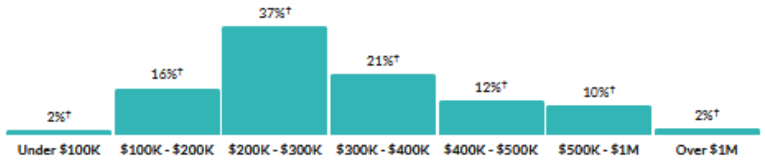
Value

$290,100
Median value of owner-occupied housing units

a little less than the amount in Pierce County: $308,600

about 20 percent higher than the amount in Wisconsin: $247,400

Value of owner-occupied housing units



Source US Census Data: ACS 2023 5-year unless noted

Table Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units

table

Housing Vacancy Rates

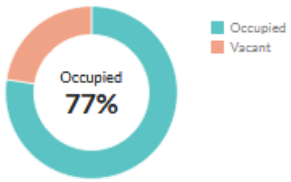
Units & Occupancy

239
Number of housing units

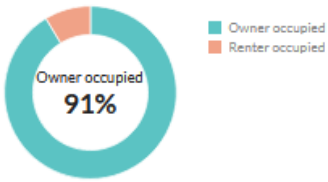
Pierce County: 17,052

Wisconsin: 2,750,750

Occupied vs. Vacant



Ownership of occupied units



Source US Census Data: ACS 2023 5-year unless noted

Affordability of Housing

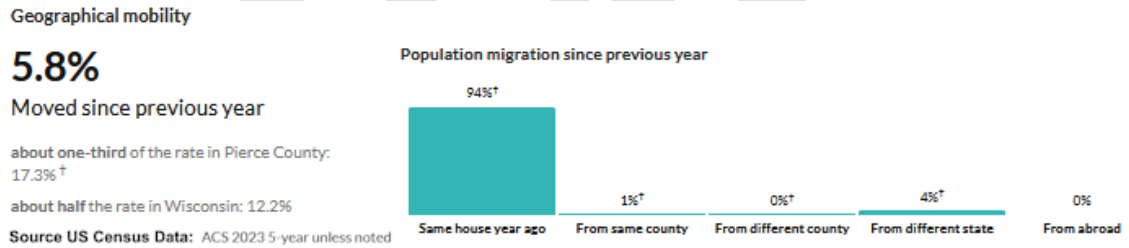
Housing affordability in the Maiden Rock area is relatively favorable compared to urban Wisconsin communities. At a median home value of approximately $308,800 (ZIP 54750, ACS 2020–2024) and a median household income of $93,750, the housing affordability index is generally above 100—meaning a median-income household can typically qualify for a median-priced home under standard mortgage criteria.

As of 2026 (the date of this Plan), the region has experienced significant inflation in land and housing prices. The Town will monitor affordability trends, particularly as recreational property demand along Lake Pepin places upward pressure on values that may make entry-level homeownership challenging for younger or lower-income households.

Housing Tenure

The Maiden Rock area (ZIP 54750) is predominantly an owner-occupied community. Approximately 91.1% of occupied units are owner-occupied and 8.9% are renter-occupied. Of owner-occupied units, approximately 51.3% carry a mortgage while 48.7% are owned free and clear—a higher free-and-clear rate than typical suburban areas, consistent with long-tenured farm families. The overall vacancy rate is approximately 14.9%, reflecting a mix of seasonal/recreational properties.

Table - Housing Tenure of Owner-Occupied Housing



Transportation

> ***Transportation element***. *A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric scooters, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation. The element shall compare the local governmental unit's objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit.*
>
> *Source Wisconsin Statute 66.1001: Comprehensive Planning*

Transportation Overview

The Town of Maiden Rock's transportation strategy is designed to balance the physical needs of the community with the preservation of its iconic bluffs, riverfront and scenic rural roads. The Town will use "developer-funded" new roads and environmental stewardship to maintain its rural character.

Development Standards & Infrastructure

All new roads for residential or business expansions must be designed, engineered, and built to Pierce County standards at the developer's expense before they can be considered for Town maintenance.

New driveways require permits and inspections to ensure they conform to existing ordinances, specifically focusing on minimizing erosion, and avoiding conflicts with pedestrians or cyclists.

The Town prohibits new roads and driveways from crossing significant slopes or wetlands unless no other access is feasible.

Proactive Maintenance & Safety

The Town of Maiden Rock will work with Pierce County to conduct regular inspections of culverts and ditches and seek state and federal financial support for replacements and repairs.

A primary focus is improving bicycle safety along the Great River Road segment. The Town will advocate for paved shoulders, enhanced signage, and future off-road trails in alignment with the Wisconsin Great River Road Bikeway Plan.

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Maintenance, Scenic Preservation & Tourism

As a gateway to Lake Pepin, the Town's transportation network is also a tool for tourism as well as basic transportation. Working with the Mississippi River Parkway Commission, WisDOT, Pierce County, and the WDNR, the Town will plow and maintain both roads and trails under the jurisdiction of the Town.

The Town will encourage efforts made to clear invasive brush from designated Rustic Roads, ensuring views of Lake Pepin and the surrounding valley for residents and visitors alike.

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Transportation Goal

"To maintain and develop a safe, efficient, and well-managed transportation network that supports the needs of all residents while protecting the Town's unique natural, scenic, and historical character through high standards for new development and a proactive maintenance strategy."

Transportation Objectives

- Require that all new Town roads for business or residential expansion to be designed, engineered, and constructed to Pierce County standards at the developer's expense.

- Require that driveways for new homes, businesses, or subdivisions, conform to existing driveway ordinance by requiring permits and inspection. Ensure these plans have the least impact on existing roads, erosion, traffic, or bike pedestrian conflicts.

- Prohibit new public or private roads from crossing significant slopes or entering designated wetlands unless it is the only feasible access point. Require designed erosion control to minimize Town and County maintenance.

- Work with the County to conduct an audit and inspection of all culverts and ditches. Work with the County and State to seek financial support for the maintenance or replacement of these roadways.

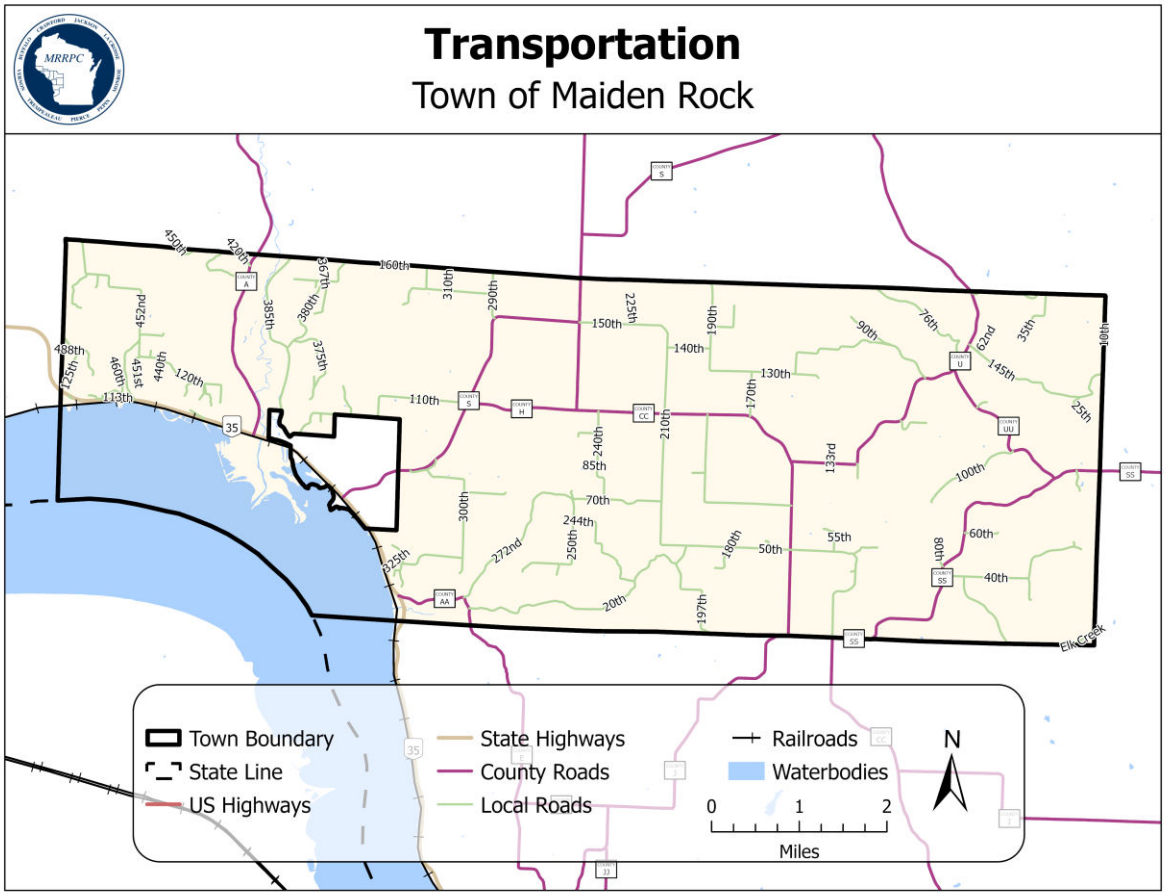
- Partner with WisDOT, WDNR, County, and the State to improve bicycle safety on the Great River Road segment by advocating for paved shoulders, signage, and off-road trails aligning with the Wisconsin Great River Road Bikeway Plan.

- Coordinate with the Mississippi River Parkway Commission, WisDOT, WDNR, rail owners, County, and the State to maintain and enhance existing vistas, and scenic pull-offs, ensuring they are free of invasive brush to preserve the scenic views of Lake Pepin and from our designated Rustic Road.

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Inventory of Existing Transportation Facilities

Map - Transportation



Walking & Bicycling

The Town of Maiden Rock offers limited but scenic walking and bicycling opportunities. The Great River Road (Hwy 35) is the primary route used by cyclists, offering dramatic views of Lake Pepin. However, the lack of dedicated paved shoulders is a safety concern during peak tourism season. The Town will advocate for WisDOT to prioritize paved shoulder improvements along Hwy 35 within town boundaries in alignment with the Wisconsin Great River Road Bikeway Plan.

Trails

The Town of Maiden Rock includes a segment of the Great River State Trail (Wisconsin DNR), a multi-use trail running along the former Chicago and Northwestern Railway corridor near Lake Pepin, open to hikers, cyclists, and snowshoers.

Railroad Corridors

A Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) freight rail line runs along the Mississippi River corridor adjacent to the town's western boundary, parallel to Hwy 35. No passenger service operates on this line.

Snowmobile and ATV/UTV Routes and Trails

Snowmobile trails connect to the Pierce County trail network via private land easements managed by local snowmobile clubs. No new town-funded snowmobile infrastructure is currently planned. All County and Town Roads are available for ATV/UTV use unless otherwise posted.

Mass Transit

No fixed-route public transit operates within the Town of Maiden Rock. Older adults and people with disabilities can schedule rides in advance through the ADRC of Pierce County volunteer driver program (715-273-6780) and private providers listed in the ADRC Resource Guide. The Town supports continued coordination with Pierce County on rural transit options, particularly for elderly and disabled residents.

Water Transportation

Lake Pepin (Mississippi River) forms the western boundary of the town and provides recreational boating, kayaking, and fishing access. Public boat access points exist along Hwy 35. No commercial water transportation serves the Town. The Town will coordinate with the WDNR and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding river access improvements.

Truck Transportation

Hwy 35 is the designated truck route through the Town. Agricultural grain and livestock hauling is significant during planting and harvest seasons. Town roads are subject to seasonal weight restrictions to protect road surfaces during spring thaw. The Town will continue to enforce seasonal weight limits and pursue cost-recovery from heavy users where possible.

Airports

No public-use airports are within the Town. Nearest general aviation airports: Red Wing Regional Airport (~9 miles west). Commercial air service: Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport (MSP, ~60 miles northwest). No airport development is planned within the town.

Streets and Highways

The Town's road network includes Hwy 35 (WisDOT), Pierce County highways (A, AA, CC, H, S, SS, U, UU), and town-maintained roads. Town roads are primarily gravel with some chip-

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seal surfaces. All new development roads must be built to Pierce County standards at the developer's expense. The Town will seek WisDOT Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) and other state/federal funding for road and bridge maintenance.

Commuting Patterns

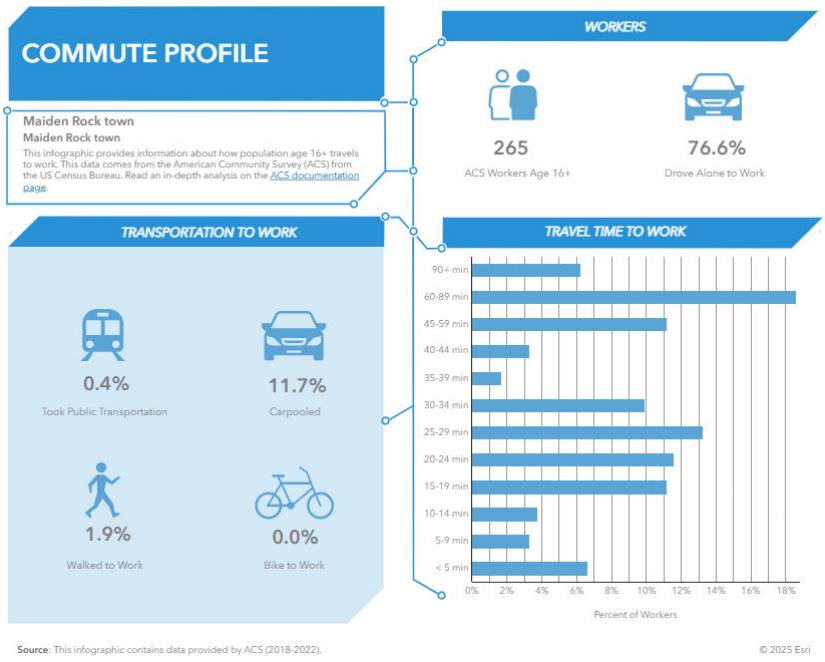
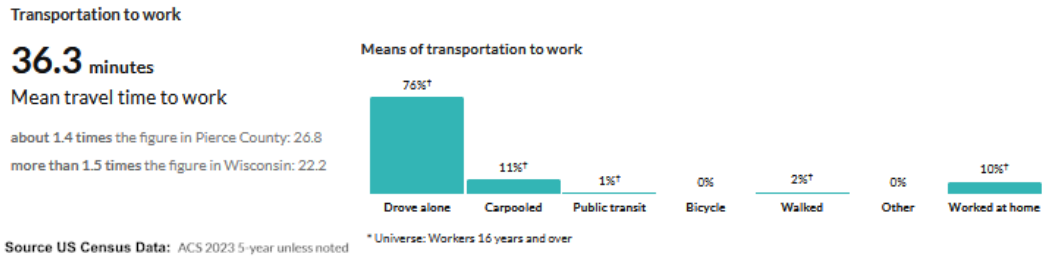


Table – Means of Transportation to Work



State and Regional Transportation Plans

Several state and regional plans influence the future of transportation in the Town of Maiden Rock, Pierce County. This includes links to available resources for Road and Transit assistance and funding:

- Active Transportation Plan 2050: Focuses on promoting walking and bicycling opportunities statewide and aligns with Wisconsin's broader transportation goals in Connect 2050.
- Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030: Outlines the long-term plan for airport infrastructure in the state, building on the policies of Connections 2030.

- Wisconsin State Freight Plan: Addresses freight transportation needs and provides a vision for the state's freight program through 2028.
- Connect 2050: A multimodal vision plan that sets transportation goals across all sectors, including roads, transit, biking, walking, rail, aviation, and water transport.
- Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050: A long-range plan focusing on freight rail, passenger rail, and rail crossing safety, supporting the broader goals outlined in Connect 2050.

Road and bridge assistance programs

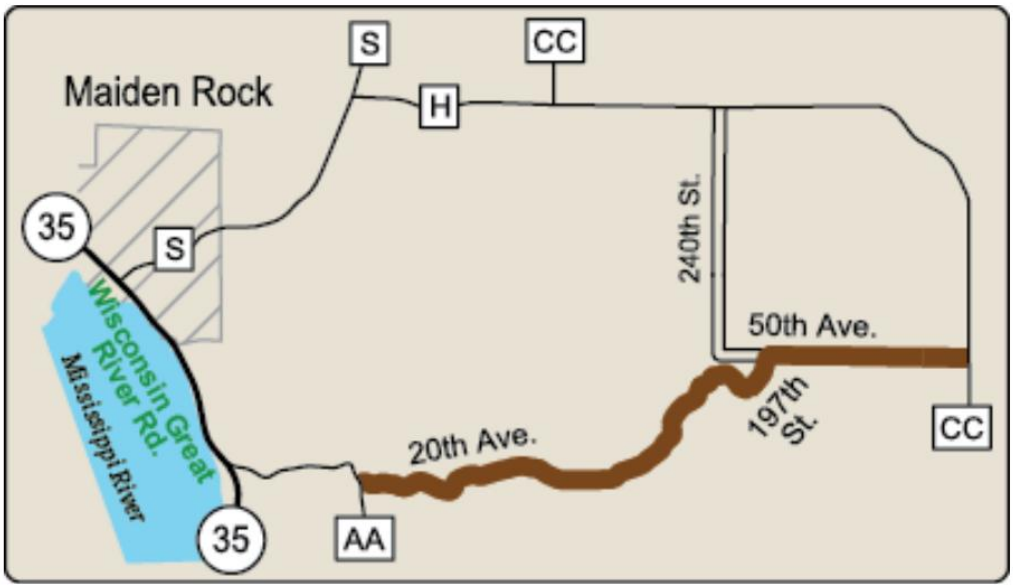
Transit assistance programs

Assistance Programs - Other aid

The Rustic Road Program

Wisconsin's Rustic Road Program was created in 1973 to highlight roads throughout the state with outstanding natural features along their routes, such as rugged terrain, native vegetation, native wildlife, and open areas with agricultural vistas. They are lightly travelled and serve those wishing to travel by auto, bicycling, hiking, and are not scheduled or anticipated for major improvements that would change their rustic characteristics.

The Town of Maiden Rock has Rustic Road 51 within its borders. This 4.3-mile unpaved road runs down a steep valley through dense woodland, fording Pine Creek at several points. It features the Pine Creek Fishery Area at its lower end.



Utilities and Community Facilities

> ***Utilities and community facilities element.*** *A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local governmental unit such as sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other governmental facilities. The element shall describe the location, use and capacity of existing public utilities and community facilities that serve the local governmental unit, shall include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need in the local governmental unit to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities and facilities or to create new utilities and facilities and shall assess future needs for government services in the local governmental unit that are related to such utilities and facilities.*
>
> *Source Wisconsin Statute 66.1001: Comprehensive Planning*

Utilities and Community Facilities Overview

The Town of Maiden Rock's approach to utilities and community facilities is centered on fiscal responsibility and the preservation of existing assets as well as the ability to work with surrounding communities to access facilities not found in the Town

Fiscal Responsibility & Growth Management

The Town will evaluate the financial impact of every proposed housing project, business, or facility expansion. New projects must prove that their long-term maintenance costs are sustainable and covered by new tax revenue or formal development agreements.

To prevent tax dollars from being diverted to major new projects, the Town will regulate "intensive operations" like mining and large-scale agriculture and new construction. Seasonal weight restrictions and penalties can be used to mitigate road degradation caused by heavy equipment.

The Town Board will review all private and public development plans, including utility substations and other facilities to confirm they will not negatively impact existing community services.

Modern Infrastructure & Public Services

A primary goal is the prioritization of utility infrastructure and the expansion of broadband access to meet modern community needs. The Town will continue to work with the state designated provider (Pierce Pepin / Swift Current) to ensure access for all residents.

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Regional Collaboration & Future Planning

The Town of Maiden Rock will look beyond its borders to ensure efficient service delivery and planned growth. The Town actively maintains shared services agreements with surrounding communities, public utilities, County and the State to provide cost-effective public services including, storm water management, solid waste disposal, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other governmental facilities. In partnership with Pierce County, the Town identifies and preserves strategic locations for future public use, such as parkland, trails, and emergency staging areas, ensuring these spaces are secured before development occurs.

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Utilities & Community Facilities Goal

"To provide cost-effective, high-quality public services and facilities that evolve in step with community demand, prioritizing underground utility infrastructure and expanded broadband access while ensuring that any expansion of Town services remains fiscally responsible and driven by resident needs."

Utilities & community facilities Objectives

- Periodically review existing facilities in the Town to ensure proper maintenance and use.

- Minimize the impact of intensive agricultural, mining, or construction operations on Town infrastructure, specifically road degradation caused by heavy trucks and equipment. Use seasonal and weight restrictions and/or impose penalties to ensure the ongoing repair and maintenance of our roads and infrastructure.

- Evaluate the financial impact of any proposed facility expansion, new business, or housing project, on the Town to ensure the long-term maintenance costs are sustainable and supported by new tax revenue or a development agreement.

- Have the Town Board review all plans for future private development and public facilities (like a new business, homes or utility substation) to ensure that plans present no negative impact on existing utilities or community facilities before development occurs.

- Work with surrounding communities to ensure the Town of Maiden Rock has the appropriate shared services agreements in place. The Town should work with the county to identify and preserve strategic locations for future public use (e.g., parkland, trails, emergency staging, development, or utilities) based on the Town's projected growth.

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Utilities Inventory

Utilities

Electric service is provided by Xcel Energy and Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services. No municipal water or sewer exists in the Town. There is limited natural gas distribution from Xcel Energy. Liquid propane, wood, and fuel oil are the most common heating fuels. All residents rely on private wells and on-site septic systems.

Wastewater Treatment / Septic Systems

All wastewater treatment is handled by private on-site POWTS (septic systems). No municipal sewer system exists or is planned. All new developments must comply with Wisconsin Administrative Code SPS 383 and Pierce County Sanitary Ordinance. Found here:

https://www.co.pierce.wi.us/departments/land_management/forms_and_information/sanitary.php

Water Supply / Wells

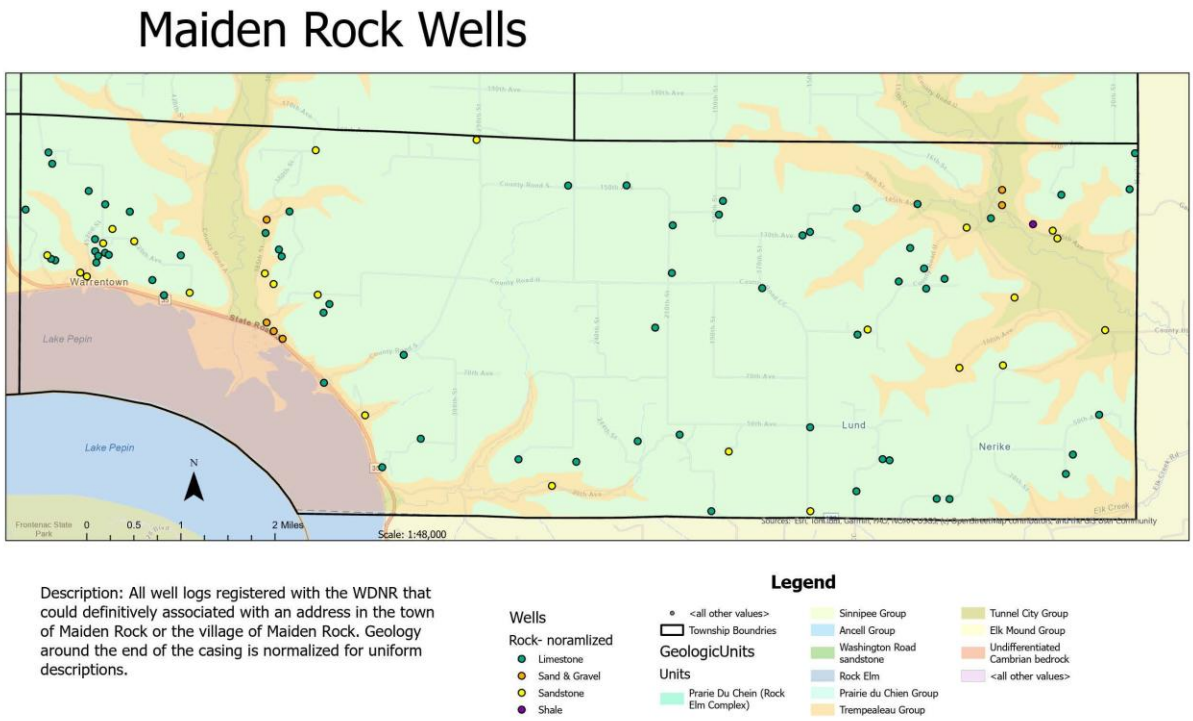
The committee recognizes that well data for the Town is incomplete and recommends working with the County, homeowners and businesses to add missing data and update test results. All water supply in the Town is from private wells drawing from sandstone and dolomite aquifers. Water quality is generally acceptable in most wells tested. Aging wells, well depth, agricultural runoff and other contamination remain a long-term concern and should be monitored. Karst topography also creates areas of heightened groundwater vulnerability and concern.

Details on wells in Pierce County can be found here: https://www.co.pierce.wi.us/departments/land_conservation/groundwater.php. The Town does suggest that well water is tested on a regular basis for bacteria and nitrates. UWSP offers testing and registers the results with the County.

This plan has included additional maps and tables in Appendix G.

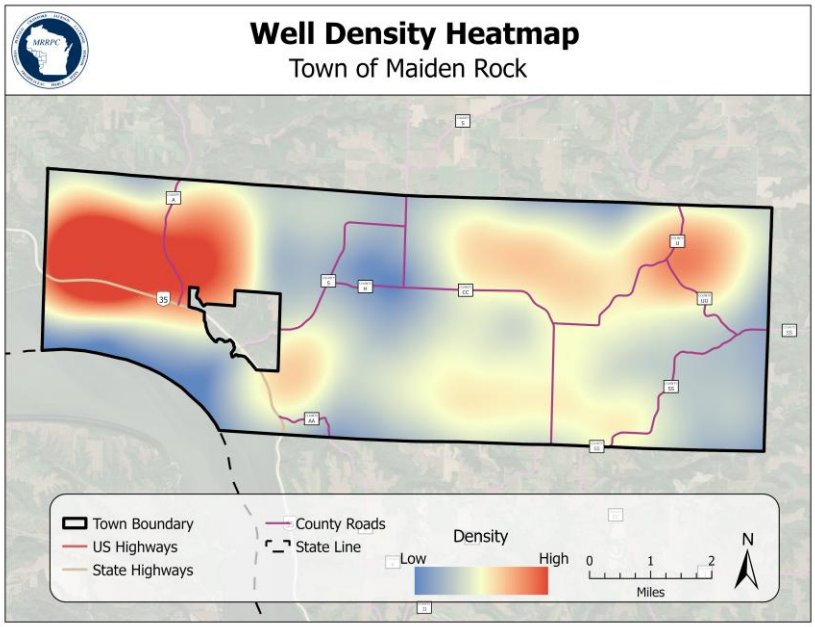
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Map – Well Locations

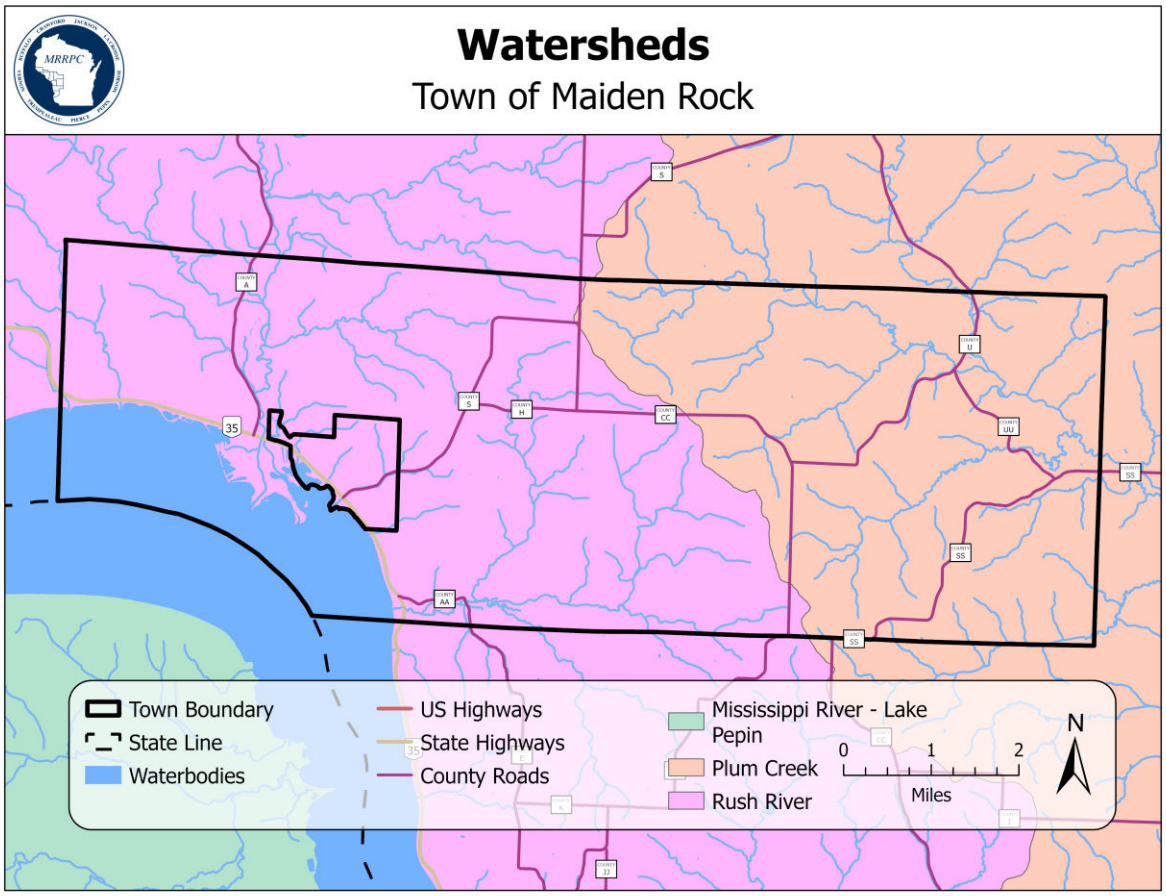


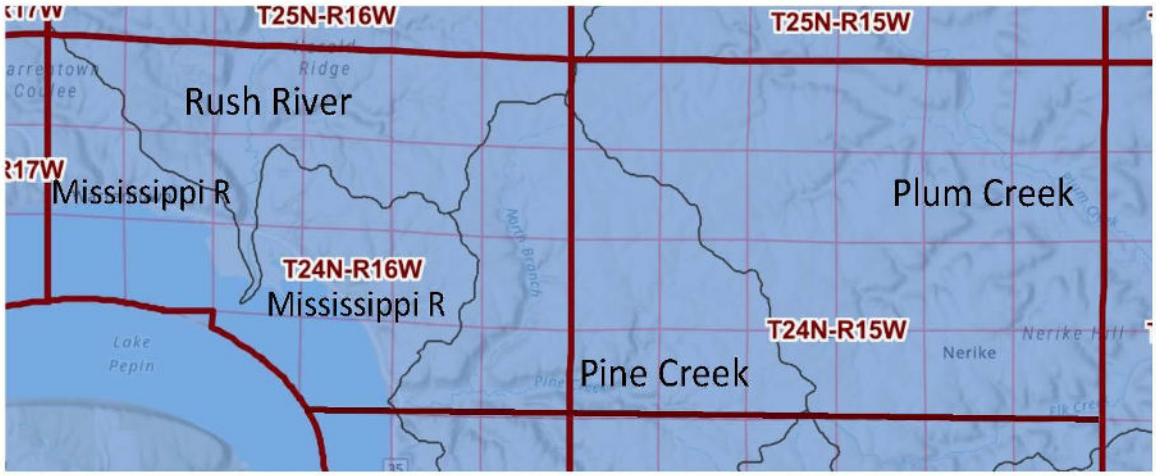
Note: Some wells are not reported and may not appear on the above map

Map - Well Density



Map - Watersheds





Watersheds

Watersheds are designated by Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs). The first map above shows the HUC-8 (subbasin level) watersheds, while the second map shows the HUC-12 (most detailed) watersheds. The HUC-12 map illustrates that the Town of Maiden Rock is covered by four distinct watersheds. Plum Creek drains much of the eastern part of the Town, Pine Creek the central portion, and the Rush River covers the northwest. Two smaller areas drain directly into the Mississippi River (Lake Pepin).

Alternative Energy Sources

Ground-mounted solar installations are the most feasible renewable energy option in the Town, potentially providing supplemental income for farm operators. Applications for commercial-scale solar should require the Town Board review with consideration of farmland reduction and scenic viewshed impacts. Smaller arrays and rooftop systems would be viewed more favorably. Regarding wind and turbine generation, the WDNR has identified the Mississippi River corridor as a migratory flyway and has expressed concerns about collisions in the area and has suggested this is not a good area for wind generation.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

Solid waste collection is handled by private haulers. Pierce County operates a recycling program including a collection bin for recycling in the Town and a convenience center in the Village of Ellsworth for recyclables and hazardous materials. The Town also sells bags that can be used for regular waste that can be deposited at the Town Hall.

Communication Facilities

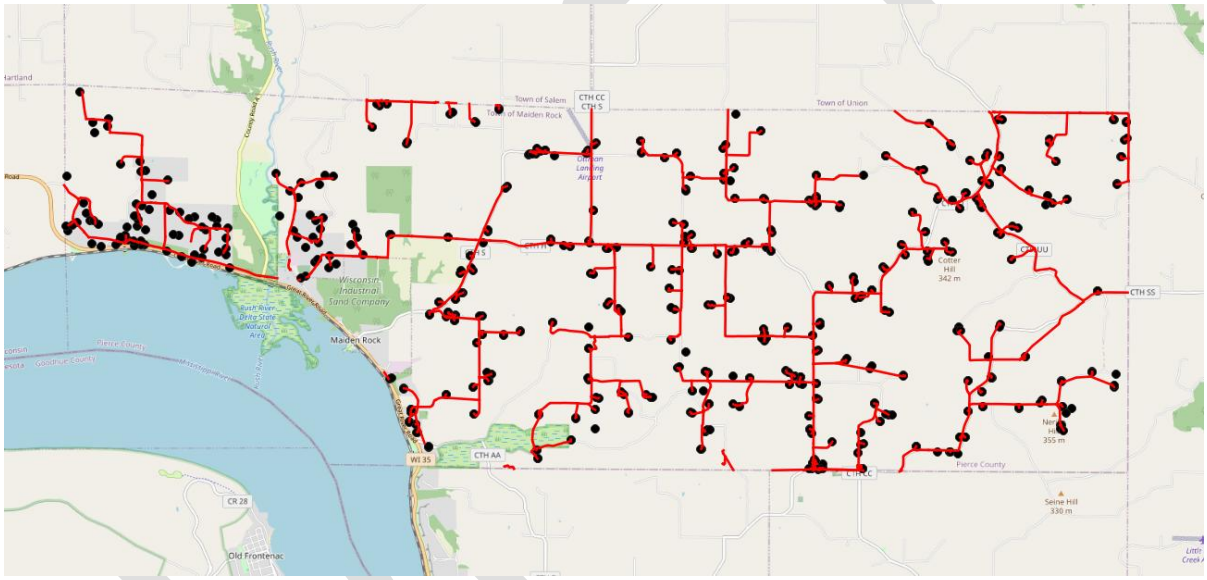
Telephone and communication infrastructure in the Town includes landline service (TDS Telecom) and cellular coverage that varies by location, with the strongest coverage along the Hwy 35 corridor. T-Mobile cellular infrastructure is registered in the area. Communication facilities are privately owned and maintained. Swift Current also offers landlines in addition to their internet services.

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Broadband / Internet

SwiftCurrent Connect is delivering high-speed internet to Pierce, Pepin, and St. Croix Counties including the Town of Maiden Rock. Launched in 2021, SwiftCurrent Connect is a wholly owned subsidiary of Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services. With one goal in mind, SwiftCurrent Connect looks to connect to every home that is currently without access to fiber and high-speed internet. Other broadband internet access is limited, particularly in rural upland portions of the Town. Fixed broadband is available primarily along Hwy 35 through cable providers, with limited DSL and fixed wireless options elsewhere. The Town is participating in Wisconsin's Broadband Expansion Programs including the federal BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) program and advocates for coverage expansion in underserved areas through Pierce County and the State of Wisconsin.

Maps - Broadband / Internet



Source:

PIERCE PEPIN COOPERATIVE SERVICES

SWIFTCURRENT CONNECT BROADBAND POWERED BY PPCS

Community Facilities Inventory

Local Park and Recreation Facilities

The Town has no formal town parks, but the Village of Maiden Rock has a park and pavilion on the shores of Lake Pepin in the Village. The American Legion Post #158 established and maintains a rentable-to-the-public park like setting, pavilion and kitchen-dining "cabin" along the Rustic Road (20th Avenue). In addition, there are public parking spots along the Class 1 Trout Stream (Pine Creek) for fishing access. The Pine Creek Fishery Area, owned by the WDNR, is discussed in more detail in an Appendix. Recreational opportunities abound within the Town's waterways and natural areas: Lake Pepin for boating/fishing, the Great River State Trail for hiking/cycling, and forests, wetlands, and blufflands for hunting and wildlife observation. The Town will coordinate with the WDNR, Pierce County, and the Mississippi River Parkway Commission on recreational access and will identify and preserve strategic locations for future public recreational use.

Cemeteries

The Town and Village of Maiden Rock, Wisconsin, feature three primary historic burial sites: the **Maiden Rock Cemetery**, the **Swedish Methodist Cemetery**, and the **Lund Methodist Church Cemetery**.

These cemeteries offer a glimpse into the early pioneer history of Pierce County:

- **Maiden Rock Cemetery**: Located in Maiden Rock Township, this is the largest and most well-known cemetery in the area, situated on a quiet hillside along Cemetery Road overlooking the Mississippi River landscape.
- **Swedish Methodist Cemetery**: A smaller, historic cemetery reflecting the Scandinavian heritage of the early settlers in the area.
- **Lund Methodist Church Cemetery**: Located nearby in Lund, this cemetery is associated with the early Methodist congregations in the region.
- The Pierce County Historical Society states that conical burial mounds (earthworks built by ancient cultures) have been identified in the Town of Maiden Rock.

To explore individual burial records, obituaries, or to trace specific family plots, you can utilize the Find a Grave Pierce County Directory to browse or search these specific locations.

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Libraries

The Town of Maiden Rock is served by the Pierce County Library System. The nearest branches are in the Village of Ellsworth (~15 miles east). The Plum City Library is also located a short distance away in the City of Plum City. The Village of Pepin also maintains a public library. The Town contributes to library services through county tax levy.

Senior Services

Senior services are provided through the Pierce County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), which coordinates meal delivery, transportation assistance, caregiver support, and information and referral. The Town will maintain its working relationship with Pierce County ADRC and monitor demographic trends to anticipate growing senior service needs as the population ages.

Town of Maiden Rock Facilities and Equipment

The Town Hall and Garage is located at W2096 County Road CC, Maiden Rock, WI 54750 (ph. 715.448.3587). It serves as the polling place, board meeting location, and community gathering space. Road maintenance equipment is stored at the town garage.

Healthcare Facilities

No hospital or clinic is within the Town. The nearest clinics are in the Village of Ellsworth (~15 miles). More comprehensive care is available at Westfields Hospital and Clinic in the City of River Falls (~30 miles) and in the Twin Cities metro area. There is also a Mayo Clinic Health System in Red Wing, MN (~16 miles) and Advent Healthcare operates a Clinic and Hospital in Durand, WI, (20-25 miles).

Childcare Facilities

There are no licensed childcare facilities within the town. Residents access childcare in the Village of Ellsworth, the City of River Falls, or the Twin Cities area. The Town will not create zoning barriers to home-based licensed childcare.

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Public Safety Facilities

Public safety services are provided through county and contracted arrangements. The Town does not employ its own police, fire, or EMS personnel, relying on intergovernmental cooperation with Pierce County, the Village of Maiden Rock, and neighboring jurisdictions.

Police Protection

Law enforcement is provided by the Pierce County Sheriff's Office, which patrols all unincorporated areas of the county. The Town maintains communication with the Sheriff's Office through the county budget and policy process.

Fire Protection

Fire protection is provided by the Lund Fire District (volunteer). The Town maintains a service contract with the department and contributes to its operational funding through the annual levy. Mutual aid is available from the Villages of Ellsworth, Bay City, Stockholm, and other neighboring departments.

EMS/Rescue Services

The Maiden Rock Plum City Community Ambulance Service (MRPCS Inc.) covers Maiden Rock, Plum City, and Stockholm EMS/Rescue Services—they provide EMT, 1st Responder and Basic Care to 5 municipalities in the Maiden Rock area. The service runs at least one ambulance.

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Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources

> ***Agricultural, natural and cultural resources element***. *A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources consistent with zoning limitations under section 295.20 (2), parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.*
>
> *Source Wisconsin Statute 66.1001: Comprehensive Planning*

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Overview

The Town of Maiden Rock is defined by its iconic bluffs, Lake Pepin vistas, and a deep-rooted farming heritage and quality agricultural lands. The Town's strategy for agricultural and natural resources focuses on protecting the economic viability of its land while fostering a modern, conservation focused rural economy.

Agricultural Preservation & Innovation

The Town of Maiden Rock actively shields its best farmland from urban development while welcoming new forms of rural commerce. Our policy directs new residential and commercial development toward "non-prime" agricultural land to keep high-quality soil in production. The Town supports a diversified economy by allowing orchards, vineyards, farm-to-table events, and seasonal markets. While encouraging these "ag enterprises," the Town may use special permits to ensure they remain compatible with the quiet, rural atmosphere. The Town will promote best land-use practices—such as cover cropping, no-till farming, and manure management—and maintains a CAFO ordinance to manage large-scale livestock operations.

Natural Resource Stewardship

The protection of the Town's unique topography and water quality is a top priority for long-term sustainability. To safeguard groundwater and surface water, the town works with the DNR to shield watersheds from harmful pathogens and nutrient runoff like phosphorus and nitrogen. The Town is committed to preserving wetlands, prairies, and forests that serve as vital habitats for game species, migratory birds, bats, pollinators and insects. Strategic partnerships and policy will be used to protect our "environmental crown jewels," including the bluffs, shorelands, and the aesthetics of the Great River Road, the Town's designated Rustic Road and rural environment.

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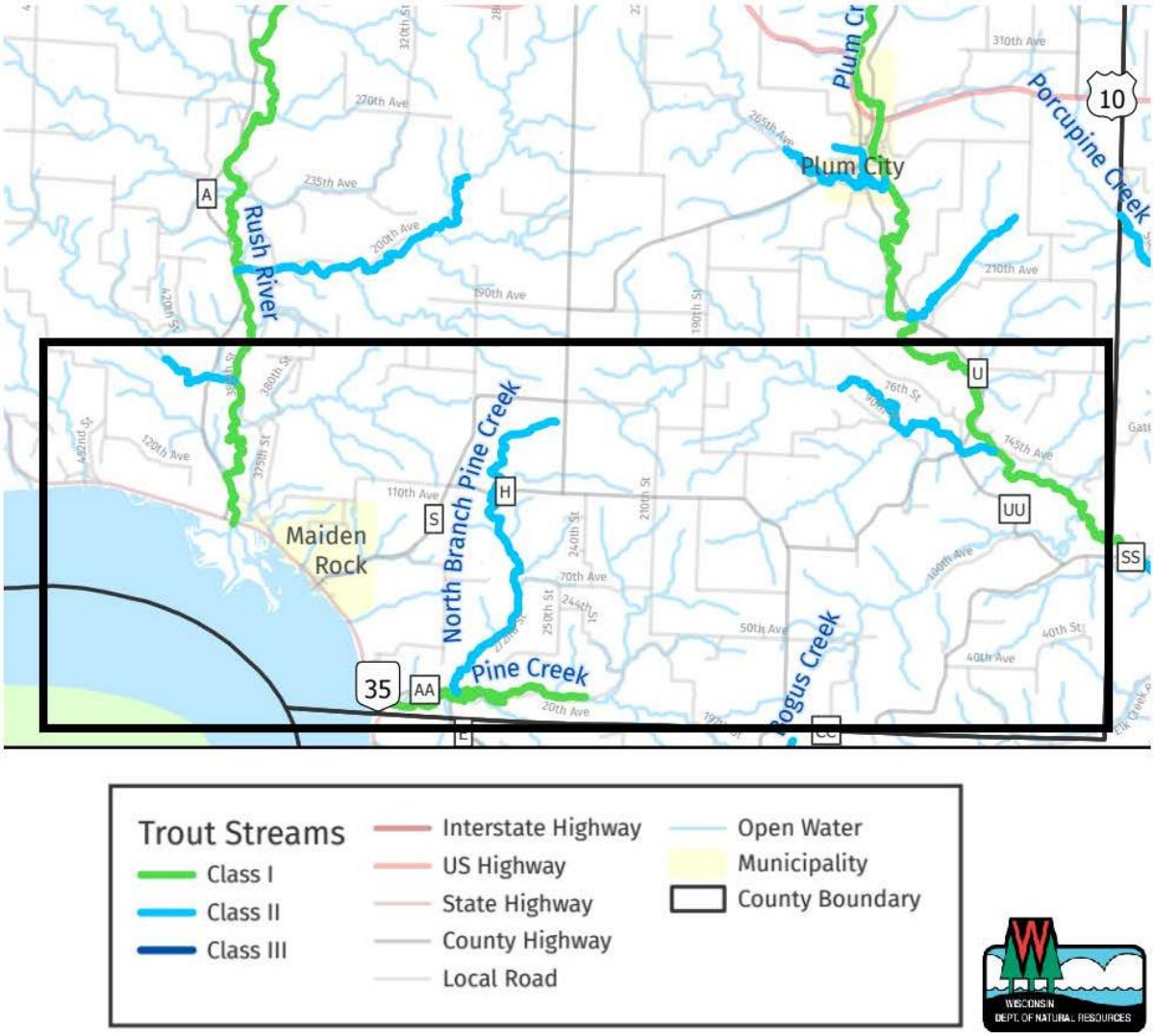
Conservation Partnerships

The Town supports landowners who enroll acreage in state and federal land preservation programs. By partnering with land conservation entities, the Town ensures that its streams, aquifers, and woodlands are managed using the latest environmental standards.

Rivers and Creeks

The waters of the Rush River, Pine Creek, and Plum Creek are home to many species of fish with a reputation as popular trout streams. They support diverse aquatic communities including thousands of species of fauna and flora.

Trout Streams



Agricultural & Natural Resources Goal

"To sustain the Town of Maiden Rock's rural agricultural heritage by protecting the economic viability of its agricultural lands and the integrity of its iconic natural landscapes including bluffs, woodlands, and waterways through responsible land stewardship, the prevention of incompatible development, and the promotion of a diversified, conservation-minded rural economy. The Town will also promote sustainable land management and a diverse agricultural environment that welcomes traditional farming alongside innovative ag-enterprises and cottage industries. The Town of Maiden Rock will also protect our natural resources including bluffs, vistas, wetlands, groundwater, and woodlands."

Agricultural & Natural Resources Objectives

- Maintain a policy where the new residential or commercial development is directed toward non-prime agricultural land or areas designated for future development.
- Protect groundwater and surface water by ensuring that watersheds are protected from pollutants, including harmful pathogens, bacteria, or nutrients (phosphorus/nitrogen). Work with the WDNR to monitor any new or expanded agriculture facilities to ensure compliance.
- The Town will support and allow "Ag-Tourism" growth including orchards and vineyards and other specialty crops, farm-to-table events, seasonal markets, home-based businesses, camping, community gardens, biking, hiking and other events and venues that support the rural atmosphere of our community. The Town of Maiden Rock may require special or conditional use permits to regulate these activities and protect public health, welfare, safety, property and the environment. The permittee will pay the cost of any required mitigation, remediation or operational modification.
- Support acreage enrolled in state/federal preservation programs.
- Partner with other land conservation entities to further protect and improve our agricultural lands, wetlands, prairies, forests, streams, and aquifers. In addition, Maiden Rock Township is committed to establishing good habitat for game species, migratory birds, and pollinator insects.
- Work with farmers and all available resources to encourage best land use practices like cover cropping, contour stripping, no-till, crop rotation, water conservation, and digestion / best practice manure management. The Town has also previously adopted a CAFO ordinance. (see appendix)
- Work with various entities to protect environmental resources including the bluffs, shoreland, our Rustic Road, woodlands, and wildlife, the aesthetic nature of the rural Maiden Rock Township.

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Agricultural Resources

Agricultural land is the dominant use in the Town of Maiden Rock, with the uplands supporting row crop production (corn and soybeans primarily) and some livestock operations. The Town's soils range from prime Class I–II soils on the upland flats to steep, erosion-prone slopes on the bluff faces. Farmland preservation and protection of prime agricultural soils from non-farm development is a central goal of this plan.

Farmland Classification

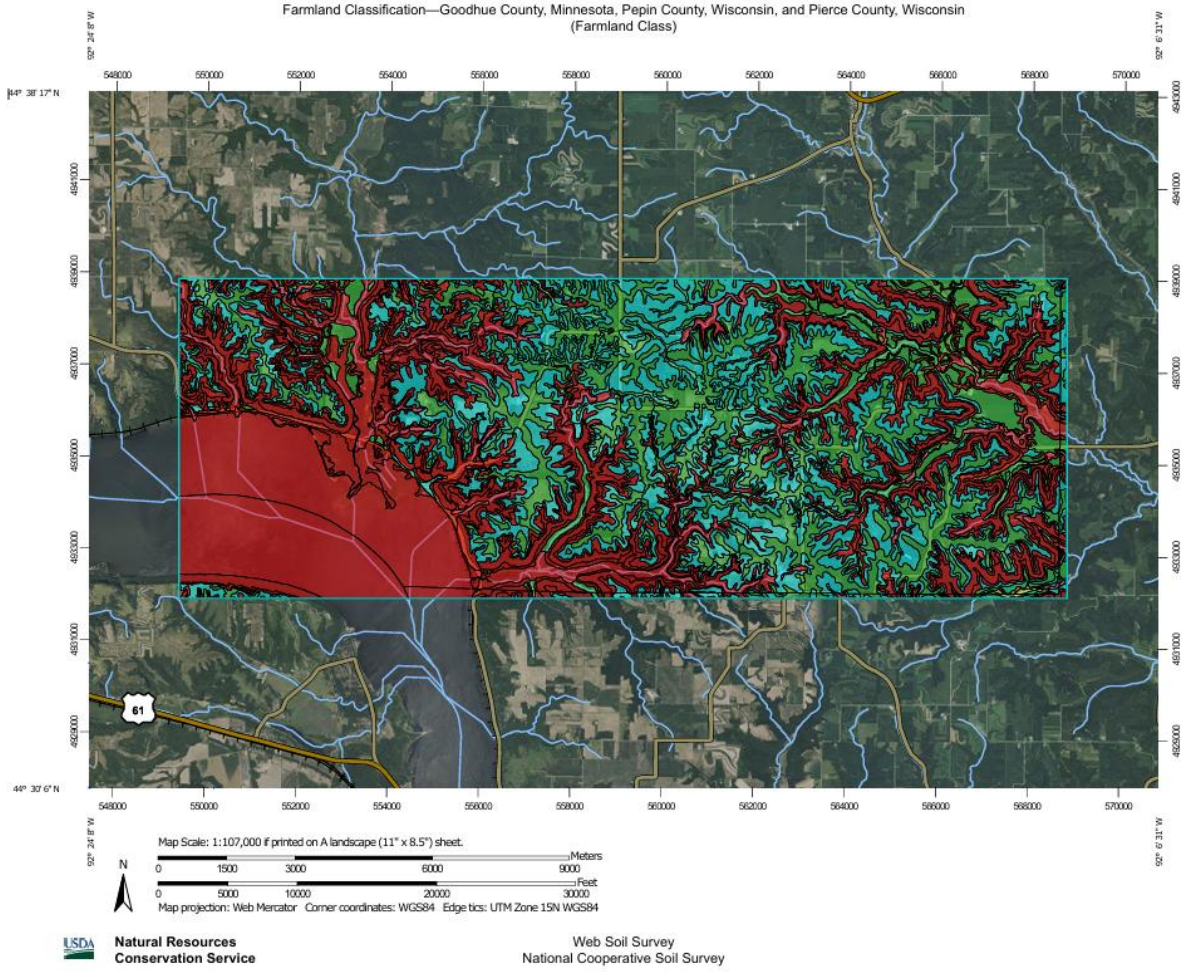
State and federal agencies have classified farmland into the following main groups:

1. Prime Farmland, land best suited for agriculture as defined by its soil and climatic properties;
2. Unique Farmland, land well-suited for specific crop production; and
3. Farmland of Statewide Importance, land suited for production, but lacking some of the criteria for prime classification.
4. Not Prime Farmland

The map below shows the farmland classification for the Town of Maiden Rock. It can be seen that the classification corresponds largely to the topography with ridgetops interspersed with valleys and bottomlands. This results in a complex intermingling of different types of farmland, based upon slope. Three colors are represented in the map. Dark green is Prime Farmland, which has a 2-6% slope. This is the best land, found on ridgetops and valley bottoms. Blue is "Farmland of Statewide Importance" (see definition above) with slopes from 6 to 12%. Slopes toward the upper end of this range require special care to avoid severe soil erosion and tractor rollovers. Red is Not Prime Farmland and is found on the steep slopes (12-20%) and blufflands along the valleys. These areas are also where the woodlands are concentrated.

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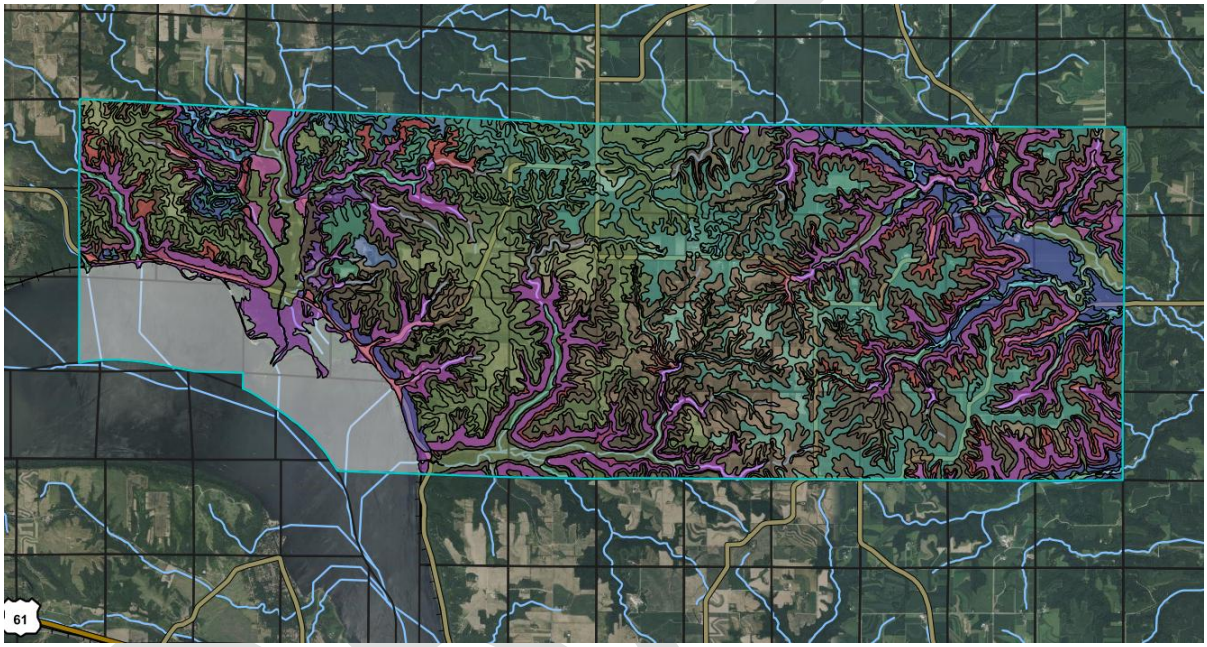
Map - Farmland Classification



Map - Agricultural Resources / Soil Type Detailed

Maiden Rock has rich agricultural land that supports the production of various crops. Pepin, Seaton, and Hersey silt loams comprise the most productive farmland. However, some of these are found on slopes with a high risk of erosion. A significant portion of the land is also in the Dorerton, very stony-Elbaville complex, a highly erosive soil with 30 to 60 percent slopes, common in the Driftless Area.

Soil units are assigned an alphanumeric code as seen in the table below. This table below lists the principal soil types found in Maiden Rock. Details and maps of the soil units for any particular farm are best viewed at a smaller scale on the USDA's Web Soil Survey at https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx



MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)
- Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils

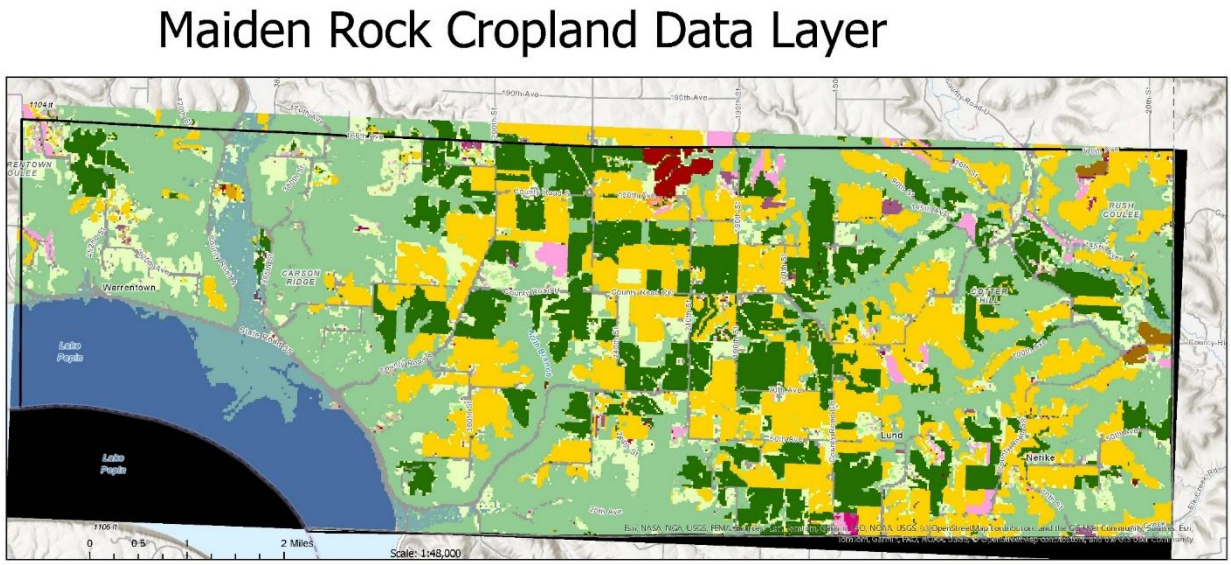
Soil Rating Polygons
- eolian deposits over loamy till
- loamy alluvium and/or stratified loamy and sandy colluvium
- loamy alluvium over sandy alluvium over stratified loamy to sandy alluvium
- loamy alluvium over sandy and gravelly outwash
- loamy slope alluvium over loess
- loess
- loess over brown clayey pedisediment over loamy residuum weathered from dolomite
- loess over clayey pedisediment derived from dolomite over loamy residuum weathered from dolomite
- loess over clayey pedisediment derived from dolomite over skeletal loamy residuum weathered from dolomite
- sandy alluvium
- sandy outwash
- silty alluvium
- silty alluvium over sandy and gravelly outwash
- silty alluvium over stratified sandy and silty alluvium
- silty and loamy alluvium over stratified sandy and silty alluvium
- silty slope alluvium
- stratified loamy alluvium over sandy alluvium
- loamy alluvium over sandy outwash
- loamy alluvium over siliceous sandy alluvium
- loamy colluvium derived from dolomite
- loamy eolian deposits over loamy till
- loamy slope alluvium over gravelly loamy melt-out till
- loess over loamy till
- mantle of mixed loess and loamy slope alluvium over Skeletal materail from fragmental loamy colluvium derived from dolomite
- mixed sandy alluvium
- outwash
- sandstone

Summary by Map Unit — Pierce County, Wisconsin (WI093)

Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
125C2	Pepin silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loess over clayey pedisediment derived from dolomite over skeletal loamy residuum weathered from dolomite	4,623.90	16.00%
1125F	Dorerton, very stony-Elbaville complex, 30 to 60 percent slopes	mantle of mixed loess and loamy slope alluvium over Skeletal materail from fragmental loamy colluvium derived from dolomite	3,302.40	11.40%
826B2	Hersey silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loess over loamy till	3,049.10	10.60%
115C2	Seaton silt loam, driftless ridge, 6 to 12 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loess	2,624.00	9.10%
W	Water		2,599.10	9.00%
125D2	Pepin silt loam, 12 to 20 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loess over clayey pedisediment derived from dolomite over skeletal loamy residuum weathered from dolomite	2,436.30	8.40%
115B	Seaton silt loam, driftless ridge, 2 to 6 percent slopes	loess	1,175.30	4.10%
1648A	Northbend-Ettrick silt loams, 0 to 3 percent slopes, frequently flooded	loamy alluvium over siliceous sandy alluvium	887.7	3.10%
316B2	Ella silt loam, 1 to 6 percent slopes, moderately eroded	silty alluvium over stratified sandy and silty alluvium	669.6	2.30%
125E2	Pepin silt loam, 20 to 30 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loess over clayey pedisediment derived from dolomite over skeletal loamy residuum weathered from dolomite	646.9	2.20%
144D2	Newglarus silt loam, deep, 12 to 20 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loess over clayey pedisediment derived from dolomite over loamy residuum weathered from dolomite	607.4	2.10%
511F	Plainfield sand, river valley, 15 to 60 percent slopes	sandy outwash	456.4	1.60%
116E2	Churchtown silt loam, 20 to 30 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loamy slope alluvium over loess	428.4	1.50%
892B	Chaseburg silt loam, till plain, 1 to 6 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	silty alluvium	438	1.50%
125B2	Pepin silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loess over clayey pedisediment derived from dolomite over skeletal loamy residuum weathered from dolomite	393.7	1.40%
313F	Plumcreek silt loam, 20 to 45 percent slopes	silty and loamy alluvium over stratified sandy and silty alluvium	417.5	1.40%
826C2	Hersey silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loess over loamy till	402.2	1.40%
144E2	Newglarus silt loam, deep, 20 to 30 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loess over clayey pedisediment derived from dolomite over loamy residuum weathered from dolomite	389.5	1.30%
116D2	Churchtown silt loam, 12 to 20 percent slopes, moderately eroded	loamy slope alluvium over loess	345.2	1.20%

Figure - Farmland Classification and Crop Land

The map below shows the most current cropland data as of 2026. Although this changes from year to year due to rotation, the map gives a good picture of the mix of crops currently in production. It is seen that corn and soybeans are the dominant crops, with some hay and alfalfa production. Pasture and grasslands, including CRP, are also present but in much smaller amounts over the landscape.

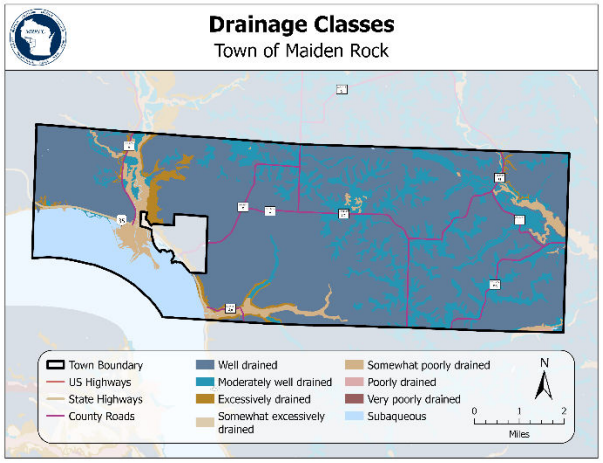


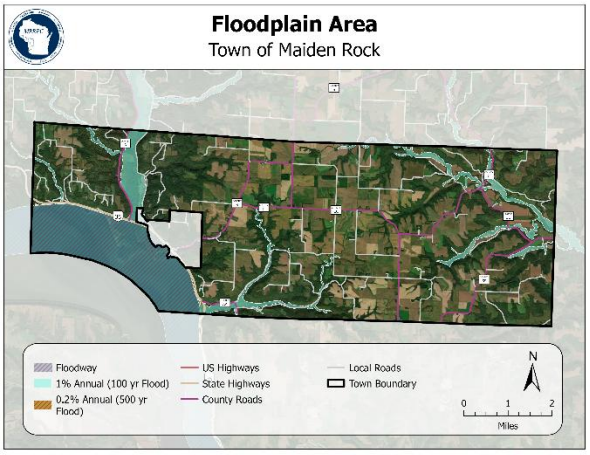
Natural Resources

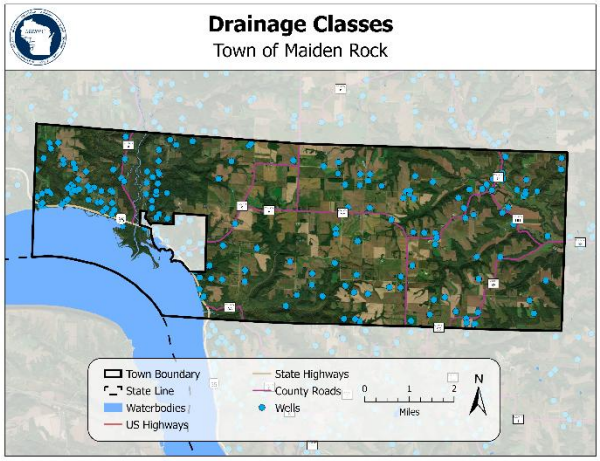
Forests and Wildlife Habitat

The Town of Maiden Rock's forested areas are concentrated primarily on the steep bluffs along the Mississippi River corridor and in wooded coulees between agricultural fields. The Town is entirely in the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape and is characterized by its lack of glacial features. It is part of the region called the "Driftless Area" because it lacks glacial deposits. The topography is unique in the state due to the long periods of erosion that have created dissected ridges, steep-sided valleys, and extensive stream networks with dendritic drainage patterns. The landscape and is more forested than the rest of southern Wisconsin." These forests provide critical habitat for migratory birds, white-tailed deer, wild turkey, and a variety of songbird species. The town supports voluntary enrollment in USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and CREP agreements to maintain forest cover and riparian buffers. The Wisconsin DNR has identified the Maiden Rock Bluff State Natural Area (approximately 4 miles south of the village) as a significant natural area.

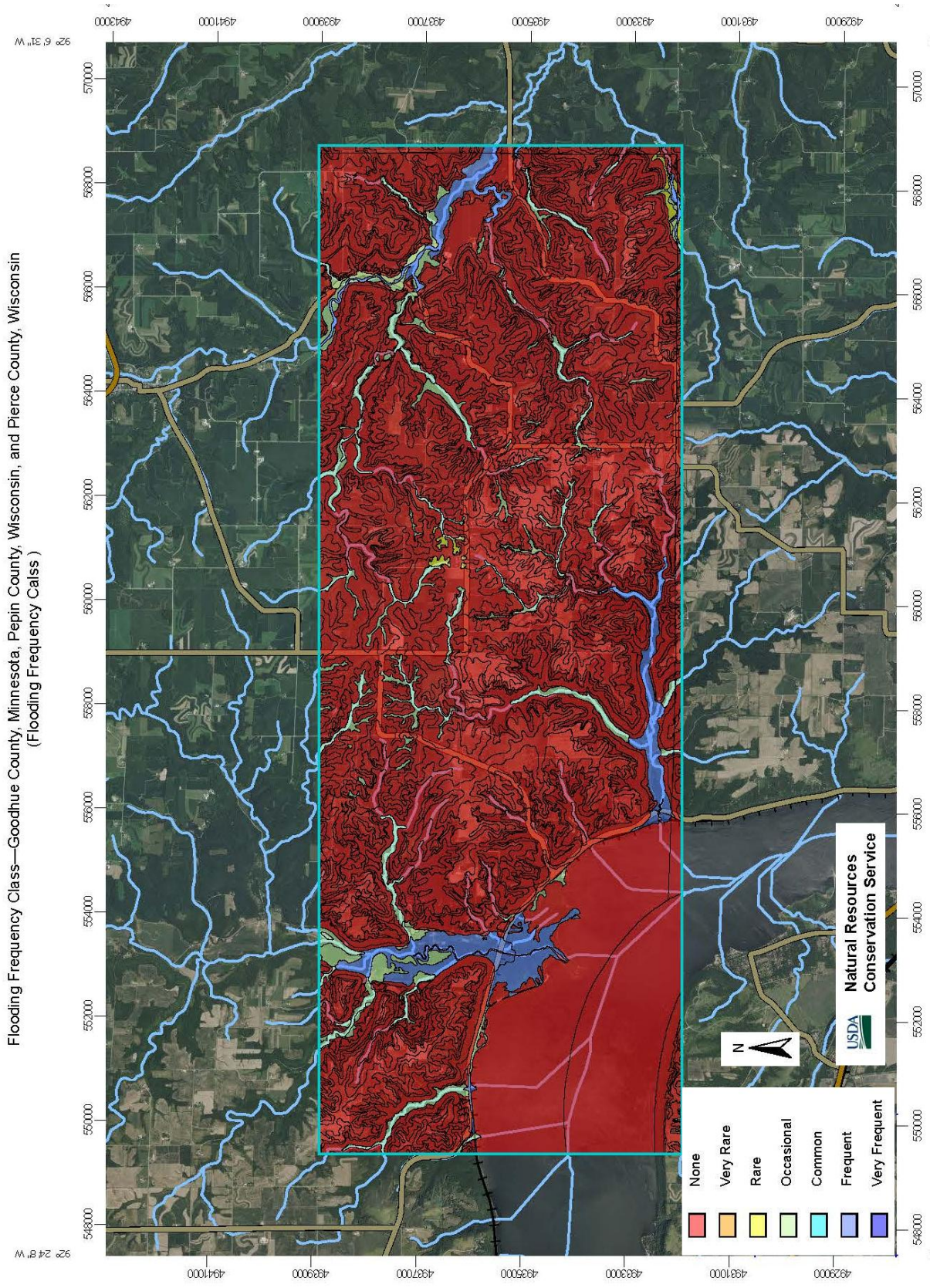
Wetlands, Floodplains, and Environmentally Sensitive Areas







Map - Flood Frequency



Flood Frequencies Definitions

"None" means that flooding is not probable. The chance of flooding is nearly 0 percent in any year. Flooding occurs less than once in 500 years.

"Very rare" means that flooding is very unlikely but possible under extremely unusual weather conditions. The chance of flooding is less than 1 percent in any year.

"Rare" means that flooding is unlikely but possible under unusual weather conditions. The chance of flooding is 1 to 5 percent in any year.

"Occasional" means that flooding occurs infrequently under normal weather conditions. The chance of flooding is 5 to 50 percent in any year.

"Frequent" means that flooding is likely to occur often under normal weather conditions. The chance of flooding is more than 50 percent in any year but is less than 50 percent in all months in any year.

"Very frequent" means that flooding is likely to occur very often under normal weather conditions. The chance of flooding is more than 50 percent in all months of any year.

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Threatened and Endangered Species

The Wisconsin DNR maintains records of threatened and endangered (T&E) species occurrences in Pierce County, including several bird species and plant communities associated with the bluff prairies and river bottomlands. Bluff prairies in Pierce County support rare species including pasque flower and prairie dropseed. The Mississippi River corridor is an Important Bird Area (IBA) recognized by Audubon Minnesota/Wisconsin. Development proposals near bluff areas or along the river corridor should be evaluated for potential impacts on T&E species through coordination with the DNR's Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI).

Metallic and Nonmetallic Resources

No active metallic mining operations are present within the Town of Maiden Rock. Nonmetallic mineral resources (sand, gravel, limestone) occur in the county, there is one "active quarry" on County Road S, just outside the village of Maiden Rock—limestone rock is blasted and occasionally ground for road use. A former industrial sand mining operation is also located along Hwy 35 (see Brown Field / Environmental Sites in the Economic Development element). Should any mining proposals arise, they would be subject to review by the Town Board using the guidelines established in the Land Use section of this document as well as Pierce County's zoning ordinance and Wisconsin's nonmetallic mining reclamation program (NR 135).

Cultural and Historical Resources

The Town of Maiden Rock has a rich cultural and historical heritage. The Maiden Rock bluff itself is the site of the Dakota legend of Winona and is part of a Wisconsin State Natural Area. The Town's European settlement history—primarily Scandinavian (Swedish and Norwegian) and German—is reflected in the historic farmsteads, rural churches, and cemeteries that remain. The unincorporated communities of Nerike and Warrentown within the town reflect early settlement patterns. The town will work with the Pierce County Historical Society and the Wisconsin Historical Society to identify, document, and protect significant cultural and historical resources.

Recreational Resources and Open Spaces

The Town's recreational assets include Lake Pepin (boating, fishing, swimming, birdwatching), Rustic Road #51 and Pine Creek, a Class 1 Trout Stream, the Great River State Trail (hiking, cycling), the Maiden Rock Bluff State Natural Area (hiking, nature observation), and agricultural landscapes offering hunting opportunities. The Great River Road National Scenic Byway provides a framework for scenic driving, cycling, and heritage tourism. The Town will support the Mississippi River Parkway Commission's regional recreational planning efforts and will seek to maintain and enhance existing public access points along Lake Pepin.

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Economic Development

Economic development element. *A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion, of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in the local governmental unit, including an analysis of the labor force and economic base of the local governmental unit. The element shall assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the local governmental unit's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, and shall designate an adequate number of sites for such businesses and industries. The element shall also evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The element shall also identify county, regional and state economic development programs that apply to the local governmental unit.*

Source Wisconsin Statute 66.1001: Comprehensive Planning

Economic Development Overview

The Town's economic development focus is to build a "service-neutral" economy by prioritizing small-scale, high-value enterprises that complement the Town's rural identity tourism, and small businesses without straining public taxpayer resources or available assets and services. The Town's vision is to stay away from high-intensity industrial or larger developments. Instead, the focus will be on a resilient, low-impact local economy.

Key elements for future economic development are small enterprises and ag-tourism. The Town will utilize Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) and specific licensing to evaluate these businesses, ensuring they contribute to the economy without degrading local roads or infrastructure. The community has also expressed an interest in maintaining a rural atmosphere and tranquility.

New developments must be "service-neutral," meaning they cannot require municipal water, sewer, or an increase in full-time emergency services (police/fire). Any necessary infrastructure upgrades—such as new roads or reinforcement, power, or internet expansion—must be funded by the business, not the Town's general fund.

To ensure that economic growth does not come at the cost of the Town's character, new or expanding businesses must prove they will not negatively impact:

- The Environment: Protecting watersheds and natural assets.
- Sensory Impact: Monitoring and mitigating noise levels and light pollution.
- Operations: Managing traffic flow to preserve the "quiet" rural quality of life.

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Economic Development Goal

"To cultivate a resilient, low-impact local economy that prioritizes agricultural viability and small-scale enterprise, ensuring that new commercial and residential growth is paced and placed to protect the Town's fiscal health, natural resources, and rural identity without requiring the expansion of high-intensity urban services."

Economic Development Objectives

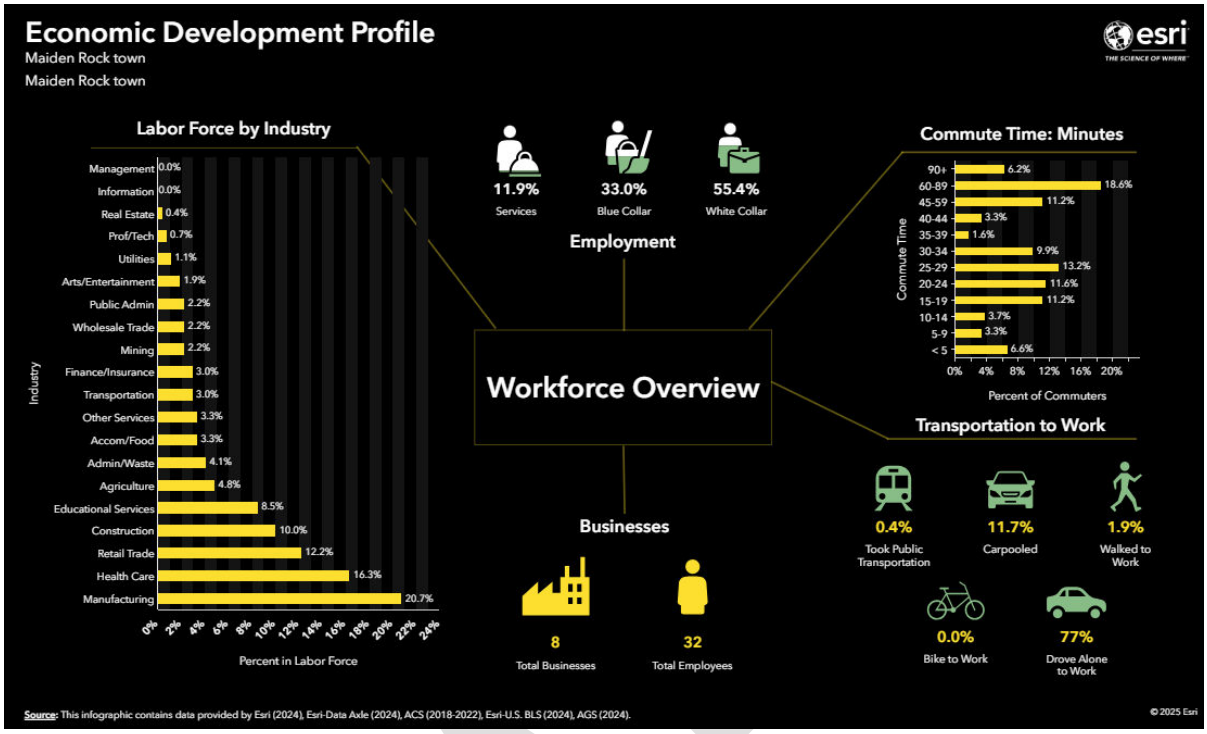
- Encourage the growth of small businesses, agriculture, and ag-tourism as a source of economic development. This would include supporting modestly sized businesses like breweries, wineries, pizza farms, farm-to-table dining, bed and breakfasts, camping, event venues, and artisan studios. By using conditional use permits, or other permits and licenses for businesses, the Town hopes to grow and support the rural economy of the Town of Maiden Rock while preserving our roads and infrastructure.

- Support fiscal sustainability and service management by restricting new commercial or industrial developments to those that are "service-neutral" - meaning they do not require municipal water, sewer, or increased full-time police/fire presence.

- Review any commercial permit application for new or expanding businesses or development to ensure the proposed use can be supported by existing infrastructure including roads and road maintenance, power, communication and internet, and emergency services. Required new infrastructure or maintenance or repair of existing infrastructure shall be the responsibility of the business.

- New and expanding businesses shall not negatively impact the environment, noise levels, light pollution, traffic, and quality of life in the Town.

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Environmental Considerations

The Town has no known Environmental Considerations that appear on the Wisconsin DNR Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System.

Brown Field / Environmental Sites

The Town of Maiden Rock has a relatively limited brownfield inventory compared to urbanized Wisconsin communities, consistent with its rural, agricultural character and the absence of heavy industrial history. No sites within the Town are listed on the EPA National Priorities List (Superfund). The only primary environmental site of note is the industrial sand mining operation along Hwy 35, which does not present as an environmental concern.

Economic Analysis and Future Opportunities

The Town of Maiden Rock's economic strengths include its scenic natural assets (Lake Pepin, bluffs, Great River Road), its agricultural heritage, and its proximity to the Twin Cities metro area (within day-trip distance). Ag-tourism opportunities—wineries, orchards, farm-to-table dining, bed and breakfasts, event venues—represent the highest-priority economic development category given the Town's character and infrastructure constraints. The Wisconsin average price of agricultural land was $6,363/acre in 2024 (up 7% from 2023), indicating continued strong demand for farmland and increasing value of the Town's agricultural base. Future opportunities include expanded ag-tourism along the Hwy 35 corridor, small-scale food processing (value-added ag products), remote work-friendly residential development, and potential small-scale solar energy on agricultural land.

Strengths and Weaknesses for Business Attraction and Retention

The Town of Maiden Rock's position along the Mississippi River Great River Road National Scenic Byway provides a foundation for tourism-based economic development. The Town's "service-neutral" economic development policy means that only businesses that can operate without requiring municipal water, sewer, or expanded emergency services are appropriate for the Town. This positions the Town favorably for low-impact rural enterprises: ag-tourism, artisan businesses, bed and breakfasts, and outdoor recreation outfitters. Any brownfield or contaminated sites within the own should be identified and evaluated for potential redevelopment consistent with the economic development goals of this plan.

Alignment with Broader Economic Plans

The Town of Maiden Rock's economic development goals align with several regional and state planning documents: the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on agricultural preservation and rural economic development; the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission's regional economic strategies; the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) rural economic development programs; and the Mississippi River Parkway Commission's Great River Road tourism plan. The Town will monitor and engage with WEDC rural grant programs, USDA Rural Development programs, and Wisconsin's Main Street and Rural Economic Development initiatives as appropriate.

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Intergovernmental Cooperation

> ***Intergovernmental cooperation element***. *A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, for sighting and building public facilities and sharing public services. The element shall analyze the relationship of the local governmental unit to school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, and to the region, the state and other governmental units. The element shall consider, to the greatest extent possible, the maps and plans of any military base or installation, with at least 200 assigned military personnel or that contains at least 2,000 acres, with which the local governmental unit shares common territory. The element shall incorporate any plans or agreements to which the local governmental unit is a party under s. 66.0301, 66.0307 or 66.0309. The element shall identify existing or potential conflicts between the local governmental unit and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.*
>
> *Source Wisconsin Statute 66.1001: Comprehensive Planning*

Intergovernmental cooperation Overview

Intergovernmental Cooperation for the Town of Maiden Rock will focus on leveraging partnerships to lower costs, protect shared natural resources, and ensure the township has reliable access to essential services through regional collaboration.

The Town will build and strengthen our relationship with the Village of Maiden Rock, Pierce County, the State and neighboring jurisdictions. The aim is to achieve economies of scale in public services while maintaining a unified front in land-use planning to protect the region's rural character and natural assets.

Advisory Committee

Allow the Board or an appointed committee to work with the Village and County. This group will review shared services and development proposals to ensure the Town's interests are protected.

Conflict Resolution

Implement formal policies to resolve discrepancies regarding annexations, new developments, and zoning enforcement—with a specific emphasis on protecting bluff lands, scenic vistas and shorelands.

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Comprehensive Agreements

Proactively develop and renew agreements, contracts, and access for Town residents for essential services provided jointly, including:

- Emergency Services: Fire, Law Enforcement, and EMS.
- Community Assets: Libraries, schools, parks, cemeteries, and recreational facilities.
- Utilities: Ensuring stable access to power, phone, internet and other vital utilities.

Equipment Sharing

Explore agreements with the Village, County, or neighboring towns to share heavy machinery and labor for road/trail maintenance, mowing, and brush chipping. This reduces the need for the Town to own and maintain expensive, low-use equipment.

Propose scheduled meetings between the Town Board, Village Board, County, and School District to sync infrastructure projects and manage their combined fiscal impact on taxpayers.

The Great River Road

Coordinate directly with the Mississippi River Parkway Commission and WisDOT. Focus on maintaining signage, road quality, and scenic vistas to ensure the Great River Road remains a viable driver for local tourism.

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Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal

"To maintain a seamless network of communication and partnership with the Village of Maiden Rock, Pierce County, and neighboring jurisdictions to achieve economies of scale in public services, ensure consistent land-use planning that protects our shared rural character, and provide high-quality emergency and law enforcement services through collaborative resource management."

Intergovernmental Cooperation Objectives

- The Town of Maiden Rock should strengthen the role of the Town Board by serving as/or establishing an advisory committee(s) to work with the Village of Maiden Rock and Pierce County to review all shared services and development proposals that could impact the Town.

- The Town, Village, and Pierce County should have a policy in place to resolve potential discrepancies in proposed annexation, new development or zoning enforcement, specifically regarding bluff land and shoreland protection.

- The Town should develop, maintain and renew intergovernmental agreements and service contracts to ensure the Town has adequate fire and law enforcement, EMS services, library, schools, recreational facilities, internet, parks, utilities, cemeteries and other elements provided jointly by other communities or units of government.

- The Town of Maiden Rock should explore shared equipment agreements to see if the Town can work with the Village, County or neighboring towns to share equipment for road or trail maintenance, brush chipping, mowing etc.

- The Town of Maiden Rock should suggest regular meetings between the Town Board, Village Board, County and School District to align upcoming infrastructure projects and fiscal impacts.

- Support the Great River Road by coordinating with the Mississippi River Parkway Commission and WisDOT to ensure signage, road improvements, vistas, and stops along the Great River Road are maintained to support tourism in our community.

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Adjacent Local Governments

The Town of Maiden Rock shares borders with the Village of Maiden Rock, the Town of Stockholm (Pepin County) to the South, the Town of Pepin (Pepin County) to the South, the Town of Frankfort (Pepin County) to the East, the Town of Union (Pierce County) to the Northeast, the Town of Salem (Pierce County) to the Northwest, and the Town of Isabelle (Pierce County) to the West. Intergovernmental relationships are primarily through Pierce County, which provides a common framework for zoning, land management, highway maintenance, emergency management, and other services.

Fire Protection

Fire protection is provided by the Lund Fire District (volunteer). The Town maintains a service contract with the department and contributes to its operational funding through the annual levy. Mutual aid is available from Ellsworth, and other neighboring departments.

The fire department also serves the Village of Maiden Rock and benefits from mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments including Ellsworth, Bay City, Stockholm, and other Pierce County departments. The Town will ensure its fire service agreement remains current and that the department is adequately funded.

Emergency Medical Services

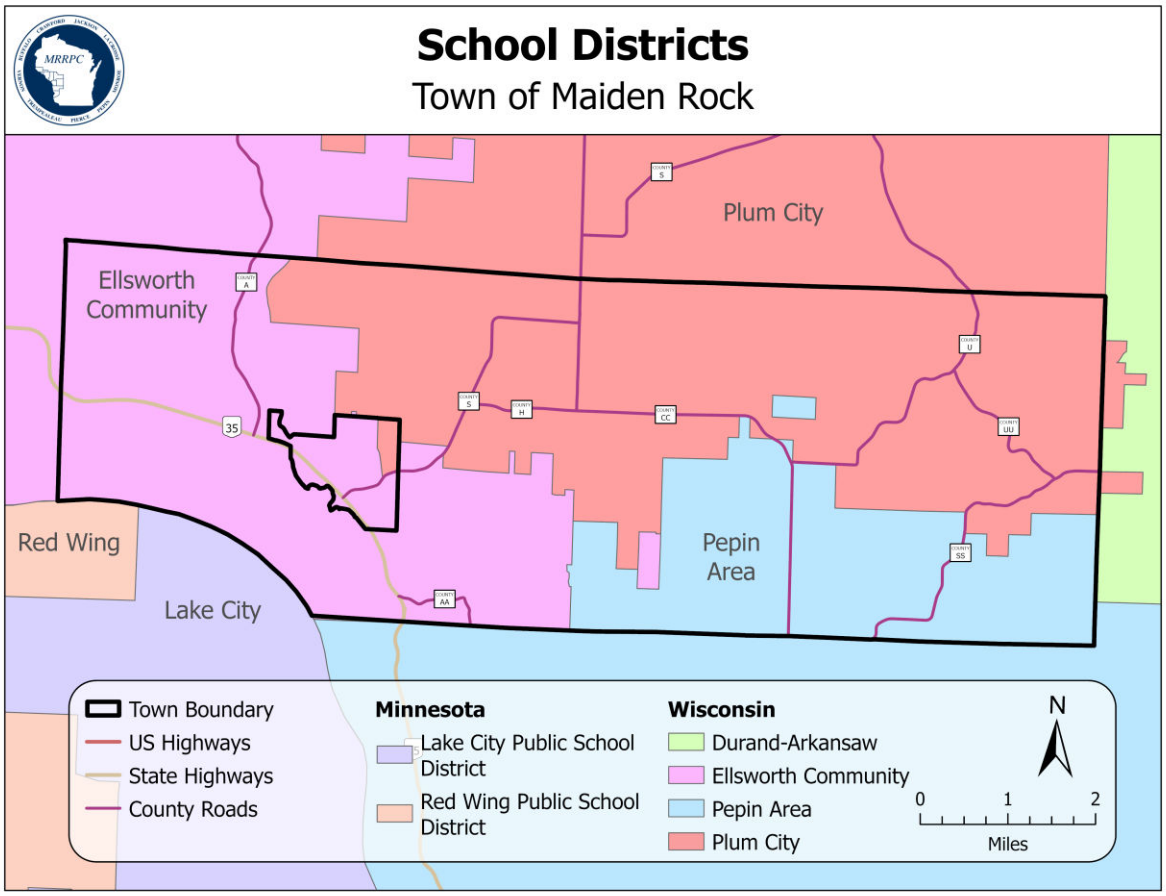
The Maiden Rock Plum City Community Ambulance Service (MRPCS Inc.) covers Maiden Rock, Plum City, and Stockholm EMS/Rescue Services—they provide EMT, 1st Responder and Basic Care to 5 municipalities in the Maiden Rock area. The service runs at least one ambulance.

School Districts

The Town of Maiden Rock is served by three school districts: Ellsworth Community School District (primary), Plum City School District, and Pepin Area School District (for portions of the Town near the Pepin County boundary Equalization values and enrollment are coordinated through Pierce County.

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Map - School District



Land Use

> ***Land-use element.*** *A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property. The element shall contain a listing of the amount, type, intensity and net density of existing uses of land in the local governmental unit, such as agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and other public and private uses. The element shall analyze trends in the supply, demand and price of land, opportunities for redevelopment and existing and potential land-use conflicts. The element shall contain projections, based on the background information specified in par. (a), for 20 years, in 5-year increments, of future residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial land uses including the assumptions of net densities or other spatial assumptions upon which the projections are based. The element shall also include a series of maps that shows current land uses and future land uses that indicate productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for building site development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, the boundaries of areas to which services of public utilities and community facilities, as those terms are used in the Utilities and community facilities element, will be provided in the future, consistent with the timetable described in Utilities and community facilities element, and the general location of future land uses by net density or other classifications.*
>
> *Source Wisconsin Statute 66.1001: Comprehensive Planning*

Land Use Overview

The Land Use strategy for Maiden Rock Township focuses on "disciplined growth"—ensuring that all new development respects the physical limits of the land and the financial limits of the town's budget.

Large-Scale Ag Siting

Commercial farming operations must be located where they won't conflict with residential areas, tourism, or sensitive resources like aquifers and surface water. See existing CAFO Operations Ordinance in Appendix E.

Topography & Wetlands

To prevent erosion and protect water quality, permanent structures are restricted on slopes exceeding 12% or within 100 feet of wetlands and environmental corridors.

Health Standards

All properties must strictly follow County well and septic regulations, with a strong emphasis on regular water testing.

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Urban Services Deflection

Businesses that require municipal water, sewer, or full-time urban police/fire are directed to locate in the Village or other nearby communities equipped for these needs.

Paced Growth

The Town reserves the right to limit the annual number of residential building permits if the rate of growth outpaces the Town's ability to maintain roads and emergency services.

Data Centers

The Town of Maiden Rock lacks the infrastructure to support a large complex like a data center. The town members have also expressed concerns. If any development is proposed, the Town would require a comprehensive review by the Town Board.

Power Generation

The Town would also reserve the right to review plans for larger solar, wind, natural gas or other means of power generation. Again, the Town members have also expressed concerns. If any development is proposed, the Town would require a comprehensive review by the Town Board.

Board Review

All new development and rezoning petitions must first be reviewed by the Town Board. This review ensures every proposal aligns with state statutes and this Comprehensive Plan before the Town Board takes a final vote.

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Land Use Goal

"To manage growth through a disciplined land use strategy that preserves the Town of Maiden Rock's agricultural foundation and natural landscapes. Ensure new development is located and designed to prevent urban-scale service demands and fiscal strain on Town taxpayers."

Land Use Objectives

- Ensure that large-scale agricultural operations are sited in areas that do not conflict with residential development, tourism, cause erosion, harm sensitive environmental resources, or pollute our wells, surface water and aquifers.

- Require businesses requiring municipal water, sewer, or full-time urban police/fire protection to consider locating in the village or another community that can better support their needs.

- Require all businesses, farms, and residences conform to County regulations for well and septic systems. The Town also encourages regular testing of well and surface water.

- Maintain the current rural character by limiting the annual number of new residential building permits if growth exceeds the Town's ability to maintain existing road and emergency service levels.

- Restrict building permits for all permanent structures on or near slopes exceeding 12% or within 100 feet of designated wetlands or environmental corridors to protect groundwater quality and prevent erosion.

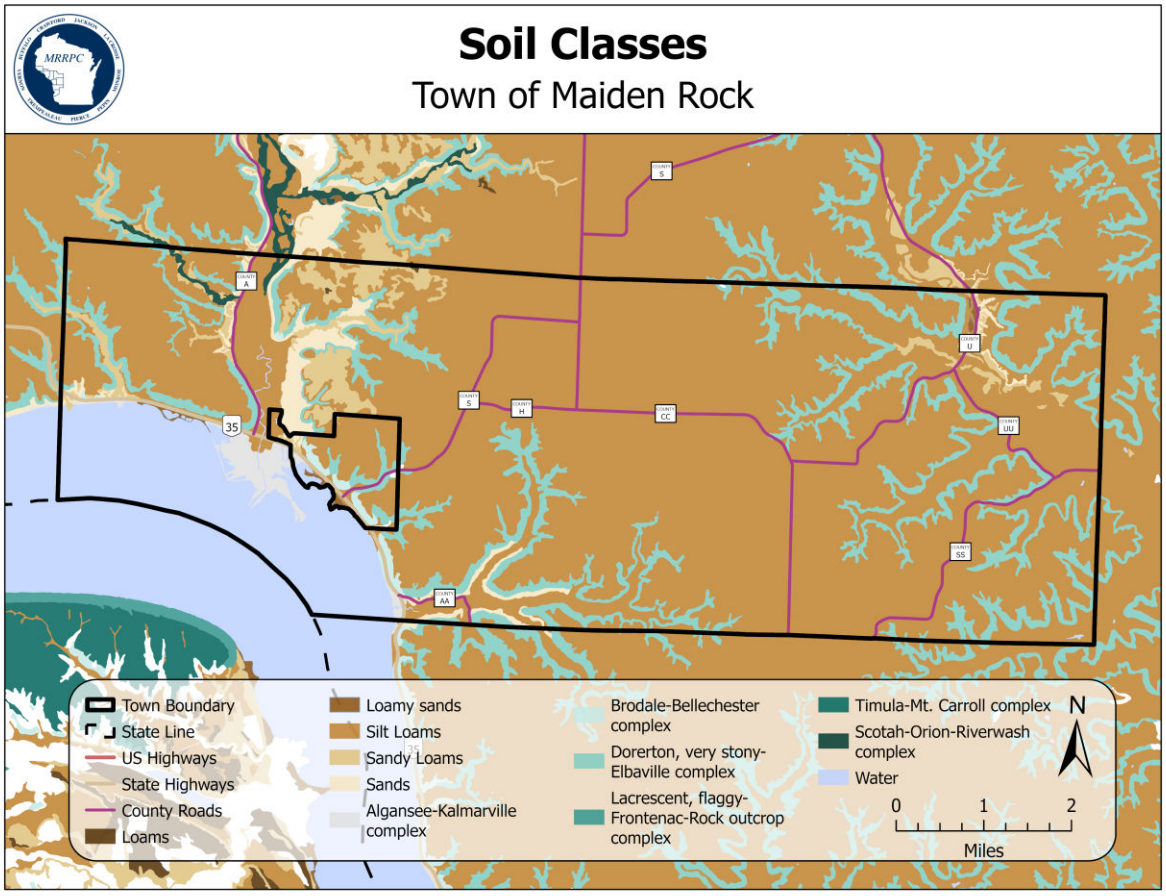
- Require all new development and rezoning petitions to be reviewed by the town board to ensure that the proposal aligns with current statutes and this plan before moving to the Town Board for a vote.

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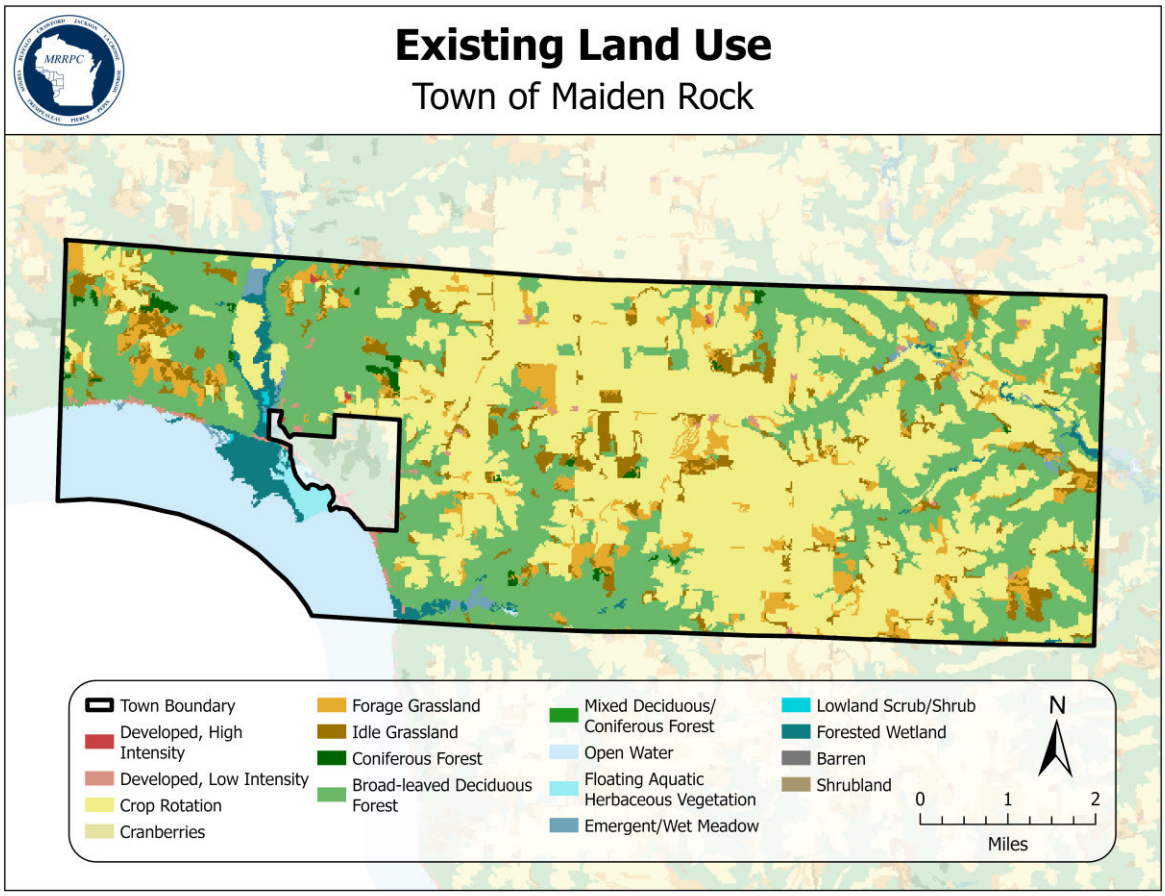
Existing Land Use

Existing land uses in the Town of Maiden Rock reflect the community's rural agricultural character. The dominant land use is agriculture (row crops and pasture), covering approximately 60–65% of the town's land area. Forested and natural areas (primarily on bluff slopes and riparian corridors) comprise approximately 20% of land area. Rural residential uses (scattered single-family homes on large lots) account for approximately 8–10%. Shoreland and floodplain along Lake Pepin accounts for approximately 4–6%. Public/quasi-public uses (town hall, cemeteries, churches) and small commercial uses (along Hwy 35) account for less than 2%.

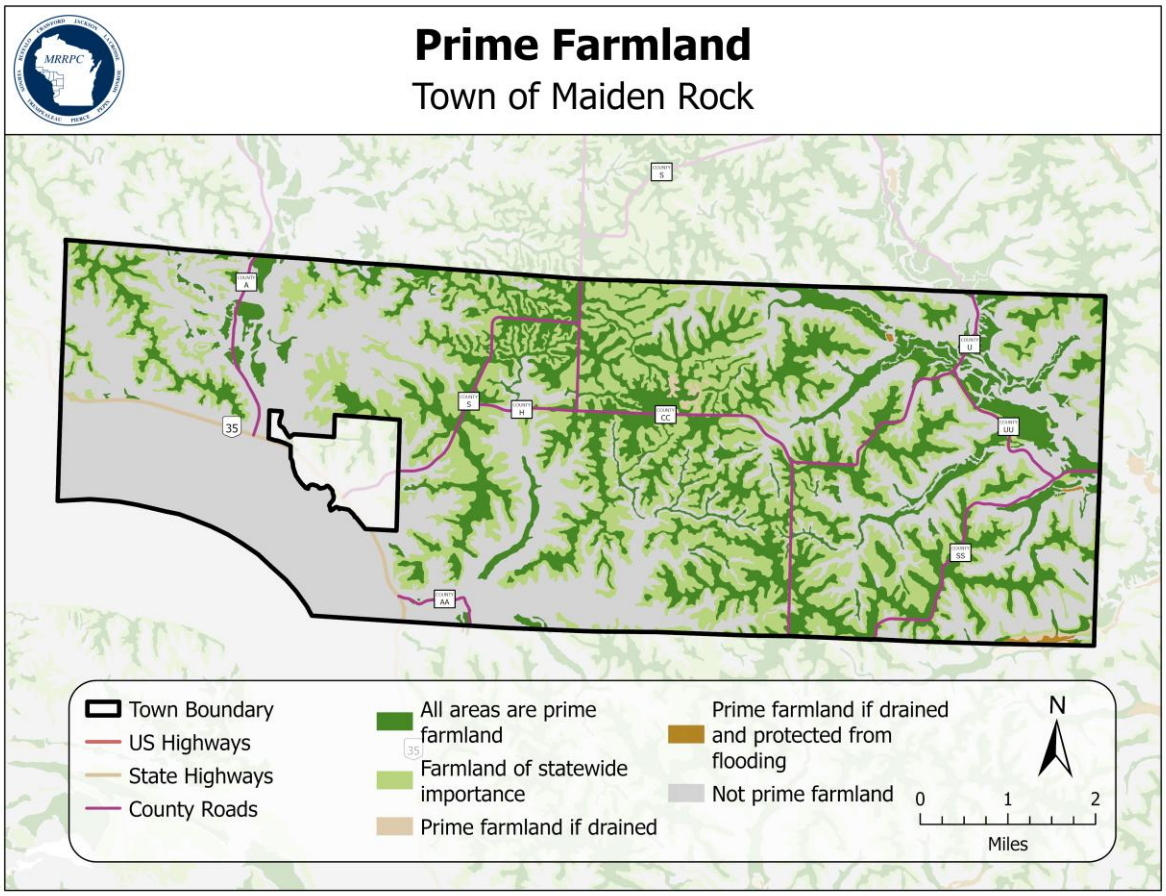
Map - Soil Classes



Map - Land Use


Existing Land Use
Town of Maiden Rock
MRRPC
Town Boundary
Developed, High Intensity
Developed, Low Intensity
Crop Rotation
Cranberries
Forage Grassland
Idle Grassland
Coniferous Forest
Broad-leaved Deciduous Forest
Mixed Deciduous/ Coniferous Forest
Open Water
Floating Aquatic Herbaceous Vegetation
Emergent/Wet Meadow
Lowland Scrub/Shrub
Forested Wetland
Barren
Shrubland
N
0
1
2
Miles

Map - Prime Farmland



Land Use Regulations / Zoning

Land use in the Town of Maiden Rock is regulated primarily through the Pierce County Zoning Ordinance, which establishes zoning districts, use regulations, and dimensional standards applicable to unincorporated areas of the county. The Town does not maintain a separate municipal zoning ordinance but does have authority to adopt local ordinances affecting land use, including the CAFO Ordinance adopted December 9, 2024. The Town will review the Pierce County Zoning Ordinance to identify any needed amendments or local ordinances to implement the policies of this plan.

Trends and Land Use Conflicts

Key land use trends and potential conflicts in the Town of Maiden Rock include: (1) recreational/seasonal property demand along Lake Pepin driving up land values and potentially converting agricultural land; (2) pressure from large-scale livestock operations (CAFOs) near sensitive environmental areas and residential properties, addressed through the 2024 CAFO Ordinance; (3) growing interest in ag-tourism and small-scale commercial activity along Hwy 35, which must be balanced against scenic corridor preservation and

resident concerns; (4) erosion and stormwater issues on steep slopes being impacted by residential development; and (5) potential solar energy installations that could conflict with scenic viewsheds. The Town Board review process is the primary tool for managing these conflicts.

Future Land Use Projections

Future land use projections for the Town of Maiden Rock are based on the Wisconsin DOA population projections, existing land use inventory, and the development policies established in this plan. Agricultural use will remain dominant. Modest residential growth is expected at the rural periphery of existing settled areas. Commercial ag-tourism uses may expand modestly along the Hwy 35 corridor subject to Town Board review.

Future Land Use Map

The zoning map on the following page depicts the Town's preferred long-term pattern of land uses including agricultural, rural residential, natural/conservation, and small-scale commercial areas.

Opportunities for Redevelopment

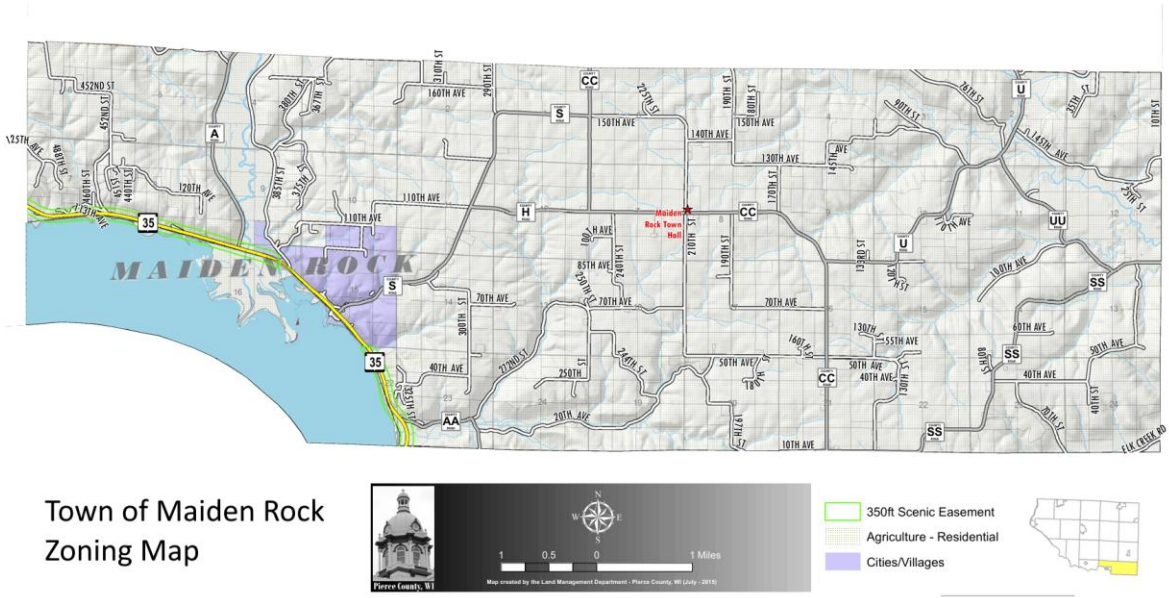
Redevelopment opportunities in the Town of Maiden Rock are limited given its rural character and low development density. However, opportunities include: (1) adaptive reuse of historic farmsteads for ag-tourism operations (bed and breakfasts, event venues, farm stays); (2) conversion of underutilized agricultural buildings to small-scale commercial or artisan studio uses; and (3) rehabilitation of any identified brownfield or contaminated sites in coordination with the Wisconsin DNR. The town will support redevelopment that is consistent with the rural character of the community and does not require expanded municipal services.

Land Use Planning Considerations

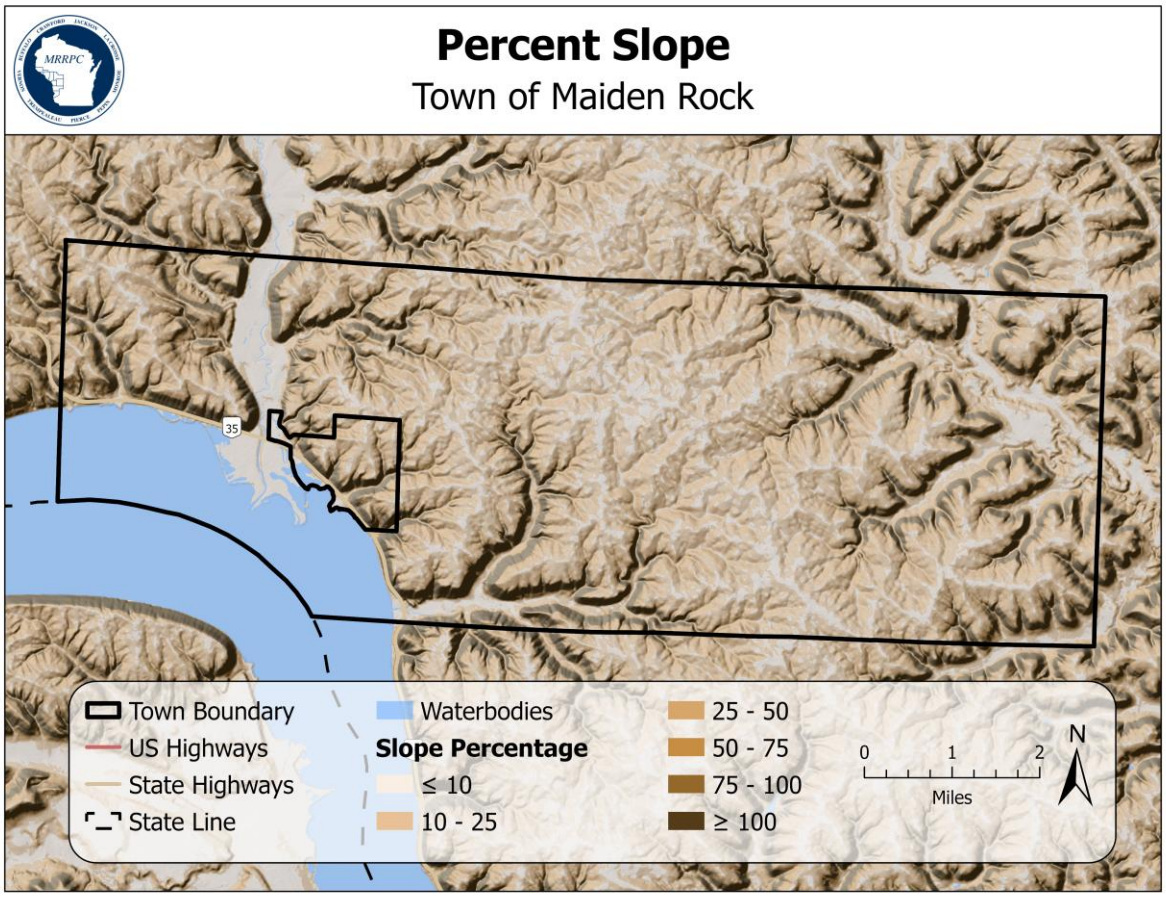
Land use planning in the Town of Maiden Rock must account for significant physical constraints that limit where development can appropriately occur. Chief among these are: steep slopes (greater than 12%) covering a large portion of the bluff areas; floodplain and shoreland areas along Lake Pepin regulated under DNR NR 115 and the Pierce County Shoreland Ordinance; wetlands regulated under state and federal law; and groundwater recharge areas associated with karst topography. All development proposals will be reviewed against these constraints by the Town Board.

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Map – Zoning / Future Land Use



Map - Slope / Topography



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Appendices

Appendix A: Public Participation Plan

DRAFT

Appendix B: Survey

1

Town of Maiden Rock

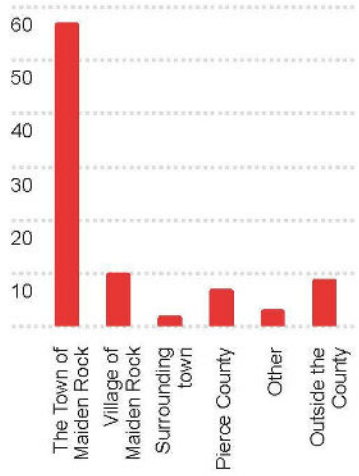
Comprehensive Plan
2025-2045

Survey



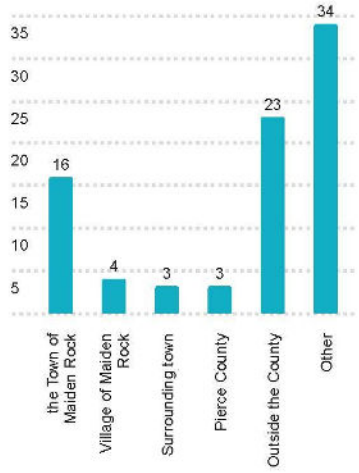
2

1. Indicate the Town, Village, or City you live in. - Selected Choice



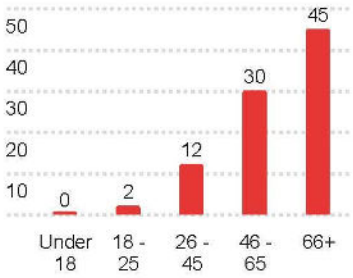
1a. Your home Zip Code?
54761
54750
54750
54750
54750
54750
54759
54769
54750
54750E
54769-8707
55089
54750
54769
54769
54769
54769
55304
54769
54769

2. Indicate the Town, Village, or City you WORK in. - Selected Choice

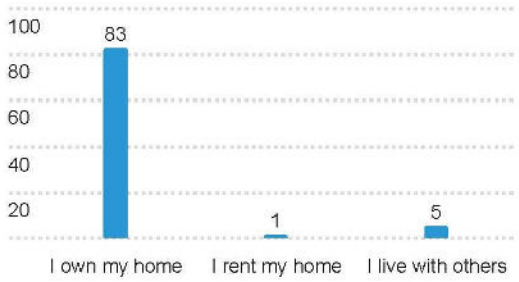


2b. Your work Zip Code?
54761
54011
55066
55066
54759
54750
54011
54014
n/a
n/a
54769
54769
55304
54769
54769
54769
54750
54750
N/A
55076

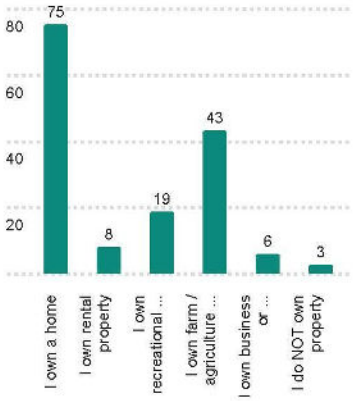
3. Your age?



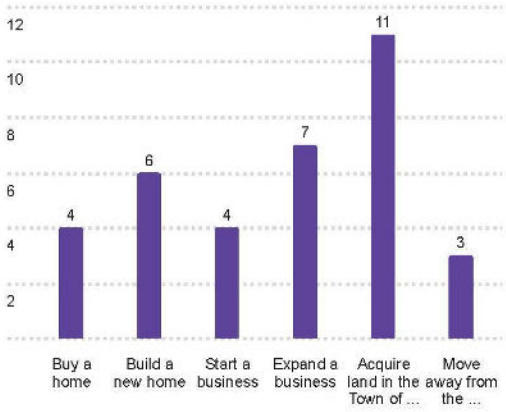
4. Do you own or rent your home?



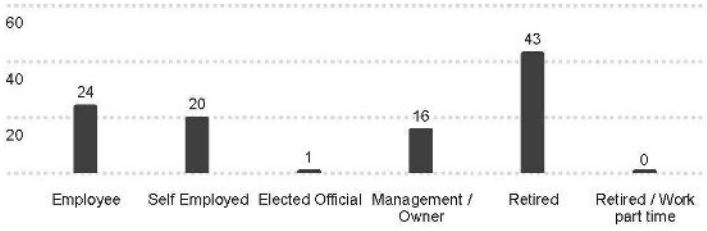
4b. Are you a property owner? (select ALL that apply)



4c. In the future I plan to?

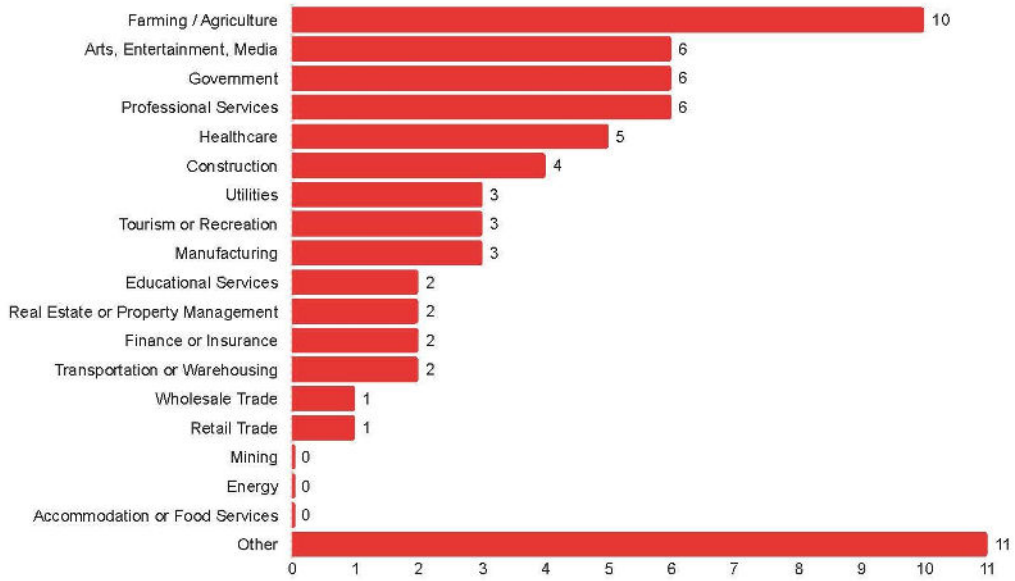


5. Your role in business? (may check more than one)



4

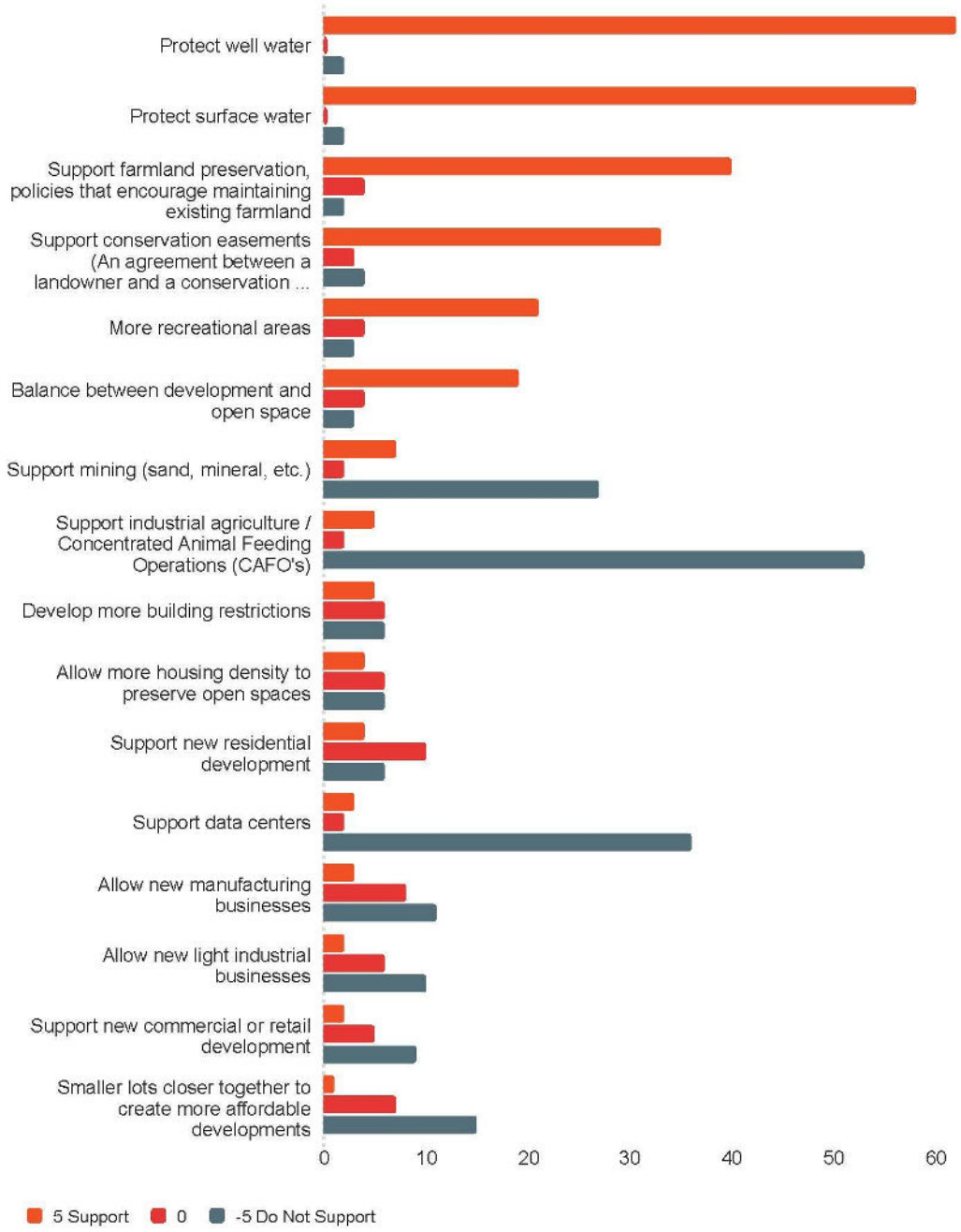
5b. Type of Job or Business you work in? - Selected Choice



Other - Text
Chef
Chef, maintenance, cleaner
Retired
Retired
Retired
retired
retired RN
tree removal

5

6. Related to land use, please rate your support of the following.

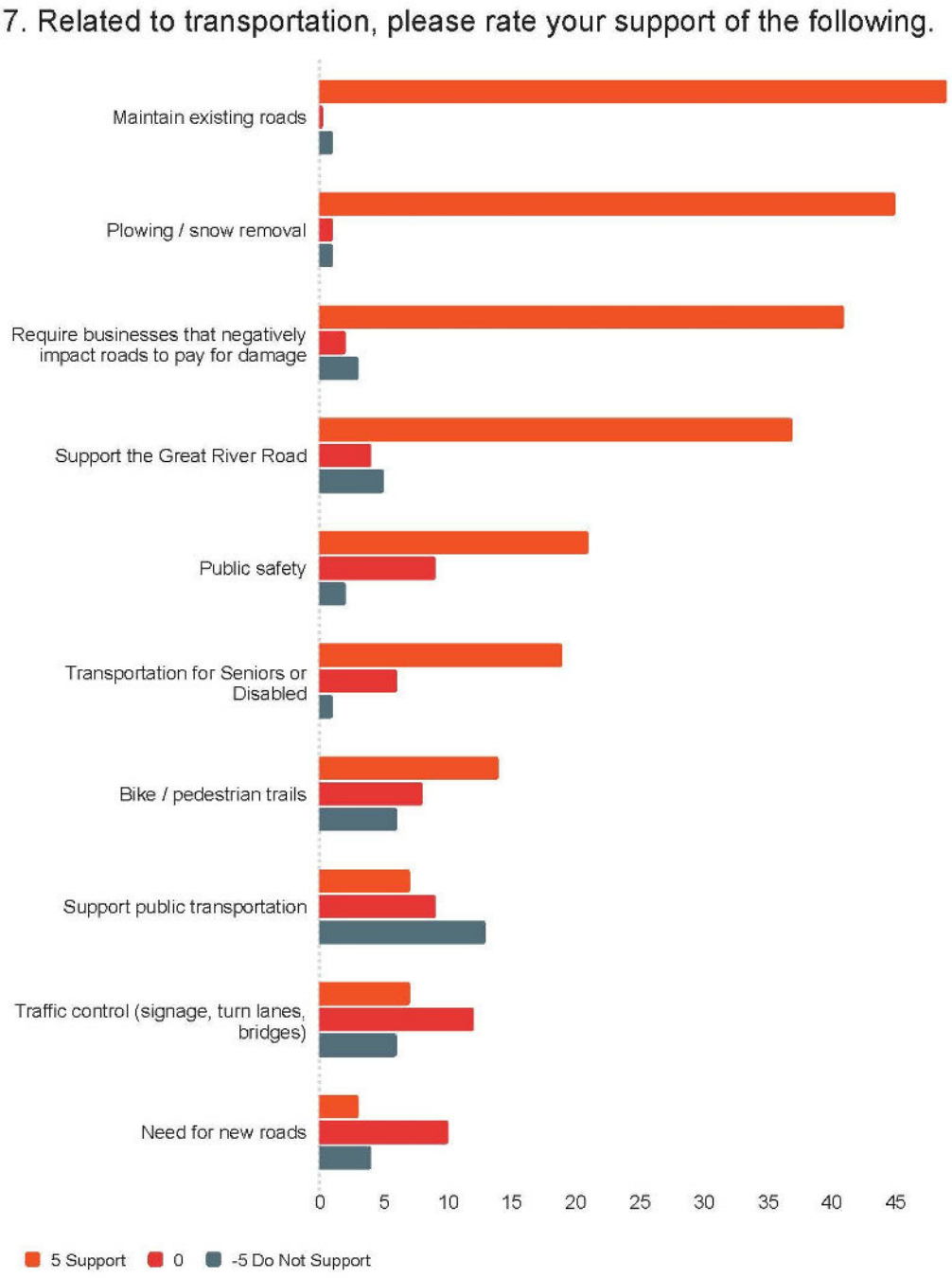


6

6a. Other ideas or thoughts on land use in the Town of Maiden Rock?

6a. Other ideas or thoughts on land use in the Town of Maiden Rock?
Lower tax on farms...
Reward those of us with land we keep wild or farmland with taxes that remain the same or lower, because there is those of us who like it just the way it is!!
Turn train tracks into tourist railways!
So help me God...lets keep it just country like it is! Alot of great smaller farms and room to roam the woods,hills and creeks.Enjoy the fresh invigorating air.
I support low-impact recreational development--not a golf course, shooting range or ski resort.
I'd prefer a more diversified agricultural land use--less corn and beans, more forage crops, woodlands, native, prairie habitats
Preserve the water
Maintain businesses similar to bed and breakfasts and restaurants.
Protect rights of farmers. People who move here from cities and then complain about farming knew where they were moving and need to accept.
often it depends and it's not black and white
Keep bluff lands undeveloped
I am a strong supporter of Maiden Rock's CAFO Operations Ordinance.
Support mixed land uses in compatible settings that support the local tax base and protect resources.
No wreaking our water table!!!!
NO CAFO
Small farms working together. Perhaps we could become a place for winter lectures as in Chautauqua in New York
Keep it the way it is. Dont develop and dont mine.
Top priority clean water. Second tourism/agritourism and small business development.
No solar farms
fishing docks, hiking or bike trails

7


7. Related to transportation, please rate your support of the following.
Maintain existing roads
Plowing / snow removal
Require businesses that negatively impact roads to pay for damage
Support the Great River Road
Public safety
Transportation for Seniors or Disabled
Bike / pedestrian trails
Support public transportation
Traffic control (signage, turn lanes, bridges)
Need for new roads
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
5 Support
0
-5 Do Not Support

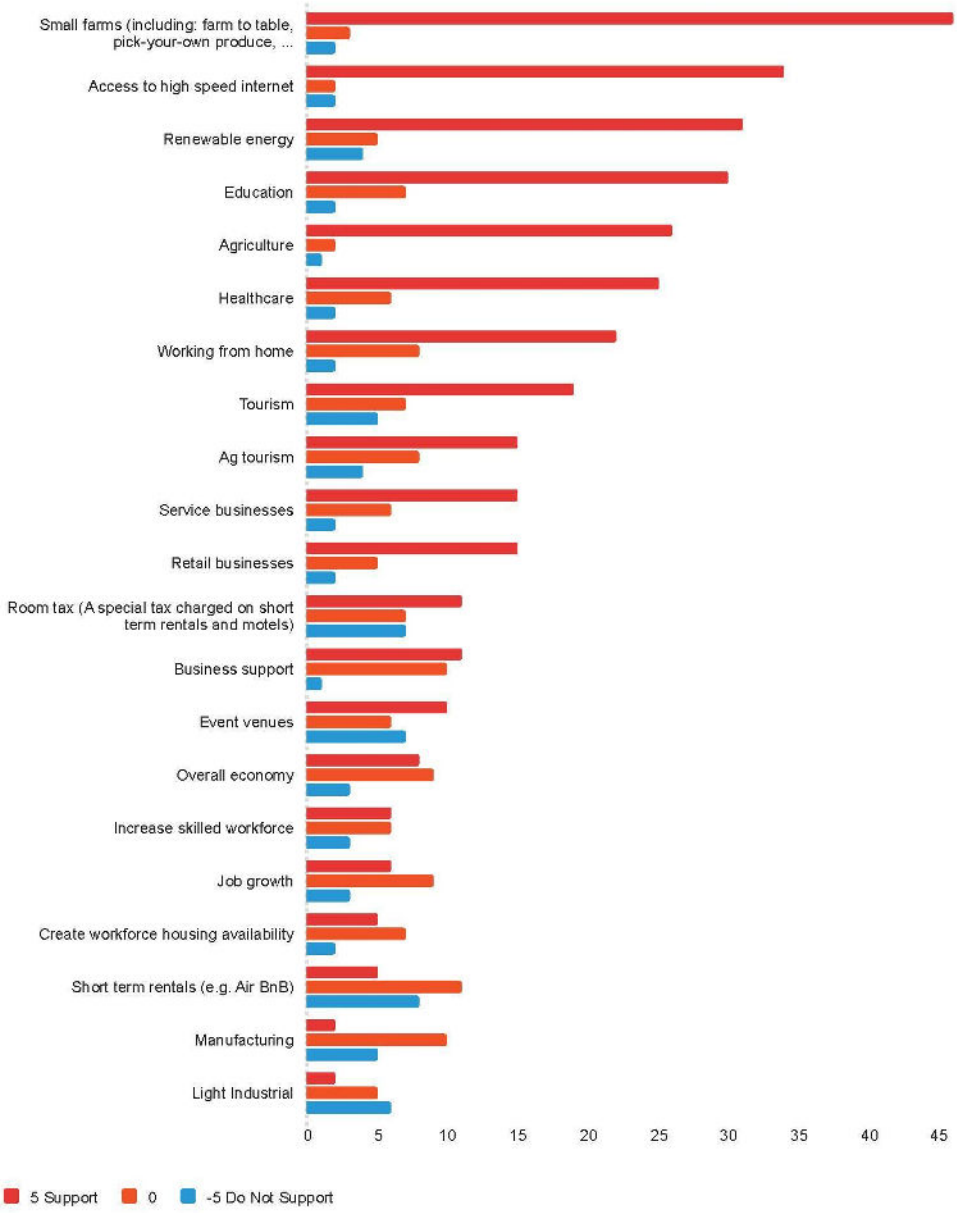
8

7a. Other comments or ideas related to transportation in the Town of Maiden Rock?

7a. Other comments or ideas related to transportation in the Town of Maiden Rock?
I love this land the way it is.
Figure out how to minimize noise from motorcycle traffic; 18-wheelers; and trains!!
I like the quiet, rural charm of the area, though it means limited option for public transit.
Weight limits as necessary to protect roads from heavy industrial or agricultural operations.
I think our Town Board does a a fairly adequate job of maintaining our rural roads
Asphalt county side roads to help prevent erosion
Maintain the good quality of roads that are in the Town of Maiden Rock.
Our highways are always in terrible shape when we have snow! Hwy's 35 and 63
Some kind of Uber type service. Safer bike paths, develop some off-road trails.
wider shoulders on the River Road for bikes
Safety railings for some of the more dangerous roads.
Make the intersection of 70th and 250th safe.
Clearing brush on corners for better visibility.
WE have some Amish folks in our township now, and I think we need some more signage on the roads, especially Co Rd CC (a county road).
none
Pave my road - 120th Ave
Our roads are not designed for big heavy equipment. People wrecking the roads need to be held responsible
The town roads are kept up as well as any other township roads and better than most. The town board does a good job with what little budget they have
no

9

8. Related to economic development and job growth, please rate your support...



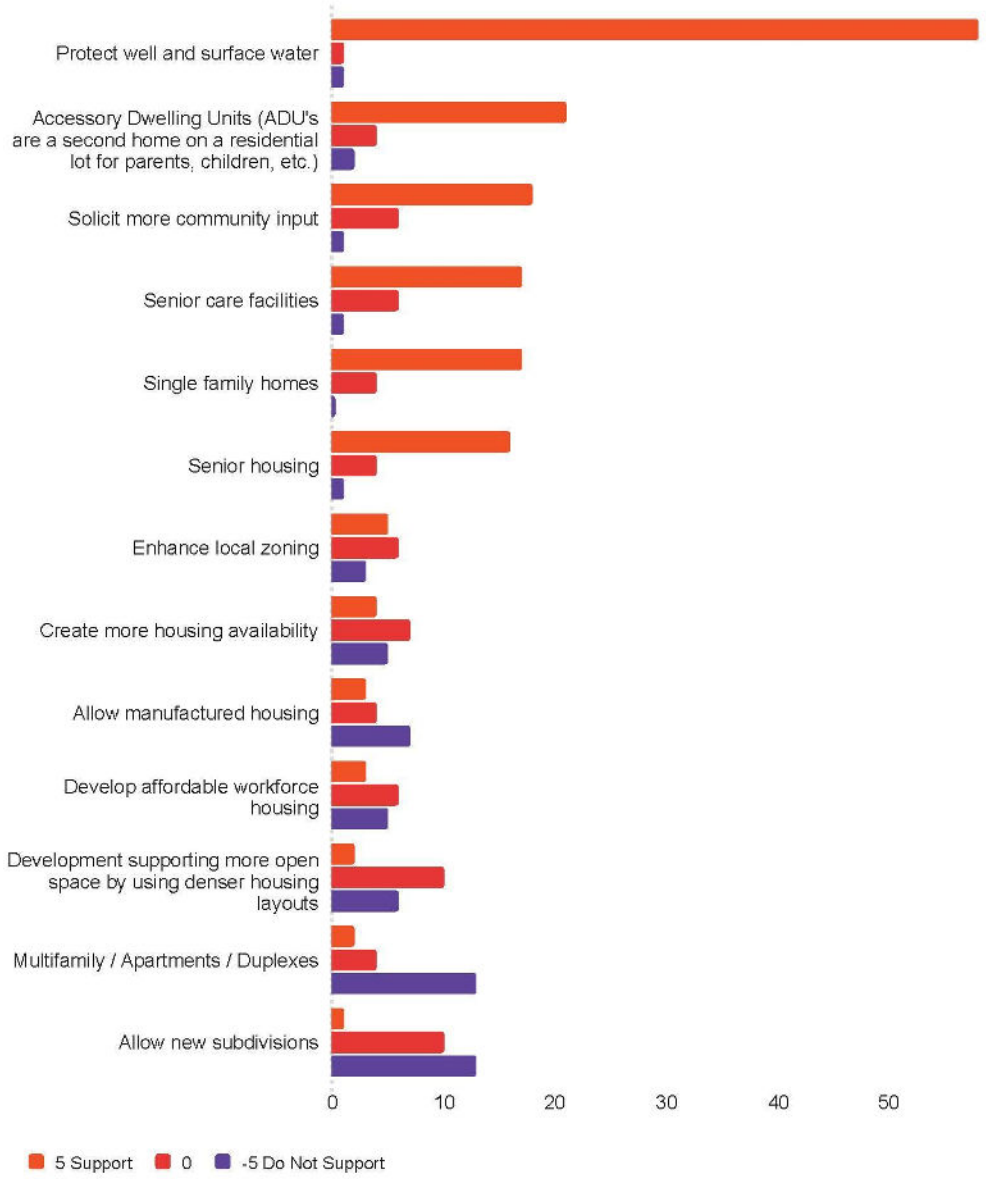
10

8a. Other comments or ideas related to economic development and job growth in the Town of Maiden Rock?

8a. Other comments or ideas related to economic development and job growth in the Town of Maiden Rock?
No complaints
I like it the way it is.
I appreciate and support modest, lo-impact, home business ventures & the arts,
Additional gas station and convenience store would be nice.
Control event venues with consideration to people who live there, also control large VRBO setting that can be loud for neighbors to contend with. This would be just as upsetting as having a HUGE corporate farming operation for people who have lived and owned land for generations to have their land devalued due to an undesireable incoming business.
Promote entrepreneurism, small farms, small businesses.
Add more welcoming establishments. Since Venus and Oles and now Mercantile bakery/coffee shop have opened the town has become a meeting place magnet. Develop Inns and destination venues for tourists from the Cities and elsewhere. GREAT just developing potential as the character and views are best, and is close to the CIties.
Businesses that create higher paying jobs
All depends on what
Fund a cneter for web-based business to get help with developing marketing, consolidating shipping for best pricing, a pick up spot of others to reduce number of delivery truck trips on rural roads.
Economic developement should be on major highways.
none
no

11

9. Related to housing, please rate your support of the following.

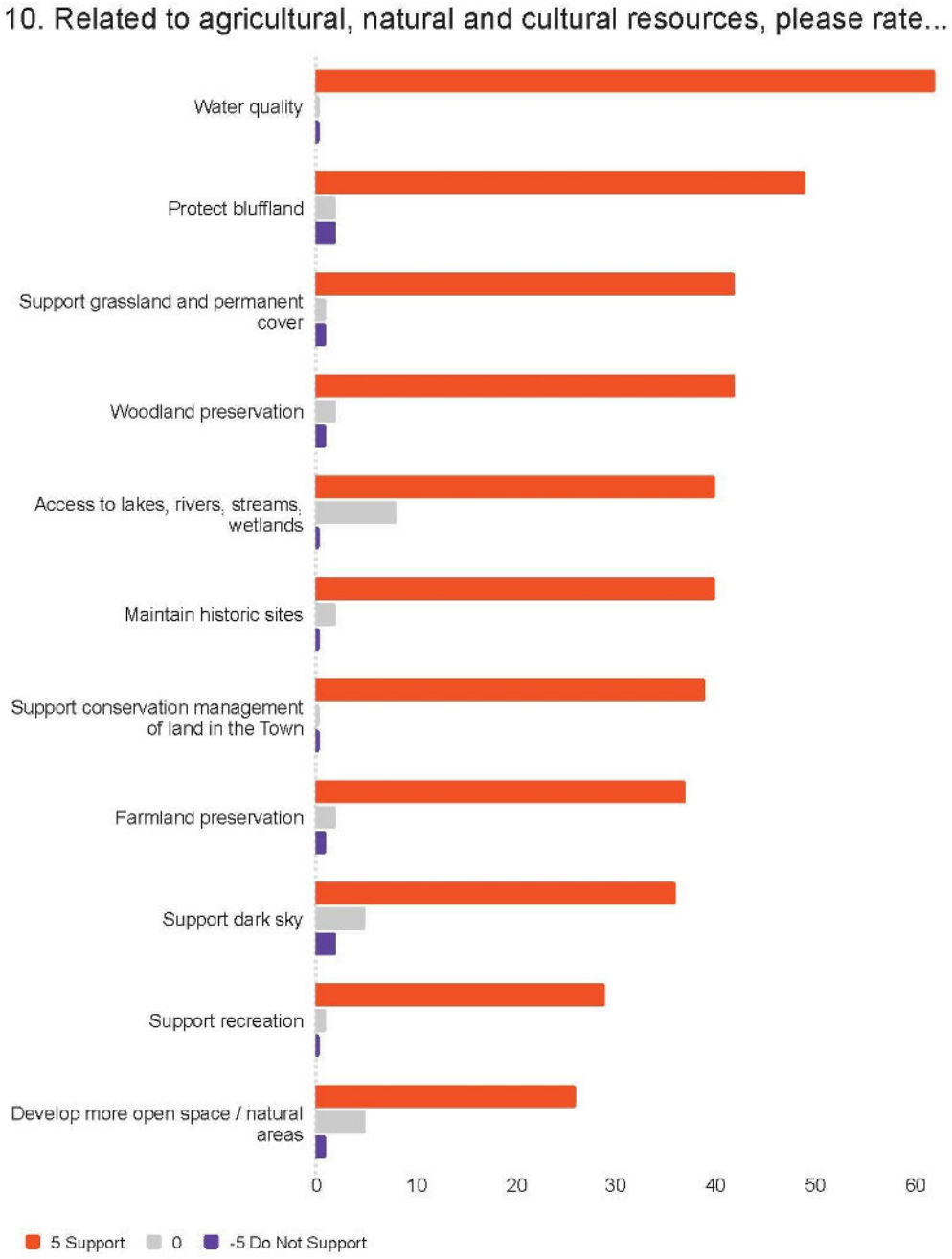


12

9a. Other comments or ideas related to housing in the Town of Maiden Rock?

9a. Other comments or ideas related to housing in the Town of Maiden Rock?
Many local seniors would appreciate a quite rural senior facility to transision from their home to a safer facility with services.
I support new housing that is sensitive to landscape and scenic protections, natural landscaping, native vegetation and woodland preservation.
rural housing developments need to have wastewater treatment to avoid further ground water pollution from each house on a single acre having their own septic system
I would like to see some sort of aid/grant program to help homeowners maintain their dwellings, wells, and septic systems.
Allow mixed residential uses in appropriate locations.
If you're going to build housing you need to make sure infrastructure can handle it.
lower housing density depends on well water quality.
For some of these questions, I'd like to know more before answering. There's a lot of nuance to these things...
none
The town usually has a few new houses added per year so I think that's plenty for our area.
I think the town has plenty of new houses going up every year
no

13


10. Related to agricultural, natural and cultural resources, please rate...
Water quality
Protect bluffland
Support grassland and permanent cover
Woodland preservation
Access to lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands
Maintain historic sites
Support conservation management of land in the Town
Farmland preservation
Support dark sky
Support recreation
Develop more open space / natural areas
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
5 Support
0
-5 Do Not Support

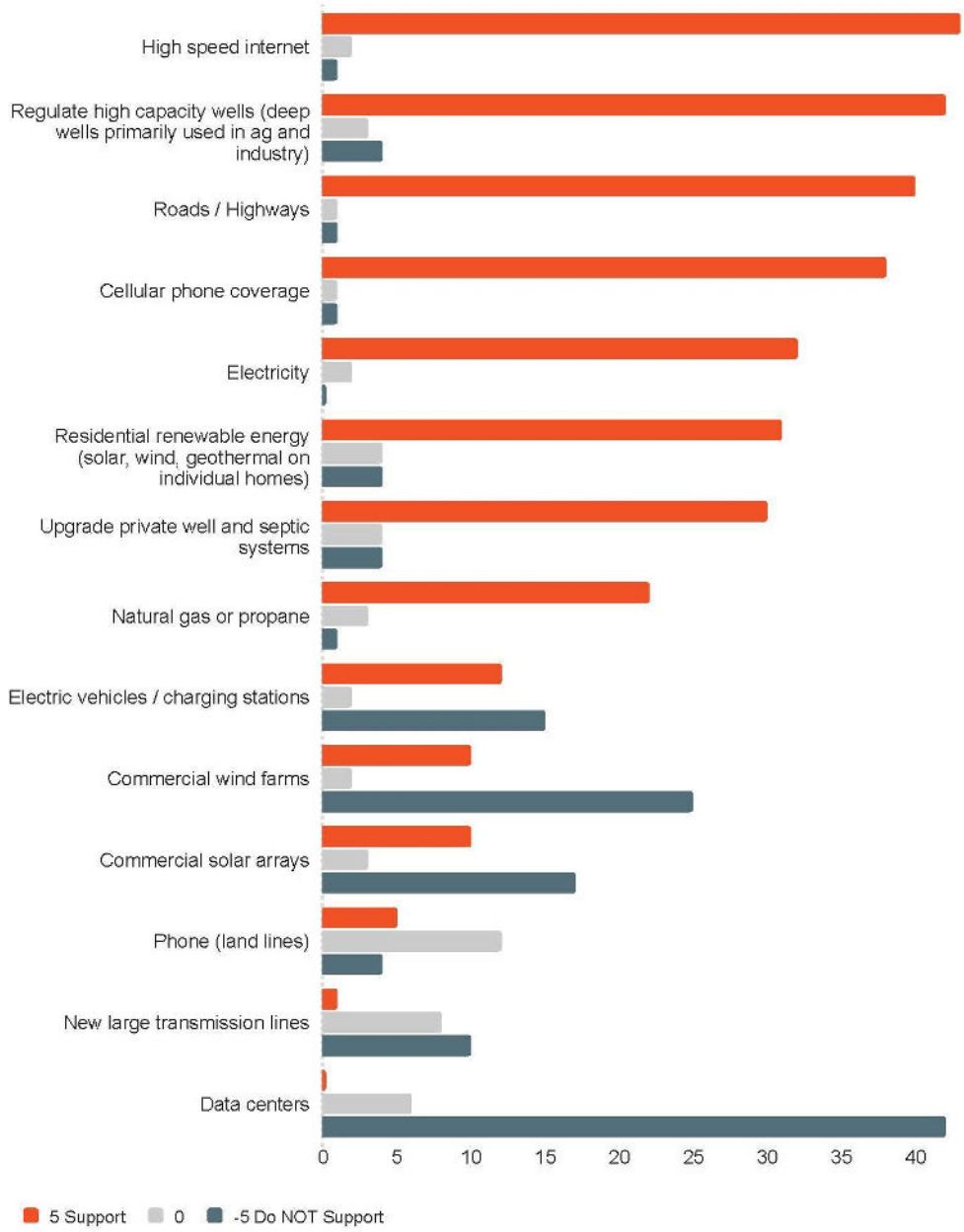
14

10a. Other comments or ideas related to Natural and Cultural Resources in the Town of Maiden Rock?

10a. Other comments or ideas related to Natural and Cultural Resources in the Town of Maiden Rock?
We will be sorry if we don't protect our water! That's why I insist our (My) personal farmland that I own be farmed organically!!
These area needs to be preserved forever with its natural beauty featuring rare plants species and raptor habitats along with the ecological importance of the Rush River Delta State Natural Area for its floodplain forest...so much beauty!
Protect/preserve historical sites within the town--cemeteries, churches, Indigenous burial sites.
Maintain road edges facing Lake Pepin so travelers can see the lake in the summer.
Importance of protecting our water resources cannot be overstated.
Pursue easements for preservation of cultural resources
Protect our water table
I'm so glad to see dark skies on this list! I hate the new high towers that blink all night long. Can they be programmed to blink only when aircraft are in the area?
property taxes are not fairly allocated for single family and farmland
These are some of the most important considerations in regional and local planning, in my opinion, as they impact everything else in some way.
Do something about the growth of toxic weeds in ditches, esp. wild parsnip
none
We need to protect our water, air and the land
The town does a good job trying to protect it's resources
no

15

11. Related to infrastructure, please rate your support of the following.



16

11a. Other comments or ideas related to Infrastructure in the Town of Maiden Rock?

11a. Other comments or ideas related to Infrastructure in the Town of Maiden Rock?

If you drive down through Central Illinois, there is a wind farm down there with probably 2 to 300 windmills. All you have to do is get out of your car and stand there for a few minutes and realize what a blight it is on the land. And they do make noise. Another place would be on the east side of Lake Winnebago. Used to be a pretty area, but now it is covered in windmills. You couldn't pay me enough to live there.
The jury is still out on what the ecological outcome will be when solar panels and windmills go beyond their useful life. I'm glad you're asking these questions, and there is no such thing as free energy. I always love it when I hear somebody talk about that. They never wanna talk about the construction costs or the effect upon land values.
Also, on a cloudy day when there's no wind, you've got millions of dollars in assets just sitting there not producing anything. There was a recent article about all the predictions that Al Gore made about 20 years ago. None of them have come true. Sorry, but the only people getting a benefit out of this are countries like China that build this stuff and sell it.

Green energy (from the sun and wind, etc) is lovely. We will be using more energy, not less, and so we need clean sources! This needs to be encouraged.

I am concerned about outside investors creating infrastructure for their own profit, when it does not benefit our community.

Identify corridors suitable for infrastructure development.

NO AI DATA CENTERS

On data centers. Study and guidelines on AI itself anon the water use and what kind of power

EV charging stations will be important to tourism.

Eliminating stray voltage sources is grossly over looked for small farmers!!!
CAFOs are not being fined or regulated properly. Permits are violated daily

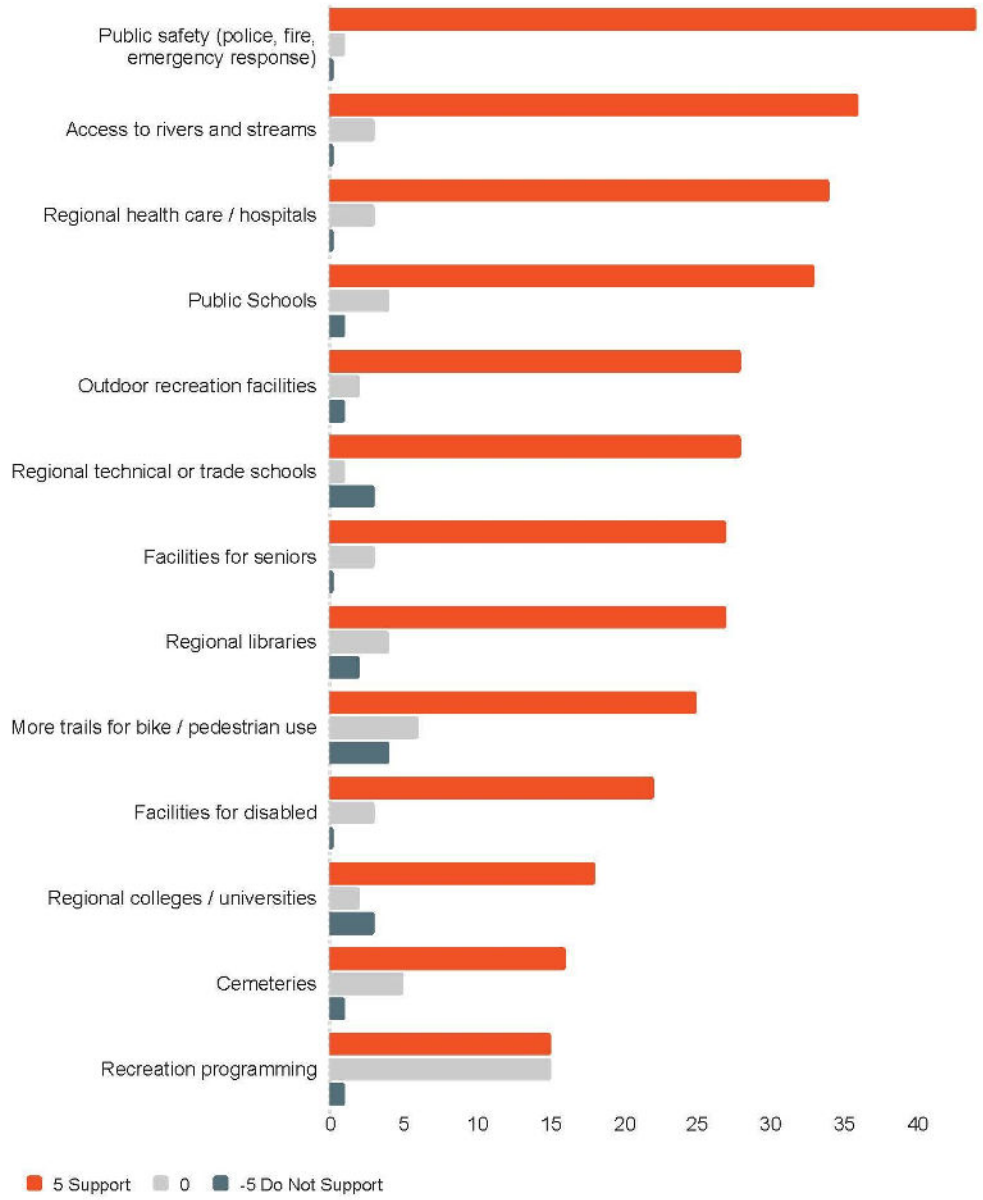
none

I don't want to see any more changes wind solar etc.

no

17

12. Related to community facilities and services, please rate your support...



18

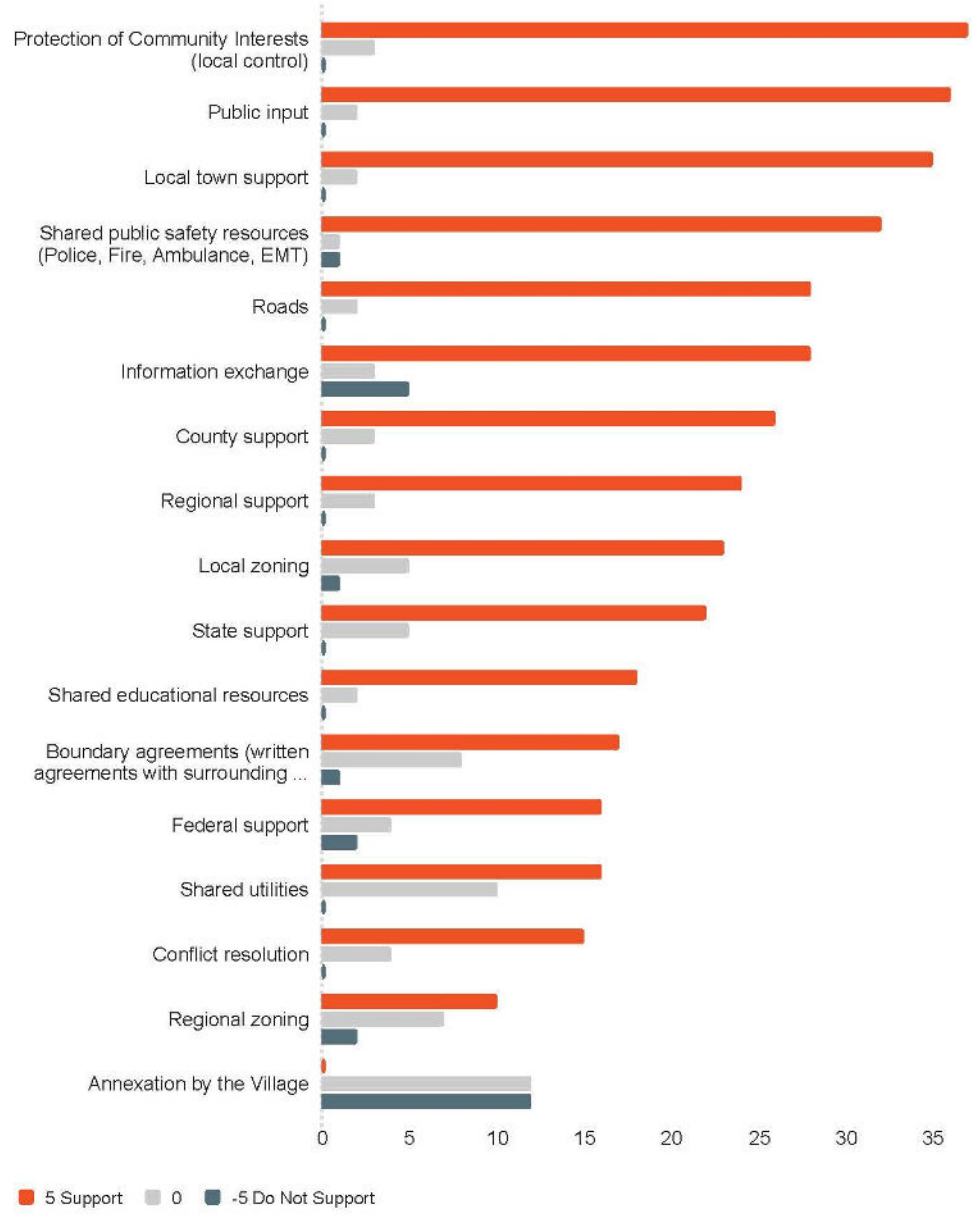
12a. Other comments or ideas related to Community in the Town of Maiden Rock?

12a. Other comments or ideas related to Infrastructure in the Town of Maiden Rock?

I belong to the rails to trails organization. You probably know about the Cannon River Falls Trail that leaves out of Red Wing. We may not have a place for something like that, but it is something I use quite a bit. And it does bring in people from other areas to use the trail, and of course, spend some money somewhere along the way.
I think we are doing good! But I don't really trust my own judgement because I don't know what all we have (even though we have been here for 31 years). To the people that have been running this place: yay! Good for you! Good Job!
I'm a "senior" and not-yet disabled--I don't believe that it's a Town's responsibility to provide services & facilities for us, but it's good to know that such things are available through the County.
Support for all public schools, colleges, Universities is contingent on teaching students, not indoctrination.
As we age senior tourism is important. More dedicated bike trails.
none
we need more volunteers for fire and ambulance
no

19

13. Related to intergovernmental collaboration, please rate your support of...



20

13a. Other comments or ideas related to Intergovernmental collaboration in the Town of Maiden Rock?

13a. Other comments or ideas related to Intergovernmental collaboration in the Town of Maiden Rock?
I don't know enough to answer this
This section is difficult to comment on, without having some specific examples by which to make some judgements.
Strongly oppose any expansion/annexation by the Village of Maiden Rock.
We should always have local control
collaboration and information sharing with Minnesota. Don't reinvent any wheels.
I noticed that tribes aren't included here and wonder if there might be some increased intentional work with tribes in the future? There is certainly their land.
"Good old Boy" mentality and over reach has hurt out town for decades.
none
I think all the townships should work together on projects as well as the county.
I feel the county could do a better job listening to the townships and villages on concerns that come up instead of getting passed over
no

21

14. What is your Key Issue or Big Idea for our Region?

Lower taxes, preserve rural character...
Expand natural gas access in the Town.
While growth is always important, the draw of a small community such as Maiden Rock can be quickly lost if we don't protect the reasons people want to visit our small community. Some mix of growth but preserving our land and wildlife is key. Balance.
I like it the way it is. I don't think we need to "improve"! More tourism equals more traffic and some ugly acting people mixed in with it. My parents had a large gift shop on the North Shore of Lake Superior and I grew to dislike tourists. I like the mix of farming and other people in the area. We're doing fine, keep it up!
Pierce County faces significant environmental challenges, including groundwater contamination from nitrates and potential manure runoff from CAFO farms.
Defend against pollution including modern farling practices. Maintain rural countryside and limit development.
Protect our shared water resources (ground and surface), natural and scenic areas.
While I support the "status quo", I am aware that circumstances are always changing. Maiden Rock Town and residents/property owners should stay aware of cultural and political changes and trends, be willing to have respectful conversations about the future of our shared community and landscape.
tax controls, care of roads, i.e. grader and plowing.
pollution of ground and surface water and mega wells used by CAFOs and Data Centers lowering our aquifers
Saying no to data centers, as well as CAFO
Protect our natural resources!
Encourage ideas supporting reasonable land use preserving the regional character of the area and provide cultural amenities for local residents and tourism that will support the local economy
Preserve natural and historical beauty, and develop magnet potential of the town for tourism, small businesses. Keep franchises out, and support small farms. KEEP CAFOS out due to regional as well as local and water quality degradation
Our WELL WATER!!! SAVE the LAND and WATER WAYS!
No AI DATA CENTER, NO CAFO, KEEP SMALL TOWN SMALL, NO OUTSIDE INFLUENCE
Small sustainable farms. Clean water, air, and peaceful open space for all. Absolutely NO CAFOs.
NO CAFO!!!
Clean Water. Dedicated bike trails. Senior Tourism. Uber system. I didn't see anything here about the power of the arts and culture to attract, support, and reinvigorate communities. Music festivals, Murals, Museums, and more should all be incliuded in the Comprehensive Plan. They are cheap to fund and have amazing spin off effects in commerce and community building.
No data centers,,CAFOs or solar farms.

Appendix C: Notice of Public Hearing

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Town of Maiden Rock, Pierce County Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan Update

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Plan Committee / Town Board of the Town of Maiden Rock, Pierce County, Wisconsin, will conduct a public hearing on **Monday, August 10th, 2026** at **6:00 P.M.** at the **Maiden Rock Town Hall W2096 County Road CC Maiden Rock, WI 54750**.

The purpose of the public hearing is to solicit public comments and consider action on an ordinance to amend the **2026 Town of Maiden Rock Comprehensive Plan**.

The draft Comprehensive Plan includes chapters addressing issues and opportunities, housing, transportation, utilities, natural/agricultural resources, economic development, land use, and implementation, all in compliance with **Wis. Stat. § 66.1001**.

The proposed plan is available for public review and inspection during regular business hours at the Clerk's Office **Maiden Rock Town Hall W2096 County Road CC Maiden Rock, WI 54750**. Additionally, electronic copies of the draft documents are available for download or review on the Town of Maiden Rock website: **townofmaidenrock.info** and **MRRPC.com** **(PLANS FOR REVIEW)**.

All interested persons, groups, and entities are invited to attend the hearing and be heard regarding the proposed plan. Written comments may be submitted to Carla Schuster, Clerk, Town of Maiden Rock, Maiden Rock Town Hall W2096 County Road CC Maiden Rock, WI 54750or via email to carla@townofmaidenrock.org and must be received prior to the public hearing to become part of the record.

Dated this **7th** day of **July**, **2026**
Carla Schuster
Clerk
Town of Maiden Rock Wisconsin

Appendix D: Ordinance to Adopt the Town of Maiden Rock Comprehensive Plan

[Insert the signed adopting ordinance here after Town Board adoption.]

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Appendix E: Relevant Ordinance(s) / Statute(s)

Maiden Rock Private Access Roads

TOWN OF MAIDEN ROCK

ORDINANCE #1-1-2000
ORDINANCE REGULATION PRIVATE ACCESS ROADS

1. **PERMIT REQUIRED.** No access road or driveway providing ingress or egress to a Town road shall be hereafter constructed, altered or removed without first obtaining a permit from the Town Board.

2. **MINIMUM STANDARD FOR CONSTRUCTION.** Prior to the granting of the permit, the applicant shall submit plans for construction which shall satisfy the following minimum standard:
   a. The access road shall be so designed as to avoid an unreasonable interference with the natural flow of water. The first 20 feet of the access road from the edge of the highway shall be near level but slightly lower than the highway in order to assure that water from the access road does not run onto the traveled portion of the highway. Flooding of the surface of the Town road in any manner shall create a presumption of unreasonable interference.
   b. The access road shall intersect with the Town road at a right angle.
   c. Culvert must be adequate for drainage. Any culvert shall be installed at the same grade as pre-exits such installation and have a minimum diameter of 18 inches, have installed apron end walls, and shall set back as close to 16 feet from the edge as possible.
   d. The access road shall be of such reasonable width to serve its intended purpose. Minimum width of an access road shall be 18 feet.
   e. Driveway access shall be at least 100 feet from any intersection.
   f. With regards to access road providing ingress from a Town road to a subdivision, speed limit being posted at 35 mph or less (both subdivision and Town road), the access road shall be located so as to provide a sight distance of 250 feet in any direction along the Town road being intersected, not veering from road surface. Sight distance is computed with observer at height of 3.75 feet and object seen at height of 5 feet. For the purpose of this section, the word "subdivision" shall be given the meaning set forth in WI Stats.236.02(12). In all other cases, the access road shall be located so as to provide a sight distance of 500 feet in any direction along the Town road being intersected, not veering from road surface. Sight distance in those cases shall be computed with the observer at a height of 3.75 feet and the object at a height of 5 feet. If the 500 foot rule can not be met, the eight second rule will apply for posted speed limit.
   g. Variances, for good cause, may be granted as to the above standards. Application for such variances shall be made to the Town Board through the Town clerk.
3. **APPLICANT TO PAY ALL EXPENSES.** All expenses of construction, reconstruction, alteration or removal of any access road shall be the liability of the applicant.
4. **BOND.** The Town Board may in its discretion, require the applicant to furnish the Town with an indemnification bond in the amount equal to the reasonable expenses contemplated by the Town by the reason of the insurance of the permit. The sufficiency of the indemnification bond shall be at the sole discretion of the Town Board.
5. **PENALTY.** Failure to comply with the above ordinance will result in a written notification by certified mail. Seven (7) working days will be allowed for compliance with ordinance. Upon failure to comply, a penalty of $150.00 will be imposed.
6. **FEE.** Access road fee for a residence shall be $75.00 per access. Field driveways are also at $75.00. A $500.00 damage deposit is required on all new building sites to cover road damage during building process, to be paid before construction starts and to be held by Town until final building inspection is completed, and returned after one year upon request by owner. Approval of the driveway is subject to meeting requirements of Ordinance #1-1-2000 within one year of this date.

Maiden Rock 2024 CAFO ordinance

The Town of Maiden Rock Adopted an ordinance addressing Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) on December 9, 2024. In-depth research on the CAFO industry and our Town are the ordinance's foundation. Findings of facts were pulled for this research. Multiple sections lay out definitions, application process, fees, etc. Appendices A and B document the research with citations and maps. Appendix C is a permit application form.

The entire ordinance can be found at https://townofmaidenrock.info/draft-ordinance

A factsheet is available at https://townofmaidenrock.info/factsheet

A brief summary of the ordinance follows:

Maiden Rock Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO)
Ordinance 24-02 Summary

Section	Summary
Whereas & Therefore	4 statements - Established committee to do research and make recommendations
Local Findings	19 Findings - Specific to Town
General Findings on Industry	Findings organized in the same categories as the Section 10 Conditions
Section 1 - Authority	Constitution, Wisconsin Statutes 92.15 & 60.22
Section 2 - Purpose	Regulate operations with 1000 animal units or more
Section 3 - Definitions	1. Animal unit definition based on Wisconsin NR 243 2. CAFO defined as 1000 animal units 3. Include outside CAFOs spreading manure in Maiden Rock
Section 4 - License Required	New Facilities - 1000 animal units
Section 5 - License Administration	1. Town Board 2. Designated third party(ies)
Section 6 - License Application & Standards	1. Apply before operating 2. Town Board approve
Section 7 - License Application Fee	1. $1 per animal unit 2. For the purpose of offsetting Town costs to review and process application

Maiden Rock Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO)
Ordinance 24-02 Summary

Section	Summary
Section 8 - Application Procedure	1. Applicant must be owner and sign application with property owner 2. Submit 11 plans 3. Third party engineer paid by applicant certifies plans 4. Public hearing and permit writing process
Section 9 - Financial Surety	1. Financial assurance required as condition 2. Amount based on Closure/Rehabilitation Plan 3. Plan sealed by licensed engineer
Section 10 - Conditions of Approval	1. 11 Potential Conditions described 2. Baseline well data required 3. Land spreading based on spreadable acres 4. Manure Land Application contracts with land owner - 5 years 5. Fire Safety Needs analysis
Sections 11 to 18	Record of Decision, Transfer & Expiration of License, Terms, Annual fees Penalties, Appeals, Severability, Effective Date
Appendix A.	Research used as basis for the General Findings of Facts. Includes citations from Scientific Journals, University Program, Regulatory & Court Documents and Media
Appendix B.	Seven maps based on data cited in the Local Findings of Facts.
Appendix C.	Application form and checklist. To be completed once the ordinance is finalized

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Appendix F: Additional Data on Natural Resources and State Natural Areas

Pine Creek Fishery Area

The Pine Creek Fishery Area, owned by the Wisconsin DNR, is located at the mouth of the Rush River. This area, which includes the American Legion Post and Rustic Road is a focal point of natural beauty for the community, and as such deserves high priority for good stewardship. The description below is taken from the Wisconsin DNR.



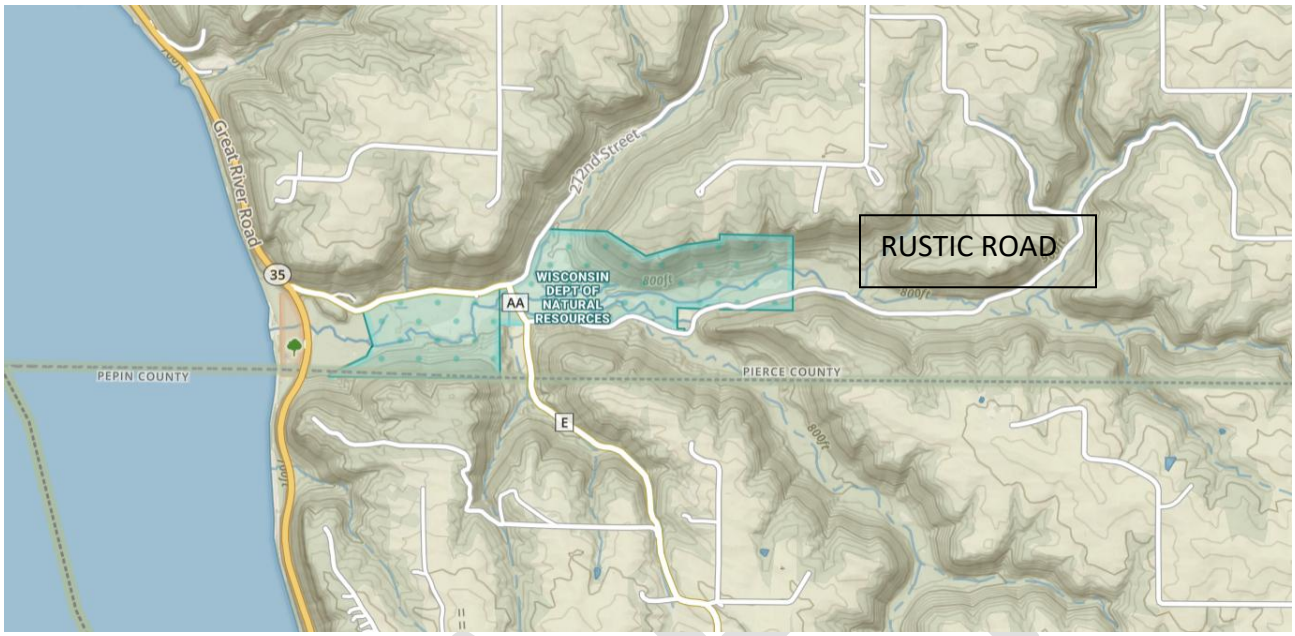
The Pine Creek watershed is located in south-western Pierce County and is composed of the main branch of Pine Creek, the North Branch of Pine Creek and several other unnamed spring fed tributary streams. The watershed mainly consists of heavily forested hillsides with the lower two miles of Pine Creek flowing through a mixture of prairie wetland and flood plain forest habitats. The Pine Creek Watershed consists of 2.6 miles of class I trout water and three miles of class II water, with several access areas and the Pine Creek Fishery Area, which harbors 246 acres of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) owned public land which has had habitat restoration work conducted throughout most of the state fishery. Pine Creek is a high-gradient cold-water stream consisting of large cobble and gravel substrates in the headwaters and mid-reaches. As it flows west, through the DNR State Fishery Area, deeper pools and undercut banks are present. Near Lake Pepin, Pine Creek begins to widen and consists of mainly sand substrate with vertical banks and bank erosion is common. In conjunction with the habitat improvement project, brown trout were mechanically removed using electrofishing in 2007 and 2008 to further attempt to improve the brook trout population. Historically, brook trout were the dominant species in Pine Creek. In 2009 and 2010, brook trout abundance approached almost 8,000 fish per mile. Initial results from the habitat improvement project and brown trout removals looked positive. However, in the years of 2011-2012, brown trout densities began to increase and by 2013 the fishery converted from a brook trout dominated fishery to a brown trout dominated fishery. Prior to 2020, the section of stream near the Legion Outpost flowed underground, which created a natural barrier to fish movement from downstream and upstream sections. This natural barrier prevented brown trout from colonizing the headwater reaches of Pine Creek. However, with relatively high groundwater levels in the area, the previously underground section of the stream began flowing above ground in its entirety, making fish passage possible. The brook trout in Pine Creek are also a genetically distinct population making this area a high conservation priority. With upstream fish passage now possible, the arrival of brown trout in the upper reaches of the stream, the remaining population of brook trout may be at risk.

Reference:

Jacobson, Samuel. Fisheries Technician Advanced, 2024. *WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, 2023 Pine Creek Watershed Report.*

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Graphic - Pine Creek Fishery Area



Map Source: Onx Hunt

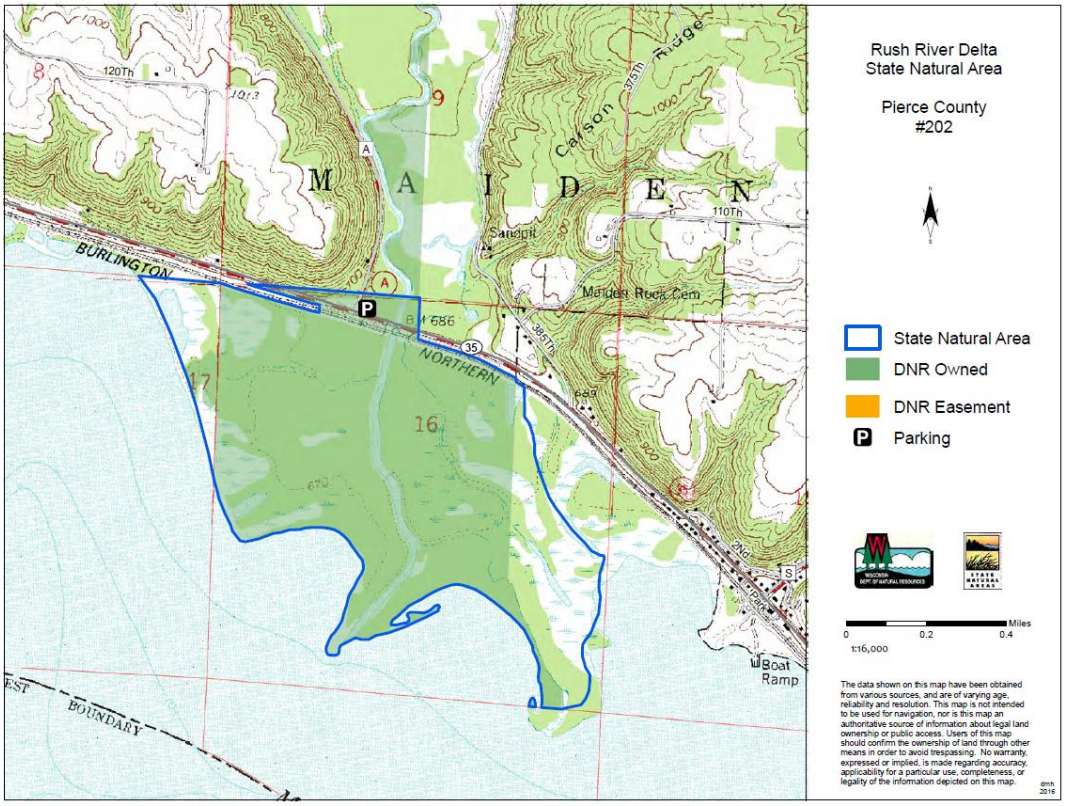
State Natural Areas

Wisconsin owns and maintains State Natural Areas (SNAs) as examples of valuable natural communities that may harbor rare species. Two SNAs have been established on the Rush River and its tributaries. The Rush River Delta SNA has been established at the mouth of the Rush River. The description below is taken from the Wisconsin DNR website.

Rush River Delta (400 acres)

Rush River Delta protects a floodplain forest on the alluvial plain at the mouth of the Rush River where it empties into the Mississippi River's Lake Pepin. The area supports stands of lowland hardwoods including silver maple, cottonwood, willow, American elm, and green ash. Large patches of wood nettle dominate the ground layer. Several open, wet depressions are vegetated with river bulrush and smartweed and provide excellent spawning habitat for northern pike and rearing areas for mallards and wood ducks. A sand spit extends into Lake Pepin at the Rush River mouth and provides feeding and nesting areas for shorebirds. Woodland birds include yellow-throated vireo, warbling vireo, blue-gray gnatcatcher, American redstart, and northern oriole. Rush River Delta is owned by the DNR and was designated a State Natural Area in 1986.

Rush River Delta State Natural Area



The Rush River Delta State Natural Area and surrounding area (Source WDNR).

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Army Corps of Engineers (COE) Lands

North of Highway 35 and extending up to Section 33 in Salem Township, large parcels of land are owned by the State and US government. Approximately 330 acres belong to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and another 53 acres belong to the State of Wisconsin.



US government (Army COE) and State of Wisconsin-owned lands along the lower Rush.

These extensive public lands north of Highway 35 encompass much of the floodplain downstream of Morgan Coulee, and comprise wet and seasonally wet grasslands, with scattered trees. USACOE has undertaken extensive re-forestation over much of this area, and there is great potential for enhancing the valuable wetland habitat with a variety of conservation measures.

Invasive Species

The rapid spread of invasive species can fundamentally alter the floral composition of natural communities and ultimately destroy them. Unfortunately, the devastating impact of these invaders does not become evident until it is too late to effectively control them. Further, the control of these plants, when carried out on a large scale, diverts considerable resources that could otherwise be spent maintaining the ecosystems. For these reasons, control of invasive plants involves many important decisions regarding action (or inaction) that should be taken and the tradeoffs involved. It also requires specialized knowledge of control methods.

In Maiden Rock, three species – buckthorn (spp.), garlic mustard, and reed canary grass – have established large populations and continue to spread aggressively. The control of invasive plants is a vast topic. The Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin (IPAW) is active in this area and maintains an excellent website. https://ipaw.org/the-problem/ipaws-plant-list/. The three plants discussed above are rated by IPAW as having the highest impact on native landscapes.

Fauna and Flora

Maiden Rock is host to a rich variety of plant and animal life.

Whitetail deer are overabundant in the driftless area. Due to the mixture of woodland and abundant agricultural crops, the biological carrying capacity of the land is quite high. However, at a high population density the environment shows signs of negative impacts. Not only is the deer herd less healthy, but overall biodiversity suffers. Desirable herb and songbird species begin to decline. Browsing is evident and threatens both desirable tree seedlings and critical components of the understory. At densities around 45/mi^2, the harvest rate is maximized, but the quality of the deer is low. Browsing is severe and begins to take a toll on agriculture. Direct threats to human health, such as deer/auto collisions and Lyme Disease, also become a problem. Furthermore, the likelihood of Chronic Wasting Disease spreading to the area increases with population density.

With the high numbers of deer present in the area, oak regeneration is practically impossible. Therefore, the red, white, and bur oaks – some of the most valuable components of the area's natural communities – are in decline. In order for oaks and other valuable hardwoods to regenerate and thus to remain in the forest canopy, deer browse must be controlled. Since white oaks can live for up to 500 years, it is worth investing in this species.

Maintaining a healthy deer herd that does not threaten the biodiversity and quality of life, and also provides good hunting, is one of the most pressing challenges that will face land managers in this area.

Birds, reptiles/amphibians, and fishes

Many birds are doing well in Maiden Rock. Wild turkeys, bald eagles, and some songbirds are abundant. Other songbirds, in particular some neo-tropical migrants (bird that winter as far south as Argentina) are in decline. For some migrant species, the woodlands surrounding the Rush River provide a stopping point for birds enroute to their nesting areas further north, while other species stay in the area to nest and raise their young. Some key species found on the Rush are mentioned in the later section on the Rush River Delta State Natural Area.

A number of birds are forest-interior species and depend upon large blocks of mature woodland.

Grassland birds such as bobolinks and eastern meadowlarks, as well as ringneck pheasants depend upon good nesting habitat that is undisturbed when active nests are present. Both bobolinks and meadowlarks are in severe decline in the area.



Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivoru*): breeding male and female (courtesy of Cornell Lab of Ornithology.)

Herptile fauna (reptiles and amphibians) are a less conspicuous but important part of the natural communities.

The Rush River and small streams of Maiden Rock provide good habitat for a variety of amphibians, an important part of the ecosystem. In springtime, the choruses of spring peepers can be heard from the wetlands and flooded fields

The waters of the Rush are home to many species of fish. With its reputation as a popular trout stream, non-game species are often overlooked. These are an important component of the aquatic community, as are thousands of other species of fauna from microscopic organisms to tiny invertebrates to insects.

From its upper reaches to its mouth at the Mississippi, the Rush provides excellent fishing. Early settlers found abundant native brook trout. As described in the surveyor's notes

recorded just after statehood in 1848, the river was clear, cold, and rocky on its bottom, even its lower reaches. However, the brook trout declined over the next hundred years due to siltation. Brown trout were introduced in the late 1800's and are still present along the entire length of the river.

The last few miles of the Rush are primarily a warm water environment. Smallmouth bass, northern pike and other warmwater fish are common here.

Flora

Maiden Rock supports a diverse flora, including some areas of remnant natural communities that should be given the highest priority for preservation. From the satellite view, the wooded areas of Maiden Rock appear to be enveloped in a mass of greenery. However, a closer look reveals that much of the tree canopy consists of low-quality trees such as boxelder, which are quick to colonize open areas. This is particularly the case along the riverbanks and of field edges. Due to the fragmented nature of the forest land, these edges comprise a large percentage of the area. Only a few areas of high quality, mature trees remain. These are located primarily on the hillsides.

Generally, the history of disturbance experienced by the land depends upon the steepness of the slope. On the steepest slopes, small areas exist that have experienced very little disturbance. In these areas, mature forests can be found. A good example of a maple-basswood forest is found along the east-facing slope that runs along the west side of the Rush River valley. Hoffman (Ref. 1) has identified this slope as a valuable remnant of this type of forest. Large-flowered trilliums blanket the slope in late spring.

Reference

Hoffman, Randy (2002). *Wisconsin's Natural Communities,* Madison, WI. UW Press.

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Appendix G: Additional Well and Water Quality Data

Graphic – Town of Maiden Rock Well Nitrate Averages

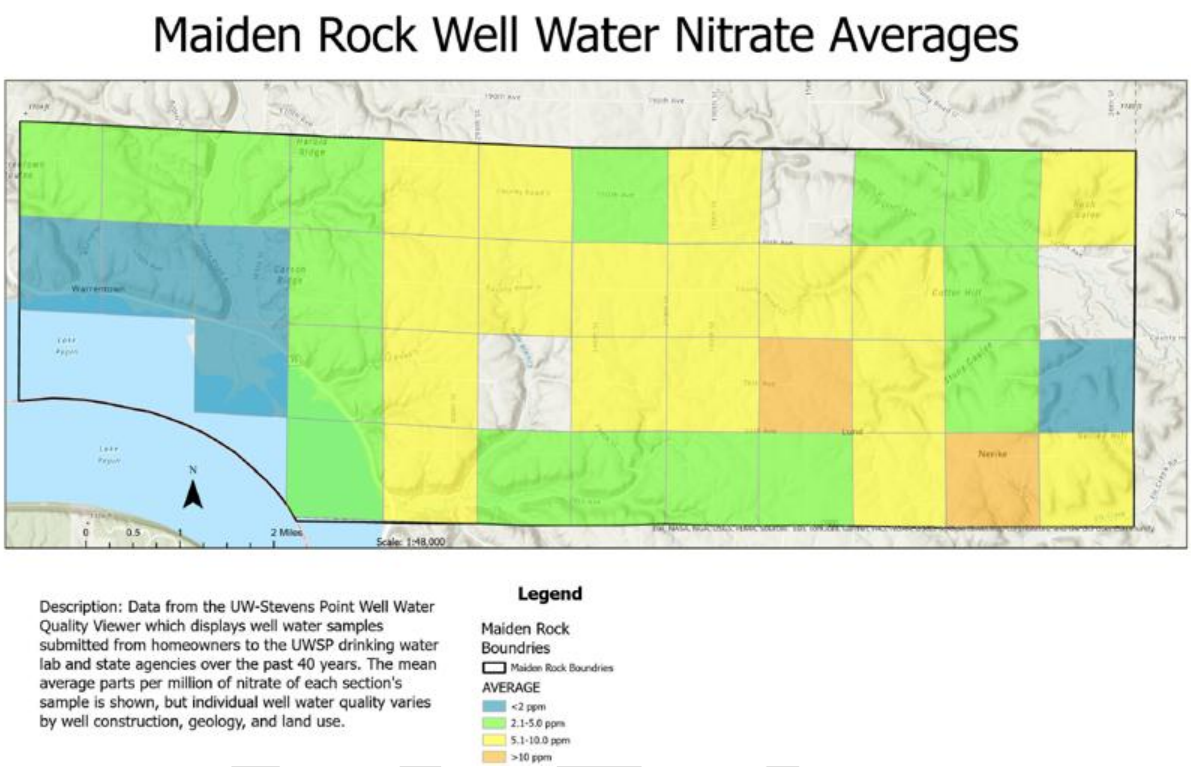


Table – Well Nitrate Levels

NITRATE (mg/l as N)
TOWN OF MAIDEN ROCK, PIERCE COUNTY
Report By Geography

Range	Sample	Percent Total	Summary
None Detected	36	11%	Minimum: 0.00
Less than 2.0 mg/l as N	55	17%	
2.1 - 5.0	104	33 %	Median: 3.80
5.1 - 10.0	91	29%	Average: 4.74
10.1 - 20.0	31	10 %	
20.1+	2	1 %	Maximum: 25.80
Total Samples	319		
> 10mg/l N	33	10 %	Exceeds Health Standard

NOTE: This groundwater quality summary may not be representative of the actual groundwater quality for the area selected. It is based on private well samples that are not a statistically random distribution for the area. Do not extrapolate these statistics to specific areas or addresses. The Center for Watershed Science and Education is not responsible for the use or application of this summary.

Groundwater Center - Center for Watershed Science and Education - UWSP Public Web Mapping Service: Jun 10, 2026

Map Well Depth

