

# City of Ripon Comprehensive Plan 2020-2040

Adopted: 9/28/2020

**Ripon**  
Wisconsin





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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### Introduction

The City of Ripon requested the assistance of MSA Professional Services, Inc. to complete a Comprehensive Plan update that complies with Wisconsin’s “Smart Growth” requirements, State Statute 66.1001. This plan is a guidebook for future development of the City of Ripon and the surrounding area. The plan provides the most recent available data, documents the important issues of concern identified by City residents, officials and staff, and sets forth goals, policies and recommendations for actions to be pursued by the City in the coming years. The plan covers topics mandated by Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001, but the content of the plan reflects local concerns. This plan looks forward to year 2040, but it should be reviewed annually and fully updated every ten years.

The City last completed a Comprehensive Plan in 2009. Although this plan will replace the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, some information from that plan was used in this planning process. The recommendations of this plan are generally consistent with other adopted local, regional, and state plans, and best planning practices. A draft and final version of this plan were distributed to all neighboring communities, including Fond du Lac County.

### 1.1 Planning Area

The study area for this plan generally includes all lands in which the City has both a short- and long-term interest in planning and development activity. This includes lands within the corporate limits and lands within 3 miles of the corporate limits within which the City has extraterritorial plat approval authority.

### 1.2 Regional Context

The City of Ripon, founded in 1849, is located in east central Wisconsin in Fond du Lac County, 78 miles northeast of Madison, WI and 90 miles northwest of Milwaukee, WI. The City itself is approximately 5.02 sq. mi. in size. The 2010 Census population for the City was 7,733 (1,540 persons per sq. mi.).

Fond du Lac County was established in 1836, and is on the southern end of Lake Winnebago, the State’s largest inland lake. The County is bordered on the west by Green Lake County, on the south by Dodge and Washington Counties, on the east by Sheboygan County, and on the north by Winnebago and Calumet Counties. The total area is approximately 766 square miles, of which 720 sq. mi. is land and 46 sq. mi. is water. The 2010 Census population was 101,633 (133 persons per sq. mi.). Twenty-one towns, ten villages, and three cities are included in the County. The City of Ripon is the County Seat and is also the largest city in the County, with a population of 43,021 at the 2010 Census.



## 1.3 Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law

Under the Comprehensive Planning legislation [s. 66.1001 Wis. Stats.], adopted by the State in October of 1999, also known as “Smart Growth,” if the City of Ripon engages in any of the actions listed below beginning on January 1, 2010, those actions shall be consistent with its Comprehensive Plan:

- Official mapping established or amended under § 62.23(6)
- Local subdivision regulations under § 236.45 or 236.46
- County zoning ordinances enacted or amended under § 62.23(7)
- Town, village, or city zoning ordinances enacted or amended under § 60.61, 60.62, 60.23(7)
- Zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands under § 59.692, 61.351 or 62.231

The Law Defines a Comprehensive Plan as containing nine required elements:

1. Issues and opportunities
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Utilities & Community Facilities
5. Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources
6. Economic Development
7. Intergovernmental Cooperation
8. Land Use
9. Implementation

The Comprehensive Planning Law in Wisconsin requires public participation at every stage of the comprehensive planning process. “Public participation” is defined as adopting and implementing written procedures for public participation that include but are not limited to broad notice provisions, the opportunity for the public and impacted jurisdictions to review and comment on draft plans, and the holding of a public hearing prior to plan adoption.

The Comprehensive Planning Law standardizes the procedure for adopting a Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Commission must submit a recommendation on the Comprehensive Plan to the chief elected body. The local governing body may then adopt and enact the plan by ordinance.

In addition to ensuring local residents and businesses have the opportunity to review and comment on the plan, the Comprehensive Planning Law requires that copies of the draft and final Comprehensive Plans be sent to adjacent communities, the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the regional planning commission, the public library serving the area, and all other area jurisdictions located entirely or partially within the boundaries of the community.

### **The Role of a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Ripon**

This planning document is intended to be a “living” guide for the future overall development of the City of Ripon. It serves the following purposes:

- The plan acts as a benchmark to where the community is now in terms of current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to quality of life.
- It provides a means of measuring progress for existing and future City leaders.

- It clearly defines areas appropriate for development, redevelopment, and preservation.
- It identifies opportunities to update and strengthen the City of Ripon's land use implementation tools.
- It can be used as supporting documentation for City of Ripon policies and regulations as well as grant funding requests for public & private projects.
- In addition to any applicable zoning ordinances, it will be a primary document used by the Plan Commission and the City Council to evaluate development proposals within the City of Ripon.

The most important function the plan will serve is as a resource manual assisting in the evaluation of land use related requests and the provision of design recommendations for various types of development. It establishes a standard for all land use decisions in the City of Ripon. Communities who consistently make land use decisions based on their Comprehensive Plan reduce their exposure to legal action, increase their opportunities to save money and improve the quality and compatibility of new development.

## 1.4 Public Participation

As part of the Comprehensive Planning legislation, every community must develop a public participation plan at the beginning of the planning process. The purpose of the public participation plan is to outline procedures for public involvement during every stage of the planning process. (See Appendix B for the complete Public Participation Plan.) Some key components of the public participation plan consist of public Plan Commission meetings, including a project kick-off meeting where issues and opportunities are discussed; distribution of the draft plan to neighboring municipalities for review; and a public hearing before the Plan Commission, noticed with a Class 1 notice 30 days prior to the hearing.

## 1.5 Plan Organization

The remainder of this plan is organized into 3 chapters:

- **Chapter 2: Goals, Policies & Actions** - describes the community's vision, and goals, policies and actions for each element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Chapter 3: Future Land Use** – a summary of the future land use plan for the City of Ripon.
- **Chapter 4: Implementation** - a compilation of the recommended actions contained within each of the elements in Chapter 2.

A Community Indicators Report has been included as **Appendix A**. This report summarizes background information as required for the nine planning elements to be included in Comprehensive Plans (as per Wisconsin Statute 66.1001). This information provides the basis for creating goals, policies and actions to guide future development in the City of Ripon.

## Chapter 2

# Goals, Policies & Actions

Each element of the Comprehensive Plan contains goals, policies and actions established during the planning process based on the information contained in the Community Indicators Report (Appendix A). This section defines goals, policies and actions as follows:

### **Goals**

A goal is a general statement about a desired future outcome. Goals provide the big idea and direction but do not indicate how they will be achieved.

### **Policies**

Policies are rules of conduct to be used to achieve the goals of the plan. They are intended to be used regularly to guide City decisions.

### **Actions**

Actions are specific activities that someone within city government should actively pursue, sometimes in coordination with non-governmental agencies. All actions are repeated in a quick reference spreadsheet in the Implementation section of this plan.

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## **Vision for the City of Ripon**

*Ripon desires to be a community that recognizes, appreciates and builds on its strengths, which include a historic downtown, Ripon College, ample employment opportunities, proximity to natural resource amenities, a safe living environment and elected officials and community leaders committed to advancing the public welfare. Ripon desires to be a community that is welcoming and accessible to all regardless of income, age, ethnic background or gender.*

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# Goals, Policies and Actions

## 2.1 Housing

### Issues

- Need more workforce housing.
- Need to increase diversity of housing types.
- Need to improve housing aesthetics.
- Housing stock is old.
- Few new home construction starts.

### Goals, Policies & Actions

#### Goal 1:

Ensure that housing and neighborhoods throughout the City provide a range of affordable, accessible, safe and desirable housing options for existing and future residents.

#### **Policies:**

1. Promote cooperation among public and private agencies to address affordable housing issues affecting City residents.
2. Review and approve housing development proposals based on consistency with the Land Use Chapter of this plan, including the Future Land Use Map.
3. Review all development plans to provide for the needs of varying household types.
4. Encourage and promote the development of workforce housing within the City.
5. Higher density residential should typically be placed along collector and arterial roads, and as transitions between single-family and commercial developments.
6. Encourage the maintenance and repair of existing housing units to protect property values, improve aesthetics, and to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of City residents.

#### **Actions:**

1. Continue to fund the Build Ripon and Renew Ripon housing programs to encourage new home construction and improvements to existing homes.
2. Continue to utilize Community Development Block Grant funds to assist low income residents with home purchases and home repairs.
3. Consider the use of “Affordable Housing” TID extension in expiring districts to capture additional funds that support housing initiatives. 75% of additional funds must be utilized to address affordable housing challenges and may be used for programs such as owner-

occupied rehabilitation, new home construction, or the creation of revolving loan funds, among other possibilities. 100% of increment generated through the extension must be utilized to better the community's housing stock.

4. Review and consider amendments to the zoning ordinance to enable development of housing formats that limit cost and increase diversity of housing stock, including smaller lots, smaller homes, attached units and accessory dwelling units. Identify locations for these housing forms in new and existing neighborhoods to provide a range of options for current and prospective residents.
5. Create a list of resources that can be utilized by residents in need of assistance for home improvements or maintenance.
6. Work with local mortgage lenders and the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) to ensure all income-qualified residents have access to and knowledge of State subsidized and insured mortgage and loan programs.

## **Goal 2:**

Encourage housing to be sensitive to the integrity of existing and future neighborhoods.

### ***Policies:***

1. Encourage new residential development and redevelopment to provide an aesthetic façade the blends into the surrounding environment.
2. As new neighborhoods are created and existing neighborhoods change over time, encourage a healthy mix of housing units including single-family, duplex, townhomes, apartments and other formats. New housing should be compatible with the existing surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Encourage new housing starts in areas that are already served by public services including sanitary sewer and water.
4. Review and approve housing development proposals based on consistency with the Land Use Chapter of this Plan, including the Future Land Use Map and associated policies.

## **Goal 3:**

Maintain the historical character of Ripon's architecture and neighborhoods.

### ***Policies:***

1. Continue efforts toward the preservation of identified historic homes and neighborhoods.
2. Encourage maintenance of identified historical housing structures to preserve the City's heritage.
3. Continue to enforce regulations to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of housing occupants, and to protect community character.

**Actions:**

1. Reach out to other historical organizations (state, county and local) to ensure that rehabilitation, remodeling, and new additions to historic buildings and housing structures protect the integrity of the buildings/structures.

## 2.2 Mobility & Transportation

### Issues

- Need for increased bikeability and walkability in the City.
- Need for maintenance and repair of existing roadways.
- Lack of public transportation.
- Need for improved connectivity to the region.

### Goals, Policies & Actions

#### Goal 1:

1. Provide a multi-modal transportation system that serves all residents in every neighborhood.

#### Policies:

1. Repair and maintain, to the greatest extent possible, existing transportation infrastructure. Evaluation of existing infrastructure should consider financial feasibility, Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, County and State transportation plans and other utility needs.
2. Continually move toward the implementation of a Complete Streets network that is safe, convenient and attractive for everyone regardless of age, ability or mode of transportation.
3. Promote complementary and compatible public and private transportation services, including Ripon Taxi and services for those with limited mobility.
4. Ensure that new subdivision and development applications provide adequate streets for safe and efficient traffic movement and include bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes, trails).
5. Maintain a well-designed bicycle/pedestrian trail and sidewalk system that links recreational areas, neighborhoods, schools and regional trail systems.
6. Seek compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) whenever an existing facility (sidewalks, trails, etc.) is reconstructed.

7. Using Ripon's Official Map, plan for and develop new portions of the transportation system to be compatible with existing and future land use patterns, maintaining safety and operational efficiency.
8. Provide adequate downtown public parking to support and promote business growth.
9. Collaborate with Ripon School District and Ripon College on safe transportation for students, including walking and biking.

**Actions:**

1. Annually evaluate City roads using the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program.
2. Annually review and update the Official Map, as needed.
3. Evaluate the downtown parking network to maintain a healthy supply of parking. Consider parking strategies such as short-term parking, compact car spaces and better signage to underutilized parking lots.
4. Work with Ripon School District to provide bicycle education in grade schools and middle schools every year.
5. Consider preparing a conceptual neighborhood plan in areas slated for growth prior to development in order to ensure good street connectivity and adequate bicycle accommodations.
6. Implement the 2008 Downtown Ripon Design Manual recommendations, including those for pedestrian-oriented design, parking and ADA accessibility by bringing recommendations for consideration during budgeting and capital improvement planning processes.

**Goal 2:**

Work cooperatively with other agencies to develop a local and regional transportation network that provides safe options for traveling to, from and through the City.

**Policies:**

1. Whenever possible, new City transportation infrastructure construction and maintenance should occur in accordance with local, State and County transportation plan schedules.
2. Connect trails and sidewalks located in the City with regional trails, where possible and as opportunities arise. Work with neighboring jurisdictions, WisDOT, Wisconsin DNR and other key stakeholders to plan, study and fund expansion of the regional network.
3. Work with the Town of Ripon and Fond du Lac County to promote the addition of bicycle accommodations to Town/County roads, including exploring funding opportunities through the Department of Transportation (e.g., Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)).

4. Work with State and County agencies to integrate transportation plans that will benefit City residents and develop efficient transportation infrastructure throughout the region.

**Actions:**

1. Look into partnerships with GO Transit in Oshkosh and Fond du Lac Area Transit to offer Ripon residents public transit routes into Oshkosh and Fond du Lac.
2. Work with Wisconsin & Southern Railroad to preserve abandoned rail corridors as multi-use trails as they become available.

**Goal 3:**

Ensure that the transportation system is designed, built and maintained to conserve existing natural resources.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage development of a transportation system that minimizes environmental impacts. Consider the use of “green street” principles in new and reconstructed streets to mitigate the stormwater runoff impact of the street.
2. Leverage new technology to improve safety and reduce the environmental impact of the City’s transportation system.

**Actions:**

1. Review the City’s off-street parking requirements periodically (at least every two years) to assess their effectiveness in making efficient use of land for vehicle parking.
2. Evaluate potential funding and installation of plug-in outlets for electric vehicles in City parking lots.

## 2.3 Utilities and Community Facilities

### Issues

- Silver Creek and Gothic Mill Pond are underutilized assets.
- Need for community garden and expanded farmer’s market.
- Senior center is too small.
- Outdated public works building and City Hall.

### Goals, Policies & Actions



## **Utilities**

### **Goal 1:**

The City of Ripon will have a high-quality, cost-effective, well-planned and efficient system of public utilities.

#### ***Policies:***

1. Maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of existing City infrastructure investments by channeling growth into already served or planned service areas and carefully regulating new growth and development.
2. Serve all urban development within the City of Ripon with the full array of urban services including municipal sewer, water, and electric, stormwater management facilities, municipal police and fire protection, refuse removal, etc.
3. Maintain and improve the utility infrastructure to ensure adequate capacity and integrity to serve existing users and accommodate new service areas. The first priority will be maintaining the reliability of existing systems and services.
4. All new development proposals shall be reviewed by all City departments to ensure that essential utilities can be provided to the subject development area in a timely and efficient manner.

#### ***Actions:***

1. Annually review the existing data relative to conditions and capacity of all current water and wastewater facilities and repair/upgrade facilities as needed to serve both existing and future populations.
2. Promote available incentives, energy audits and appliance recycling offered through Focus on Energy or other sources to assist individuals and businesses with energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.

### **Goal 2:**

Utility system planning and implementation will occur in coordination with land use and transportation plans and projects.

#### ***Policies:***

#### **Land Development**

1. Avoid environmentally sensitive areas when planning the location of utilities to minimize adverse impacts, to the greatest extent possible.

2. Maximize the use of existing utility systems by encouraging infill development that uses existing infrastructure investments.
3. Discourage inefficient “leap frog” development that results in infrastructure constructed before there is adequate customer base in place to support its maintenance.
4. Adhere to the City’s annexation policies and Official Map when determining the feasibility of serving possible annexation lands with utilities.
5. Discourage suburban development served by septic systems (i.e. residential densities greater than one unit per 35 acres, non-agricultural commercial, industrial and institutional) within the City’s planning area.
6. Require new development to pay the full cost of new municipal services needed to support the development, so that the existing taxpayers are not burdened with inequitable taxes or service costs. Consider methods to recover the costs of new City utility facilities necessitated by new growth, such as impact fees.

#### Electrical System

7. Continue to bury existing utilities, where feasible, as redevelopment and street reconstruction occurs, and continue to require utilities in new developments to be underground.
8. Continue to support public/private partnerships to co-locate telecommunication facilities (e.g., antennas on a water tower, small cells on/in street light poles, etc.).
9. Encourage private use of renewable energy systems to reduce demand on public utilities.

#### Water Supply

10. Continue to evaluate and identify capacity concerns with capacity of existing City wells when new development is proposed.
11. Municipal wells shall be located in areas where there will be minimal impact on groundwater and groundwater recharge, including outside of capture zones for springs.
12. The City will encourage water conservation methods and practices when feasible, such as encouraging the replacement of older fixtures with low-flow fixtures through public education and awareness.

#### Sanitary Sewer

13. Parcels within the City on septic systems shall be connected to the public sewer system in accordance with the City’s ordinances when such utilities are made available.
14. Work to mitigate excessive infiltration and inflow, as defined in s. NR 110, in the sanitary sewer system.

## Surface Water & Stormwater Management

15. Improve the quality of surface water runoff by continuing to implement stormwater best management practices, maintaining the stormwater management system and expanding facilities as necessary in accordance with the City's policies and ordinances (e.g., Public Services Ordinance).
16. Encourage residential and nonresidential properties to implement additional stormwater management techniques to reduce the impacts of stormwater discharge (e.g. rain gardens, rain barrels, green roofs, bioretention basins, oil and grease filters) on surface and groundwater resources.

### **Actions:**

1. Conduct an Impact Fee Needs Assessment on all potential municipal utilities and facilities in order to impose impact fees on new development that has an impact on the level of service for such systems. Review and potentially update every ten years, at a minimum.
2. Explore alternative winter maintenance methods to reduce rock salt usage (e.g., salt brine) to protect water quality and the natural environment.
3. Explore the implementation of best management practices with respect to stormwater management and erosion control measures, including the use of rain gardens, at City facilities.

## Community Facilities

### **Goal 1:**

Maintain and provide community facilities and services that create a safe, attractive, and healthy environment that meets the needs of current and future City residents.

### **Policies:**

#### General

1. Require all new development proposals to be reviewed by all City departments and agencies so that essential City services and facilities can be provided to new developments in a timely and efficient manner.
2. Require new development to pay for the costs associated with the City providing or expanding services to the development.
3. Require fiscal impact analyses of all major capital projects considered for funding. Such analyses should include, but not be limited to, one-time capital costs, life-cycle operating and maintenance costs, revenues from the project, and costs of not doing the project.



4. Make major project specific capital decisions by the City Council through the adoption of the City's operating budget and the Capital Improvement Program and budget.
5. Collaborate with private organizations that are serving the recreation needs of families, especially those that focus on the needs of seniors, youth and lower-income families.
6. Prioritize the incorporation of green building technologies, energy saving measures and renewable/alternative energy technologies into all new and remodeled City-owned buildings. Seek grant opportunities to support this.
7. As feasible, locate public-use community facilities where they are accessible to a majority of their expected users by walking or bicycling.
8. Collaborate with private organizations that are serving/providing community services to serve the needs of the population (e.g., daycare, healthcare, senior services etc.), particularly the youth, the elderly and those with special needs.
9. Work with the Ripon School District to maintain a high level of service and adequately plan for the growing needs of the community. Ensure coordination of school facilities planning with land use and utility planning.

#### Parks & Trails

10. Develop and maintain safe and attractive community gathering spaces and parks facilities that meet a wide range of recreational needs, both passive and active.
11. Work with the school district to identify and explore options for sharing recreation facilities.
12. Consider the use of renewable energy systems at park facilities, including solar lighting and heating.
13. Consider the acquisition of land as it becomes available around Silver Creek and Gothic Mill Pond in order to create a parkway and trail system along and around these natural assets.
14. Continue creating interconnections to regional trails, such as the Mascoutin Valley State Trail.

#### Emergency Services

15. Continue to evaluate the need for expanded public safety services and facilities (police, fire and EMS) to respond to the needs of the community as it grows and encourage volunteerism associated with Fire and EMS services.
16. Ensure that public safety facilities are located so as to provide acceptable response times to existing development and can accommodate future growth areas.

### Waste Management Services

17. Continue to manage solid waste disposal and recycling in a manner that is environmentally sound and cost-effective.
18. Consider additional opportunities to reuse waste materials generated by City processes as new options and uses become available.
19. Encourage recycling and minimize waste by charging additional fees for curbside collection of excessive amounts of waste.
20. Provide public education and awareness of recycling opportunities for all waste streams, including computers, electronics and appliances.

#### **Actions:**

1. Annually review the police, fire, and emergency medical services in the City and continue to review all options for providing services that meet the needs of residents. Meet with neighboring jurisdictions, as necessary, to review fire protection and ambulance service mutual aid and/or contractual intergovernmental services.
2. Explore the creation of a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.
3. Explore the creation of a Corridor Plan for Silver Creek and Gothic Mill Pond that includes public input and an alternatives analysis to garner public support and assist the City in determining the best use of these underutilized assets.
4. Complete the process of constructing a new Senior Activity Center in order to ensure the continued and improved provision of social, physical, recreational and informational services to seniors. Utilize grant funds, such as CDBG funds, to complete these improvements.
5. Complete the process of installing an outdoor trailhead connection for the Mascoutin Valley State Trail at Murray Park.
6. During budgeting, consider improvements to the aging City Hall and Public Works buildings that will allow the City to more effectively and efficiently serve the public.

## 2.4 Natural & Agricultural Resources

### **Issues**

- Water quality in Silver Creek needs improvement.
- Environmental contamination on the old brewery stable land.
- Species and ecosystems identified by the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory need to be protected.
- Need to take better advantage of the City's natural resource assets, like Silver Creek and Mill Pond.



- Need an accessible community garden within the City.

## Goals, Policies & Actions

### Agricultural Resources

#### **Goal 1:**

Preserve productive agricultural lands in balance with development of the City.

#### ***Policies:***

1. Promote infill and redevelopment initiatives on underutilized sites within the City as the preferred development type, reducing development pressure on agricultural lands.
2. Limit development in agricultural areas identified within this Plan's Future Land Use Map.

#### **Goal 2:**

Increase access to local, healthy, affordable, and culturally-specific food options.

#### ***Policies:***

1. Allow agricultural uses in the City that support community agriculture and food access, including infill urban farming and community gardens.
2. If community agriculture and gardens are displaced by development, actively assist the community in identifying nearby appropriate sites for relocation.
3. Continue promotion and support of the Farmers Market.

#### **Actions**

1. Review and amend City ordinances to allow for small-scale agricultural operation that is compatible with surrounding development. Examples of small-scale agricultural uses include community gardens, CSA plots, fruit orchards and vineyards, rooftop gardens, etc.
2. Investigate possible locations for a community garden within the City's borders that is easily accessible to all residents.

### Natural Resources

#### **Goal 1:**

Balance conservation of and increased access to natural resource amenities.

**Policies:**

1. Preserve and protect key environmental corridors, native vegetation, and wildlife species identified on the State's Natural Heritage Inventory lists.
2. Site development and infrastructure improvements in areas with least possible impact to natural environments.
3. Partner with other local and regional governments on initiatives that will protect natural environments.
4. Restrict development in the City's floodplains, wetlands and steep slopes.
5. Encourage landscaping practices on public and private property that help to filter and infiltrate rainwater.
6. Minimize impervious surfaces through site planning and development review.

**Actions:**

1. Review and amend the land division ordinance to require all-natural resource features to be depicted on submittals for proposed development or division.
2. Develop and maintain a list of preferred native plants and trees for landscaping to be used for assistance in development review and project planning.

## 2.5 Cultural Resources and Community Character

### Issues

- Need to revitalize the City's historic downtown.
- Poor aesthetics along the main entrances to the City.

### Goals, Policies & Actions

#### Goal 1:

Preserve and create new places and events that contribute to the identity of Ripon.

**Policies:**

1. Invest in placemaking initiatives in key corridors that serve as entrances to the City and in the downtown district that create aesthetically pleasing and engaging spaces for residents and visitors.



2. When investing in new and existing neighborhoods, the City will collaborate with developers to create unique features and great public spaces and encourage public art in public and quasi-public spaces.
3. Support community organizations and events.
4. Support ways in which the City can capitalize on its proximity to the Mascoutin Valley State Trail.
5. Continue investing in trails and paths which make the Mascoutin Valley State Trail easily accessible from within the City.

**Actions:**

1. Develop branding and marketing that promote civic pride and clarify the City's cultural identity as a great place to live, work, and experience community. Utilize the assistance of the NEW North in developing marketing materials.
2. Support community events and programming year-round that activate the downtown, attracting residents, patrons and visitors alike. Programming should appeal to all members of the community, including youth and communities of color.
3. Adopt a policy or ordinance to enable privately-funded art on public property.
4. Promote the utilization of the housing rehabilitation programs to improve the aesthetics of the highway corridors into the City.

**Goal 2:**

Preserve and promote the City's historic structures and sites, especially in the downtown core.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage rehabilitation of culturally, historically and architecturally significant buildings that contribute to the character of the City.
2. Increase public awareness of and civic pride in the City's cultural and historic resources.
3. In Downtown development projects, continue to enforce the 2008 Downtown Ripon Design Manual to preserve the unique features that enhance downtown identity.
4. Continue to support Ripon Main Street and the Downtown Ripon Revitalization Program to market, preserve and restore the historic downtown.

**Actions:**

1. Maintain an inventory of historic, architecturally significant and culturally significant buildings.
2. Continue funding the Downtown Ripon Façade Grant Program to enhance and preserve the unique cultural and historic characteristics of the downtown.

## 2.6 Collaborations & Partnerships

### Issues

- Lack of communications between neighboring communities.
- Need improved communication and coordination between the City and Ripon College.
- Coordination of land use planning & zoning.
- Lack of overall strategy for expanding borders.

### Goals, Policies & Actions

#### Goal 1:

Collaborate with neighboring communities and other government entities to achieve sustainable growth patterns in the Ripon area.

#### Policies:

1. Openly communicate and work closely with surrounding local government entities to manage land use, zoning, environmental, stormwater and extraterritorial boundary issues.
2. Protect natural systems and the City's ability to grow by exercising plat approval authority within the City's mile-and-one-half jurisdiction using the following criteria. The following criteria are suggested, and may be modified or waived through an adopted intergovernmental agreement:
  - The City shall not approve land divisions that would result in the development of land that is unsuitable for development due to flooding, poor drainage, soil or rock formations, highly erosive soils, unfavorable topography or any other feature likely to be harmful to health, safety or welfare of future residents or landowners.
  - The City shall not approve land divisions that would have an adverse impact on existing or planned City improvements or services.
3. Work closely with Ripon College to foster communication, relationships and knowledge sharing about planning and growth activities.

4. Openly communicate with East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission about land use planning sewer service area planning and transportation planning and seek their assistance where appropriate.
5. Utilize the Northeast Wisconsin Stormwater Consortium for assistance with stormwater management and for educational resources for City residents.

**Actions:**

1. Meet annually with representatives from neighboring municipalities and Fond du Lac County to discuss common issues related to planning, zoning, land use, and emergency services.
2. Schedule a working session with Ripon College involving elected officials and key staff for both the City and the College no less than annually to discuss issues of concern and opportunities for collaboration.
3. Work with the Town of Ripon to develop an intergovernmental agreement that protects future growth areas and utilities extensions routes for the City, protects stormwater and environmental corridors, and defines the jurisdiction and maintenance of certain roads that serve both jurisdictions.

**Goal 2:**

Enhance the efficiency and quality of public services by collaborating with other governmental entities in the region.

**Policies:**

1. Work cooperatively with other units of government and seek intergovernmental agreements that can provide cost-effective and/or higher-quality public facilities and services.
2. Coordinate with adjoining jurisdictions, the Ripon Area School District and Ripon College during outdoor recreation planning to seek complementary recreation investments where service areas overlap. Work to avoid duplication of unique amenities.

**Actions:**

1. Review existing intergovernmental agreements at least every five years and amend the agreements as needed.
2. Explore opportunities for state and federal grants to develop joint services with contiguous municipalities, the school district and College to reduce costs and improve services.
3. Continue to work jointly with the Towns of Ripon and Nepeuskun to provide Fire and emergency services.

## 2.7 Economic Development

### Issues

- Attracting Workforce
- Attracting & Retaining Businesses
- No overall economic development strategy
- Retail Volatility

### Goals, Policies & Actions

#### Goal 1:

City residents will have the skills to achieve personal success and financial stability, and employers will have access to skilled staff to maintain and expand business development initiatives.

#### *Policies:*

1. Support proactive communication between educational institutions and area employers in determining and filling appropriate local skills and needs.
2. Support training resources that help residents with employment skills and job preparedness.
3. Encourage employers to be actively engaged in career-advancement and workforce development efforts including internships, apprenticeships and workshops.
4. The City will work together with the Ripon Area School District, Ripon Main Street, Ripon College and other entities to ensure job skills training is provided to prepare students for careers in Ripon.

#### *Actions:*

1. Work with Ripon Main Street and Ripon College to compile a comprehensive list of skills and training resources and host this list prominently on the City's website.
2. Encourage Ripon Main Street to conduct an annual survey of employers and entrepreneurs to identify hiring and retention needs as well as business support needs and share this information with educational institutions.
3. Facilitate enhanced partnerships between Ripon Main Street, the Ripon Area School District and Ripon College to coordinate activities in support of the local economy, including:
  - Ensure that courses in computer science, information technology, entrepreneurship and financial literacy are regularly offered at the middle school and high school levels.

- Incorporate into the curriculum skills and information specifically pertinent to the City's targeted employment sectors.
- Hold at least two events each year to help facilitate a discussion between teachers and employers about local hiring needs and skill requirements.
- Form and support student-led business groups and clubs.

## **Goal 2:**

The City will expand and diversify the local economy.

### ***Policies:***

1. Continue to develop and manage the City's industrial and business parks to promote employer retention and expansion, as well as provide opportunities for new development.
2. The City of Ripon, in reviewing development projects, will seek to maintain a balance between the needs of the community and the needs of the developer.
3. Support locally-owned businesses, small-/micro-businesses and start-up businesses.
4. The City's identity and positioning within the region will be consistent, clearly defined and marketed to promote local economic development initiatives.
5. Promote the City's natural resource advantages (e.g., the Mascoutin Valley State Trail) to promote tourist spending and business attraction within the region.

### ***Actions:***

1. Collaborate with Ripon Main Street and Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to proactively communicate, discuss needs and receive feedback from area businesses. Use these conversations to continually refine services and resource referrals.
2. Create and maintain an inventory of available sites for development and redevelopment, updated on a biannual basis. This should include infill sites that have been cleared and cleaned (if necessary) and growth area sites that are already served with public utilities.
3. Co-host with Ripon Main Street an annual business workshop for local business leaders, employers, entrepreneurs, economic development professionals, and City staff to discuss current issues. Work to be inclusive of all business and economic development stakeholders of the community.
4. Consider working with East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Ripon Main Street and Fond du Lac County EDC to create a Strategic Plan for Economic Development to assist the City in creating a vision, strategy and action plan for economic development.

### Goal 3:

Business investment will support the health and vitality of the Ripon community.

#### **Policies:**

1. Support business development initiatives that increase diversity of entrepreneurs, business types and the workforce, as well including access to culturally-specific needs.
2. Encourage new business development within areas easily accessible by the City's transportation network, including considerations of public transit access.
3. Attract, support and retain businesses that fill and/or redevelop vacant properties in the downtown and key corridors.
4. The City will support new office and industrial development by expanding and extending access to utility and transportation infrastructure, where needed.
5. Financial incentives for business development will support one or more of the following criteria:
  - Increases the tax base without adding significant service costs.
  - Improves existing neighborhoods through redevelopment and/or expanded access to employment and services.
  - Adds affordable and workforce housing units.
  - Supports small businesses.
  - Improves conditions that will attract future quality development, such as a catalytic project in a new redevelopment area.
  - Provides public amenities in a relevant location, such as pocket parks not otherwise required, etc.
6. Support affordable and workforce housing initiatives that expand economic opportunities for City residents of all income levels, especially income-limited individuals/families.
7. Support childcare and after-school/summer programming that meets the needs of income-limited employees.
8. The City will actively support festivals, recreational and community events that attract visitors and spending at local businesses.

**Actions:**

1. Review and revise Tax Increment Finance (TIF) policy to prioritize business attraction, retention and expansion that is consistent with Policy 5.
2. Collaborate with Ripon Main Street and Fond du Lac County EDC to conduct a biennial survey of large employers to determine trends in workforce housing and transportation needs.

## 2.8 Land Use

### Issues

- Lack of enforcement of existing ordinances
- Need to update Zoning Code
- Need a plan for the old brewery stable land
- New subdivisions are not attracting developers

### Goals, Policies & Actions

#### Goal 1:

Grow the tax base and population of the City at a moderate and sustainable pace and use land, utilities and community services as efficiently as possible.

**Policies:**

1. Review proposed developments within the City's extraterritorial plat review jurisdiction for consistency with this plan and the City's subdivision ordinances and provide comments to neighboring communities as necessary in the interests of the City.
2. Encourage efficient and sustainable development patterns through the use of innovative zoning techniques, land use, transportation and utility planning tools such as planned unit developments and cluster zoning.
3. Through detailed land use plans, determine the highest and best use of vacant or under-utilized properties within the City (e.g. old brewery stable site) and prioritize these properties for (re)development and investment through the creation of new TIF districts.

**Actions:**

1. Maintain the Future Land Use Map (Map 15) to identify appropriate areas for residential, commercial, industrial, institutional and environmental uses within the City and its extraterritorial plat review jurisdiction.

2. Maintain an Official Map to coordinate long-term facility planning (e.g. roads, utilities, parks, drainage areas, etc.) in the City and surrounding extraterritorial plat review area.
3. Review and update the City's Zoning Ordinance to ensure compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan and also to ensure that standards are advancing the City's overall vision.
4. Update the City's Official Zoning Map at least once per year to ensure the map accurately reflects any zoning amendments completed in the prior year. Include the map on the City's website along with zoning permit application forms.
5. Investigate the creation of an environmental remediation TIF district to help fund remediation and redevelopment of the old brewery stable site.

## **Goal 2:**

Ensure high quality and aesthetically pleasing development compatible with surrounding land uses.

### ***Policies:***

1. Any development with uses more intensive than neighboring uses will utilize architecture, siting and screening techniques to minimize negative impacts on neighboring properties due to noise, light, traffic, etc. or incompatible architectural designs.
2. Enforce development design guidelines and zoning regulations for new and existing development to ensure high quality design that will maintain neighborhood character, property values and aesthetics.

### ***Actions:***

1. Strengthen the City's Zoning Ordinance relating to site and building design, lighting, landscaping and signage to promote higher quality design and aesthetics, especially for properties along transportation corridors.

## **Goal 3:**

Redevelop vacant, blighted or under-utilized properties.

### ***Policies:***

1. Encourage infill development and redevelopment of under-utilized properties where City.

### ***Actions:***

1. Investigate partnering with the Wisconsin DNR to provide environmental remediation to the old brewery stable site through the DNR's Remediation and Redevelopment Program.

# Chapter 3

## Future Land Use Plan

### Future Land Use

#### 3.1 Future Land Use Summary

The following chapter summarizes the Future Land Use Plan for the City of Ripon. The information is intended to provide a written explanation of the Future Land Use Map (Map 15), which depicts the City's desired pattern of land use and establishes the City's vision and intent for the future. The Future Land Use Map identifies areas of similar character, use and density. These land use areas are not zoning districts, as they do not legally set performance criteria for land uses (i.e. setbacks, height restrictions, etc.). Rather, the land use designations act as a guide for future development. The City does not assume that all areas depicted on the Future Land Use Map will develop during the next 20 years. Instead, the Future Land Use Map depicts those areas that are the most logical development areas based on the goals and policies of this plan, overall development trends, environmental constraints, proximity to existing development and the ability to provide services.

#### 3.2 Future Land Use Categories

The proposed pattern of land use is depicted in Map 15 (Appendix C). The Future Land Use Map provides land use recommendations for all lands within the City. These recommendations were derived through discussion's with Ripon's Planning Commission, City staff and by studying the Future Land Use Map from the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The Future Land Use Map, in conjunction with the other chapters of this Comprehensive Plan, should be used by City staff and officials to guide recommendations and decisions on rezoning and other development requests. The following is a list and description of the major land use categories, along with a list of appropriate zoning categories for each future land use designation.

- Agriculture – areas intended to be preserved for farming, farm family businesses, or other agricultural related businesses.
  - A – Agricultural District
- Farmsteads – areas intended for low-density rural residences with or without small scale farming operations.
  - A – Agricultural District
  - R-1 – Single-Family Residential District
- Single-Family Residential – areas intended for low density suburban-style residential development within the City, primarily single family residential with the potential for some duplex development.
  - R-1 – Single-Family Residential District
  - R-2 – One- and Two-Family Residential District

- Multi-Family Residential – areas intended for primarily higher density residential developments (buildings with 3 dwelling units or more) or potential mixed-use developments, which include small-scale retail uses.
  - R-3 – Multi-Family Residential District
  - B-1 – Central Business District
  - B-3 – Neighborhood Business District
- Mobile Home Parks – areas intended for mobile home communities.
  - R-3 – Multi-Family Residential District
- Group Housing – areas intended for community living arrangements, such as community-based residential facilities (CBRFs), nursing homes, assisted living facilities, adult family homes and other similar uses.
  - R-3 – Multi-Family Residential District
  - B-1 – Central Business District
  - B-3 – Neighborhood Business District
  - IN – Institutional District
- Commercial – areas intended primarily for retail and professional office developments, which could include higher density residential development.
  - R-3 – Multi-Family Residential District
  - B-1 – Central Business District
  - B-2 – Highway Business District
  - B-3 – Neighborhood Business District
- Industrial – areas intended primarily for industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, packaging and distribution activities, with the potential for higher intensity commercial uses.
  - B-2 Highway Business District
  - I-1 – Industrial District
  - I-2 – Industrial Park District
  - I-3 Light Industrial District
- Quarries – intended for uses which extract raw materials from the ground, such as gravel or sand pits and quarries.
  - A – Agricultural District
- Utilities/Communications – areas intended for public utilities, such as power generation facilities, water storage and sewage disposal, lift stations, cell towers and other similar uses.
  - IN – Institutional District
  - A – Agricultural District
- Rail Transportation – areas intended for rail transportation corridors and other related facilities.
  - Rail corridors are generally within public rights-of-way.
  - Related facilities, like rail yards, would be most compatible with industrial districts.
- Public/Government – areas intended primarily for public or institutional facilities, such as government offices or community centers, school or college facilities, hospitals, clinics or administrative offices.
  - IN – Institutional District
- Recreational Facilities – areas intended primarily for recreational facilities, such as neighborhood or community parks, playgrounds, community centers, pools, public or private sports facilities, and other similar uses.

- Recreational facilities are generally compatible with any zoning district aside from industrial districts.
- Conservancy – areas intended to preserve natural resources, such as lakes, waterways, wetlands, marshes or forests; areas of historical, archeological or ecological significance; and other areas which are deemed unsuitable for development due to steep slopes or floodplains.
  - C – Conservancy District
- Open Land – areas intended primarily to preserve open space, either within or outside of the City. This is differentiated from conservancy in that it could include the utilization of the land for activities like farming or forestry, or open public gathering spaces.
  - Open land is generally compatible with any zoning district.

If a rezoning were to be requested within one of the above land use categories, the zoning district listed should not be looked at as the only allowable district; rather, it is indicative of the intent of the Future Land Use Map.

# Chapter 4 Implementation

## Implementation

### 4.1 Implementation Summary

The implementation element is defined as a compilation of the specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence in order to implement the goals and policies contained within this plan. In addition, this chapter describes how each of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan will be internally integrated and how the plan itself will help the City maintain consistency across all planning related decision-making. This element also details the process for adopting and updating the Comprehensive Plan.

### 4.2 Actions

Element	Action No.	Action	Timeframe
Housing	1	Continue to fund the Build Ripon and Renew Ripon housing programs to encourage new home construction and improvements to existing homes.	Ongoing
	2	Continue to utilize Community Development Block Grant funds to assist low income residents with home purchases and home repairs.	Ongoing
	3	Consider the use of “Affordable Housing” TID extension in expiring districts to capture additional funds that support housing initiatives. 75% of additional funds must be utilized to address affordable housing challenges and may be used for programs such as owner-occupied rehabilitation, new home construction, or the creation of revolving loan funds, among other possibilities. 100% of increment generated through the extension must be utilized to better the community’s housing stock.	Short-term
	4	Review and consider amendments to the zoning ordinance to enable development of housing formats that limit cost and increase diversity of housing stock, including smaller lots, smaller homes, attached units and accessory dwelling units. Identify locations for these housing forms in new and existing neighborhoods to provide a range of options for current and prospective residents.	Short-term

	5	Create a list of resources that can be utilized by residents in need of assistance for home improvements or maintenance.	Short-term
	6	Work with local mortgage lenders and the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) to ensure all income-qualified residents have access to and knowledge of State subsidized and insured mortgage and loan programs.	Short-term
	7	Reach out to other historical organizations (state, county and local) to ensure that rehabilitation, remodeling, and new additions to historic buildings and housing structures protect the integrity of the buildings/structures.	Short-term
<b>Mobility and Transportation</b>	1	Annually evaluate City roads using the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program.	Ongoing
	2	Annually review and update the Official Map, as needed.	Ongoing
	3	Evaluate the downtown parking network to maintain a healthy supply of parking. Consider parking strategies such as short-term parking, compact car spaces and better signage to underutilized parking lots.	Short-term
	4	Work with Ripon School District to provide bicycle education in grade schools and middle schools every year.	Ongoing
	5	Consider preparing a conceptual neighborhood plan in areas slated for growth prior to development in order to ensure good street connectivity and adequate bicycle accommodations.	Short-term
	6	Implement the 2008 Downtown Ripon Design Manual recommendations, including those for pedestrian-oriented design, parking and ADA accessibility by bringing recommendations for consideration during budgeting and capital improvement planning processes.	Mid-term
	7	Look into partnerships with GO Transit in Oshkosh and Fond du Lac Area Transit to offer Ripon residents public transit routes into Oshkosh and Fond du Lac.	Short-term
	8	Work with Wisconsin & Southern Railroad to preserve abandoned rail corridors as multi-use trails as they become available.	Ongoing
	9	Review the City's off-street parking requirements periodically (at least every two years) to assess their effectiveness in making efficient use of land for vehicle parking.	Ongoing
	10	Evaluate potential funding and installation of plug-in outlets for electric vehicles in City parking lots.	Short-term

<b>Utilities and Community Facilities</b>	<b>1</b>	Annually review the existing data relative to conditions and capacity of all current water and wastewater facilities and repair/upgrade facilities as needed to serve both existing and future populations.	Ongoing
	<b>2</b>	Promote available incentives, energy audits and appliance recycling offered through Focus on Energy or other sources to assist individuals and businesses with energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.	Ongoing
	<b>3</b>	Conduct an Impact Fee Needs Assessment on all potential municipal utilities and facilities in order to impose impact fees on new development that has an impact on the level of service for such systems. Review and potentially update every ten years, at a minimum.	Mid-term
	<b>4</b>	Explore alternative winter maintenance methods to reduce rock salt usage (e.g., salt brine) to protect water quality and the natural environment.	Short-term
	<b>5</b>	Explore the implementation of best management practices with respect to stormwater management and erosion control measures, including the use of rain gardens, at City facilities.	Short-term
	<b>6</b>	Annually review the police, fire, and emergency medical services in the City and continue to review all options for providing services that meet the needs of residents. Meet with neighboring jurisdictions, as necessary, to review fire protection and ambulance service mutual aid and/or contractual intergovernmental services.	Ongoing
	<b>7</b>	Explore the creation of a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.	Short-term
	<b>8</b>	Explore the creation of a Corridor Plan for Silver Creek and Gothic Mill Pond that includes public input and an alternatives analysis to garner public support and assist the City in determining the best use of these underutilized assets.	Short-term
	<b>9</b>	Complete the process of constructing a new Senior Activity Center in order to ensure the continued and improved provision of social, physical, recreational and informational services to seniors. Utilize grant funds, such as CDBG funds, to complete these improvements.	Mid-term
	<b>10</b>	Complete the process of installing an outdoor trailhead connection for the Mascoutin Valley State Trail at Murray Park.	Short-term
	<b>11</b>	During budgeting, consider improvements to the aging City Hall and Public Works buildings that will allow the City to more effectively and efficiently serve the public.	Ongoing

<b>Natural and Agricultural Resources</b>	<b>1</b>	Review and amend City ordinances to allow for small-scale agricultural operation that is compatible with surrounding development. Examples of small-scale agricultural uses include community gardens, CSA plots, fruit orchards and vineyards, rooftop gardens, etc.	Short-term
	<b>2</b>	Investigate possible locations for a community garden within the City's borders that is easily accessible to all residents.	Short-term
	<b>3</b>	Review and amend the land division ordinance to require all-natural resource features to be depicted on submittals for proposed development or division.	Short-term
	<b>4</b>	Develop and maintain a list of preferred native plants and trees for landscaping to be used for assistance in development review and project planning.	Short-term
<b>Cultural Resources and Community Character</b>	<b>1</b>	Develop branding and marketing that promote civic pride and clarify the City's cultural identity as a great place to live, work, and experience community. Utilize the assistance of the NEW North in developing marketing materials.	Short-term
	<b>2</b>	Support community events and programming year-round that activate the downtown, attracting residents, patrons and visitors alike. Programming should appeal to all members of the community, including youth and communities of color.	Ongoing
	<b>3</b>	Adopt a policy or ordinance to enable privately-funded art on public property.	Short-term
	<b>4</b>	Promote the utilization of the housing rehabilitation programs to improve the aesthetics of the highway corridors into the City.	Ongoing
	<b>5</b>	Maintain an inventory of historic, architecturally significant and culturally significant buildings.	Ongoing
	<b>6</b>	Continue funding the Downtown Ripon Façade Grant Program to enhance and preserve the unique cultural and historic characteristics of the downtown.	Ongoing
<b>Collaborations and Partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>	Meet annually with representatives from neighboring municipalities and Fond du Lac County to discuss common issues related to planning, zoning, land use, and emergency services.	Ongoing
	<b>2</b>	Schedule a working session with Ripon College involving elected officials and key staff for both the City and the College no less than annually to discuss issues of concern and opportunities for collaboration.	Short-term / Ongoing
	<b>3</b>	Work with the Town of Ripon to develop an intergovernmental agreement that protects future growth areas and utilities extensions routes for the City, protects stormwater and environmental	Short-term

		corridors, and defines the jurisdiction and maintenance of certain roads that serve both jurisdictions.	
	4	Review existing intergovernmental agreements at least every five years and amend the agreements as needed.	Ongoing
	5	Explore opportunities for state and federal grants to develop joint services with contiguous municipalities, the school district and College to reduce costs and improve services.	Short-term
	6	Continue to work jointly with the Towns of Ripon and Nepeuskun to provide Fire and emergency services.	Ongoing
<b>Economic Development</b>	1	Work with Ripon Main Street and Ripon College to compile a comprehensive list of skills and training resources and host this list prominently on the City's website.	Short-term
	2	Encourage Ripon Main Street to conduct an annual survey of employers and entrepreneurs to identify hiring and retention needs as well as business support needs and share this information with educational institutions.	Short-term / Ongoing
	3	Facilitate enhanced partnerships between Ripon Main Street, the Ripon Area School District and Ripon College to coordinate activities in support of the local economy, including: Ensure that courses in computer science, information technology, entrepreneurship and financial literacy are regularly offered at the middle school and high school levels; Incorporate into the curriculum skills and information specifically pertinent to the City's targeted employment sectors; Hold at least two events each year to help facilitate a discussion between teachers and employers about local hiring needs and skill requirements; Form and support student-led business groups and clubs.	Ongoing
	4	Collaborate with Ripon Main Street and Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to proactively communicate, discuss needs and receive feedback from area businesses. Use these conversations to continually refine services and resource referrals.	Ongoing
	5	Create and maintain an inventory of available sites for development and redevelopment, updated on a biannual basis. This should include infill sites that have been cleared and cleaned (if necessary) and growth area sites that are already served with public utilities.	Short-term / Ongoing

	6	Co-host with Ripon Main Street an annual business workshop for local business leaders, employers, entrepreneurs, economic development professionals, and City staff to discuss current issues. Work to be inclusive of all business and economic development stakeholders of the community.	Ongoing
	7	Consider working with East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Ripon Main Street and Fond du Lac County EDC to create a Strategic Plan for Economic Development to assist the City in creating a vision, strategy and action plan for economic development.	Short-term
	8	Review and revise Tax Increment Finance (TIF) policy to prioritize business attraction, retention and expansion that is consistent with Policy 5.	Short-term
	9	Collaborate with Ripon Main Street and Fond du Lac County EDC to conduct a biennial survey of large employers to determine trends in workforce housing and transportation needs.	Short-term / Ongoing
Land Use	1	Maintain the Future Land Use Map (Map...) to identify appropriate areas for residential, commercial, industrial, institutional and environmental uses within the City and its extraterritorial plat review jurisdiction.	Ongoing
	2	Maintain an Official Map to coordinate long-term facility planning (e.g. roads, utilities, parks, drainage areas, etc.) in the City and surrounding extraterritorial plat review area.	Ongoing
	3	Review and update the City's Zoning Ordinance to ensure compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan and also to ensure that standards are advancing the City's overall vision.	Short-term
	4	Update the City's Official Zoning Map at least once per year to ensure the map accurately reflects any zoning amendments completed in the prior year. Include the map on the City's website along with zoning permit application forms.	Ongoing
	5	Investigate the creation of an environmental remediation TIF district to help fund remediation and redevelopment of the old brewery stable site.	Short-term
	6	Strengthen the City's Zoning Ordinance relating to site and building design, lighting, landscaping and signage to promote higher quality design and aesthetics, especially for properties along transportation corridors.	Short-term
	7	Investigate partnering with the Wisconsin DNR to provide environmental remediation to the old brewery stable site through the DNR's Remediation and Redevelopment Program.	Short-term

## 4.3 Plan Adoption

In order to implement this plan, it must be recommended for approval by the City Plan Commission. One copy of the plan adopted by the Plan Commission for recommendation to the City Council is required to be sent to: (1) every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the City, including any school district, sanitary district, or other special district, (2) the clerk of every city, village, town, and county that is adjacent to the City, (3) the WI Department of Administration, (4) East Central Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission, and (5) the public library that serves the area in which the City is located. The City will also send one copy of the plan, per written request, to any operator who has applied for or obtained a nonmetallic reclamation permit, a person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit, or any other property owner or leaseholder that has an interest in property allowing the extraction of nonmetallic mineral resources. (Refer to Section 66.1001(4)(b), Stats.)

After the Commission adopts the plan by resolution, the City Council must adopt the plan by ordinance. Prior to adopting the plan, the Plan Commission will hold at least one public hearing to discuss the recommended plan (SS 66.1001 (4)(d)). At least 30 days prior to the hearing, a Class 1 notice will be published that contains, at a minimum, the following:

- The date, time and location of the hearing,
- A summary of the proposed plan or plan amendment,
- The local government staff who may be contacted for additional information,
- Where to inspect and how to obtain a copy of the proposal before the hearing.

The City Council, by a majority vote, shall enact the ordinance adopting the recommended plan (Section 66.1001(4)(c), Stats.). The adopted plan and ordinance shall be distributed to the aforementioned parties. If the City Council asks the Plan Commission to revise the recommended plan, it is not mandatory that these revisions be sent to the distribution list. However, in the spirit of public participation and intergovernmental cooperation, revisions that constitute a substantial change to the recommended plan may be sent to the distribution list.

## 4.4 Consistency

Once formally adopted, the plan becomes a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and for coordinating legislative decisions. Per the requirements of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, beginning on January 1, 2010 if the City of Ripon engages in any of the actions listed below, those actions shall be consistent with its Comprehensive Plan:

- Official mapping established or amended under s. 62.23 (6)
- Local subdivision regulations under s. 236.45 or 236.46
- County zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 62.23 (7)
- Town, village, or city zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 60.61, 60.62, 60.23 (7)
- Zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands under s. 59.692, 61.351 or 62.231

An action shall be deemed consistent if:

1. It furthers, or at least does not interfere with, the goals, objectives, and policies of this plan,

2. It is compatible with the proposed future land uses and densities/intensities contained in this plan,
3. It carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for community facilities, including transportation facilities, other specific public actions, or actions proposed by nonprofit and for-profit organizations that are contained in the plan.

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the implementation element describe how each of the nine-elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Prior to adoption of the plan the City of Ripon reviewed, updated, and completed all elements of this plan together, and no inconsistencies were found.

## 4.5 Plan Monitoring, Amending and Updating

To monitor consistency with the Comprehensive Plan the City shall regularly revisit this plan to review its content prior to any important decisions, especially those that will affect land use. Members of the City Council, Plan Commission and any other decision-making body should periodically review the plan and identify areas that need to be amended. Special attention should be paid to the recommendations identified in this plan, and to the timetable for their completion. Completed actions should be celebrated and removed, while those actions not yet carried out should be given new deadlines and assigned to specific individuals, boards or committees for completion per the new schedule.

Although this plan has described policies and recommendations for future implementation, it is impossible to predict the exact future conditions in the City. Amendments may be appropriate in years following the adoption of the plan, particularly when the plan becomes contradictory toward emerging issues or trends. An amendment may also be needed to accommodate a unique proposal not previously considered; however, amendments should be carefully considered and should not become the standard response to proposals that do not fit the plan. Frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided or the plan loses integrity and becomes meaningless.

Amendments are any changes to plan text or maps and are defined as either being minor or major. Minor amendments are defined as changes to plan text or maps that are not associated with a development proposal. Major amendments are defined as changes to plan text or maps that are associated with a development proposal. In order to provide economies of scale, minor amendment requests should be collected throughout the year and addressed at a specified annual joint meeting of the Plan Commission & City Council (recommended for January to review requests of the previous year). Major amendments requests (i.e. Future Land Use amendments) can be aligned with the development review process (i.e. zoning or subdivision meetings).

Whether reviewing the request for a minor or major amendment, it is important to ensure that the change does not trigger the need to alter something else in the plan. The proposed amendment should be evaluated based on its merits and whether it is consistent, or would cause inconsistencies, with the other elements of the plan.

- **Recommendation: Hold one annual joint meeting between the City Council and Plan Commission to:**
  - Review the City's progress in implementing the recommendations of the plan,
  - Establish new deadlines and responsibilities for new or unfinished recommendations,
  - Identify any minor or major plan amendments that are needed or have been requested for review.

Frequent requests for minor or major amendments to the Comprehensive Plan should signal the need for a plan update. Unlike an amendment, the plan update is a major re-write of the plan document and supporting maps. Per the requirements of State Comprehensive Planning law, this Comprehensive Plan needs to be updated at least once every ten years. Updates could be coordinated with the release of new demographic and economic data (as with a new census) or with the release of updated mapping layers (such as FEMA Flood Maps). The assumptions of the previous plan can then be reconsidered in light of the new information.

- **Recommendation: Update this Comprehensive Plan at least once every ten years per the requirements of the State comprehensive planning law.**

To follow State Comprehensive Planning law, the City shall use the same process to amend or update the plan as was followed for the initial adoption, regardless of how minor the amendment or change is. Proposed amendments should be channeled through the local Plan Commission for recommendation, with final action occurring at the City Council, including proper public notices and hearings. For most amendments, the City does not need to circulate the entire plan to the parties in §66.1001(4)(b) of the State Statutes; it is only necessary to circulate the portion of the plan that is being amended. For the purpose of record keeping, page 35 of this plan contains an area to list any amendments made to this plan after its original adoption.

## 4.6 Severability

If any provision of this Comprehensive Plan shall be found to be invalid or unconstitutional, or if the application of this Comprehensive Plan to any person or circumstances is found to be invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the other provisions or applications of this Comprehensive Plan, which can be given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application.



## Plan Amendments

The following lists the dates, summaries and page numbers of any amendments to this Comprehensive Plan since its original adoption.

Date	Amendment Summary	Page # (if applicable)
------	-------------------	------------------------

# Appendix A

## Community Indicators Report

### Appendix A: Community Indicators Report

The Community Indicators Report is a summary of current conditions and recent trends in the City of Ripon. The purpose of these indicators is to enable informed choices about the future of the City. This report is included as an appendix to the Comprehensive Plan so that it may be easily updated from time to time as new data becomes available.

This chapter summarizes background information as required for the nine planning elements to be included in Comprehensive Plans. The information is compiled at the state, county and municipal levels to the extent that such data is available or can be synthesized from standard data sources. Much of the data comes from secondary sources, consisting primarily of the U.S. Census Bureau’s decennial census and American Community Survey (ACS) estimates. Caution should be given as ACS estimates are from a sample of the total population, and therefore, are subject to both sampling errors (deviations from the true population) and non-sampling errors (human and processing errors).

#### A.1 Demographics

The following tables display the population statistics and projections that were prepared as part of the requirements of the State Comprehensive Planning legislation. The data presented here includes historic population numbers, population projections, race/ethnicity and age.

Historic Population Change							
Municipality	1970 Census	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2019 Estimate	% Change (1970-2019)
City of Berlin	5,338	5,478	5,371	5,305	5,542	5,604	4.98%
City of Green Lake	1,109	1,208	1,064	1,100	960	1,008	-9.11%
Town of Ripon	1,186	1,411	1,419	1,379	1,400	1,416	19.39%
<b>City of Ripon</b>	<b>7,053</b>	<b>7,111</b>	<b>7,241</b>	<b>7,450</b>	<b>7,733</b>	<b>7,817</b>	<b>10.83%</b>
County of Fond du Lac	84,567	88,964	90,083	97,296	101,633	104,423	23.48%
State of Wisconsin	4,417,821	4,705,642	4,891,769	5,363,715	5,686,986	5,843,443	32.27%
Source: WI DOA							

As you can see in Figures 1 and 2, Ripon has been slowly increasing in population since 1970, with 10.83% total population growth. Over the same time period, however, the Town of Ripon, Fond du Lac County and the State all recorded much higher population growth rates. The highest being the State with 32.27%. The only comparable communities with slower growth rates are the City of Berlin and Green Lake, which has a negative growth rate. It should also be noted that Ripon’s population growth rate, as you can see in Figure 2, is beginning to slow between 2010 and 2019. This coincides with the WI DOA population projections of Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 and 5 shows that Ripon’s population growth rate is continuing to slow between 2010 and 2030, but between 2030 and 2040, the population is expected to decrease. This results in a net population decrease of 0.1%. The only surrounding community that loses more population than Ripon is Green Lake with a 6.25% decrease. The State and County populations, on the other hand, are expected to increase – the County by 8.48% and the State by 14.15% (Figure 4).

Figure 1

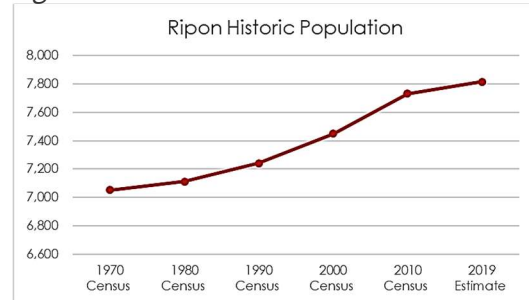


Figure 3

Population Projections					
Municipality	2010 Census	2019 Estimate	2030 Projection	2040 Projection	% Change (2010-2040)
City of Berlin	5,542	5,604	5,800	5,720	3.21%
City of Green Lake	960	1,008	955	900	-6.25%
Town of Ripon	1,400	1,416	1,470	1,440	2.86%
City of Ripon	7,733	7,817	7,945	7,725	-0.10%
County of Fond du Lac	101,633	104,423	110,590	110,250	8.48%
State of Wisconsin	5,686,986	5,843,443	6,375,910	6,491,635	14.15%

Source: WI DOA

Figure 4

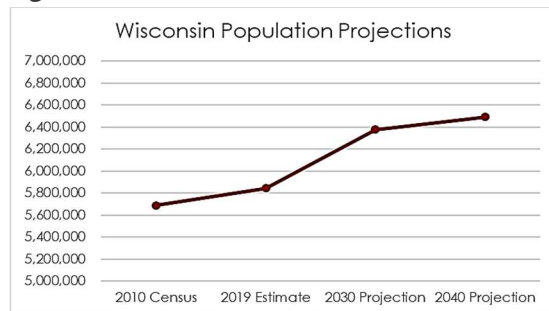
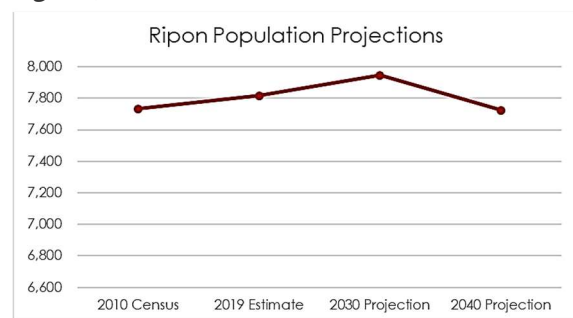


Figure 5



Ripon’s slow to negative growth rate could be explained by an aging population without sufficient in-migration.

Figure 6

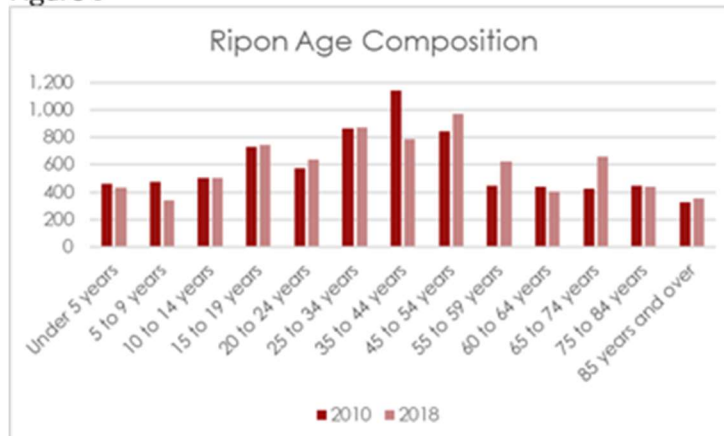


Figure 7

Population Age Composition						
Age Group	City of Ripon		Fond du Lac County		Wisconsin	
	2010	2018	2010	2018	2010	2018
Under 5 years	6.04%	5.54%	5.88%	5.62%	6.29%	5.81%
5 to 9 years	6.17%	4.38%	6.03%	6.13%	6.45%	6.19%
10 to 14 years	6.53%	6.47%	6.94%	6.13%	6.77%	6.41%
15 to 19 years	9.54%	9.53%	7.06%	6.32%	7.21%	6.60%
20 to 24 years	7.48%	8.24%	6.24%	6.25%	6.95%	6.96%
25 to 34 years	11.29%	11.24%	11.76%	11.66%	12.42%	12.63%
35 to 44 years	14.85%	10.12%	13.76%	11.82%	13.54%	12.02%
45 to 54 years	10.93%	12.45%	15.57%	14.05%	15.40%	13.46%
55 to 59 years	5.85%	8.02%	6.68%	7.79%	6.54%	7.35%
60 to 64 years	5.72%	5.23%	5.43%	6.83%	5.04%	6.57%
65 to 74 years	5.54%	8.50%	7.00%	9.77%	6.74%	9.13%
75 to 84 years	5.80%	5.67%	5.20%	4.97%	4.66%	4.70%
85 years and over	4.25%	4.60%	2.45%	2.66%	1.99%	2.18%
Median age (years)	38.1	39.2	39.8	41.5	38.1	39.3
Total Male	3,808	3,581	49,529	50,302	2,795,908	2,872,376
Total Female	3,878	4,196	51,390	52,013	2,842,039	2,906,018
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>7,686</b>	<b>7,777</b>	<b>100,919</b>	<b>102,315</b>	<b>5,637,947</b>	<b>5,778,394</b>

Source: 2010 and 2018 US Census ACS 5-year Estimates

Figure 6 shows the age composition of Ripon between 2010 and 2018; 2018 is represented by the lighter colored line. As you can see, the number of residents age 45 to 59 and 65 to 74 increased between 2010 and 2018. The number of residents age 9 and under decreases between 2010 and 2018. As stated above, this indicates that the population is growing older, while at the same time not seeing an influx of young families.

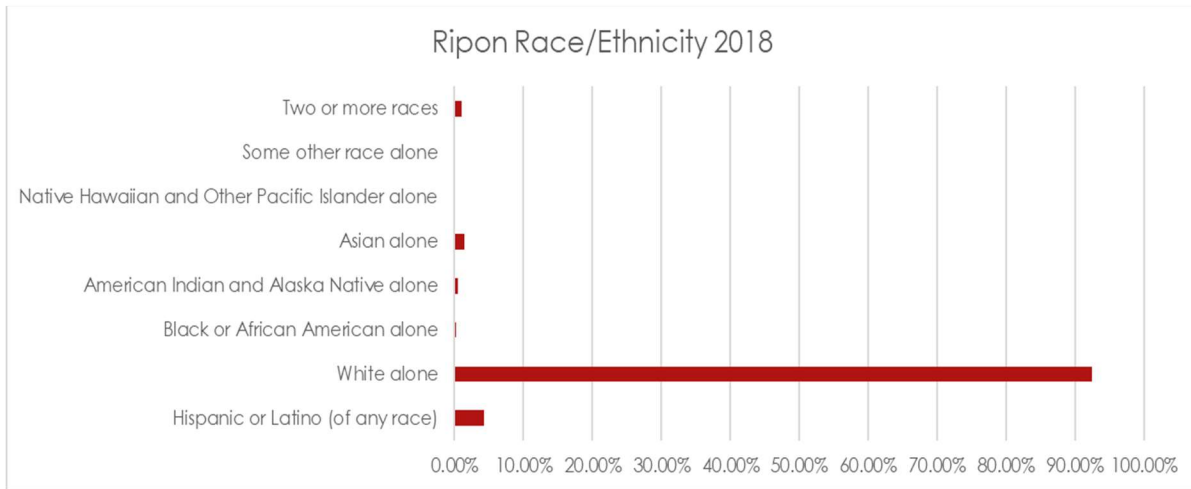
This is not unique to Ripon, however. As can be seen in Figure 7 above, both Fond du Lac County and the State had relative increases in the percentage of those 65 to 74 years old between 2010 and 2018: 2.96% for Ripon, 2.77% for the County and 2.39% for the State. Conversely, there is a slight decrease for

Figure 8

Race and Ethnicity												
Race and Ethnicity	City of Ripon				Fond du Lac County				State of Wisconsin			
	2010		2018		2010		2018		2010		2018	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	509	6.60%	336	4.30%	4,038	4.00%	5,125	5.00%	310,549	5.50%	385,779	6.70%
White alone	6,749	87.80%	7,184	92.40%	93,324	92.50%	92,042	90.00%	4,735,425	84.00%	4,711,038	81.50%
Black or African American alone	95	1.20%	22	0.30%	1,055	1.00%	1,409	1.40%	343,420	6.10%	361,909	6.30%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	49	0.60%	39	0.50%	420	0.40%	472	0.50%	45,340	0.80%	46,149	0.80%
Asian alone	87	1.10%	116	1.50%	793	0.80%	1,367	1.30%	121,582	2.20%	158,198	2.70%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	0.00%	8	0.00%	1,444	0.00%	1,676	0.00%
Some other race alone	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	184	0.20%	5,446	0.10%	4,807	0.10%
Two or more races	197	2.60%	80	1.00%	1,285	1.30%	1,708	1.70%	74,741	1.30%	108,838	1.90%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>7,686</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>7,777</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100,919</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>102,315</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5,637,947</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5,778,394</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: 2010 and 2018 US Census ACS 5-year Estimates

Figure 9



Ripon, the County and State in those age 19 and younger. This data indicates that there is an increasing need for amenities and housing for seniors.

Race and ethnicity were also looked at to help create a complete picture of Ripon’s residents. As is illustrated in both Figure 8 and Figure 9, the majority of Ripon’s residents (92%) classify themselves as “White alone.” This percentage is slightly lower in Fond du Lac County, with 90%, and lower yet in the State, with 81.5%. Latino or Hispanic and African American both come in at just over 6% each of the State population. In Ripon, those percentages are 4.3% for Hispanic or Latino and less than 1% for African American.

This data shows that Ripon is generally racially homogeneous, but there are still minorities, particularly Latino and Hispanic, living in the City. Care needs to be taken to ensure that Ripon’s homogeneity does not lead to the marginalization of the minority populations that call the City home.

## A.2 Housing

This element provides a baseline assessment of Ripon’s current housing stock and covers all of the information required under §66.1001. Information includes past and projected number of households, age and structural characteristics, occupancy and tenure characteristics, and value and affordability characteristics. This information provides a basis for creating goals, policies and actions to guide the future development and maintenance of housing in the City of Ripon.

As can be seen in Figure 10, in 2010, there were 3,053 households in the City of Ripon. By 2040, the number is projected to be 3,246 an increase of 6.32%. During the same period, total households are projected to increase by 18.13% for Fond du Lac County and 22.39% for the State. The higher increase in households for the County and State as compared to Ripon corresponds to the larger increases in population for the County and the State, as compared to the 0.1% population loss for Ripon.

Ripon’s 6% increase in total households despite the population loss can be attributed to the trend of smaller household sizes due to longer life expectancy, delayed family formation, and families having

fewer children, which is seen in Figure 11. Between 2010 and 2040, household size is expected to drop by approximately 7%-8% across the State and local municipalities.

Both housing and population projections allow a community to anticipate and plan for future land use needs. A projected loss of population and only a small increase in number of households is a potential issue that Ripon will need to address, as that can lead to a declining tax base.

Figure 10

Household Projections					
Municipality	2010 Census	2020 Projection	2030 Projection	2040 Projection	% Change (2010-2040)
City of Berlin	2,296	2,417	2,550	2,578	12.28%
City of Green Lake	491	508	510	486	-1.02%
Town of Ripon	545	582	613	614	12.66%
<b>City of Ripon</b>	<b>3,053</b>	<b>3,226</b>	<b>3,337</b>	<b>3,246</b>	<b>6.32%</b>
County of Fond du Lac	40,697	44,308	47,419	48,076	18.13%
State of Wisconsin	2,279,768	2,491,982	2,697,884	2,790,322	22.39%

Source: WI DOA

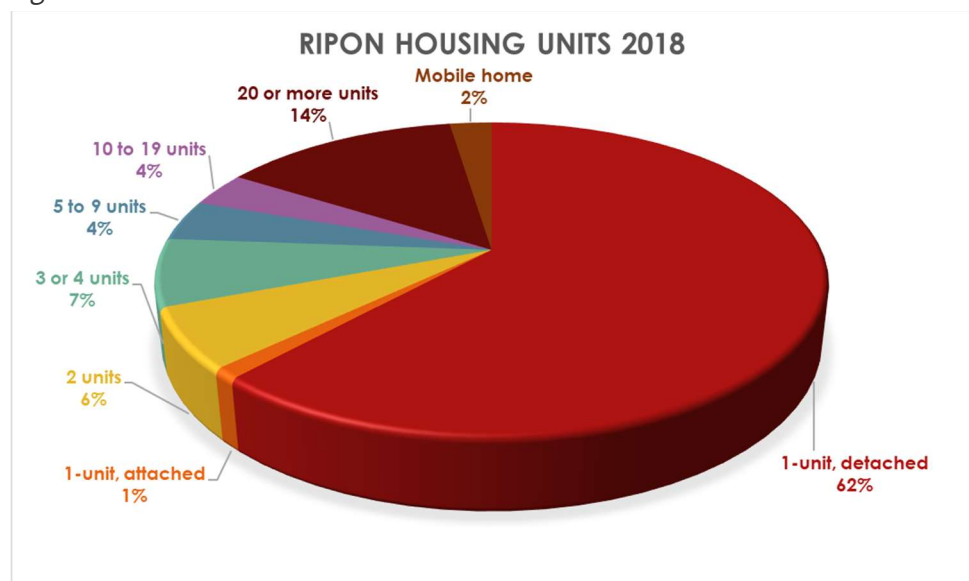
Figure 11

Persons per Household					
Municipality	2010 Census	2020 Projection	2030 Projection	2040 Projection	% Change (2010-2040)
City of Berlin	2.38	2.32	2.25	2.18	-8.53%
City of Green Lake	1.88	1.83	1.78	1.72	-8.58%
Town of Ripon	2.57	2.46	2.40	2.35	-8.70%
<b>City of Ripon</b>	<b>2.22</b>	<b>2.12</b>	<b>2.07</b>	<b>2.02</b>	<b>-8.77%</b>
County of Fond du Lac	2.41	2.31	2.25	2.20	-8.71%
State of Wisconsin	2.43	2.35	2.30	2.26	-7.05%

Source: WI DOA

Per the 2018 ACS estimates, 62% of Ripon's housing units were single-family homes, 14% of housing units were in multi-family buildings with 20 or more units, and 8% were in multi-family buildings with 5-19 units. Attached homes with 1-4 units and mobile homes made up the remainder of the housing stock in 2018. In the same year both

Figure 12



the State and the County had a higher percentage of single-family housing units, with the County

having 70% and the State having 67%. This is likely attributable to the student population at Ripon College who live in apartments or dorms.

Figure 13

	City of Ripon				Fond du Lac County				Wisconsin			
	2010		2018		2010		2018		2010		2018	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Owner-occupied	2,065	60.9%	1,928	55.67%	29,363	67.6%	28,500	62.8%	1,580,608	61.0%	1,568,040	58.5%
Renter-occupied	1,120	33.0%	1,343	38.78%	11,121	25.6%	12,509	27.6%	694,003	26.8%	775,089	28.9%
Vacant Units	206	6.1%	192	5.54%	2,967	6.8%	4,352	9.6%	318,462	12.3%	338,103	12.6%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>3,391</b>		<b>3,463</b>		<b>43,451</b>		<b>45,361</b>		<b>2,593,073</b>		<b>2,681,232</b>	

Source: 2010 & 2018 U.S. Census ACS 5-Year Estimates

Figure 13 shows housing occupancy status per the 2010 Census and 2018 estimates. The percentage of owner-occupied housing units is decreasing in Ripon, while the percentage of renter-occupied housing is increasing. This mirrors Fond du Lac County and the State. Between 2010 and 2018, the percentage of owner-occupied units went from 60.9% to 55.67% in Ripon, 67.7% to 62.8% in the County, and 61% to 58.5% in the State; the percentage of renter-occupied units, on the other hand went, from 33% to 38.78% in Ripon, 25.6% to 27.6% in the County and 26.8% to 28.9% in the State.

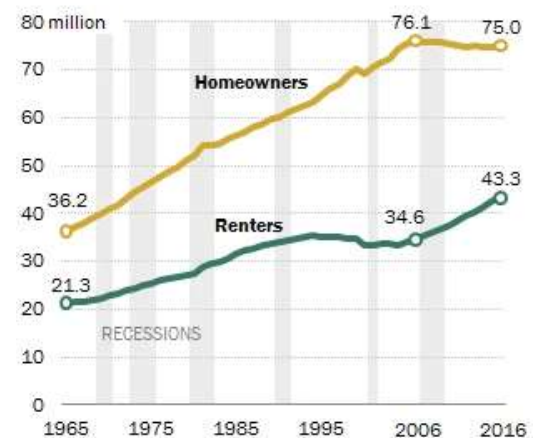
This follows the trend in the United States as a whole. According to a 2017 PEW Research Center analysis of Census Bureau Housing data, “more U.S. households are headed by renters than at any point since at least 1965” (see Figure 14). This can be partially attributed to the housing crisis of 2008, but it can also be attributed to the decrease in family size and increase in single person households.

According to Figures 15 and 16, in 2018 83.1% of homeowners in Ripon lived in a home that was, by definition, affordable. This is actually up from 72.1% in 2010. The Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines an "affordable dwelling" as one that a household can obtain for 30% or less of its income. This corresponds to Fond du Lac County and the State, which also have high percentages of their homeowner populations living in homes where they pay less than 30% of their income on the home: 83.2% for the County and 79.4% for the State in 2018.

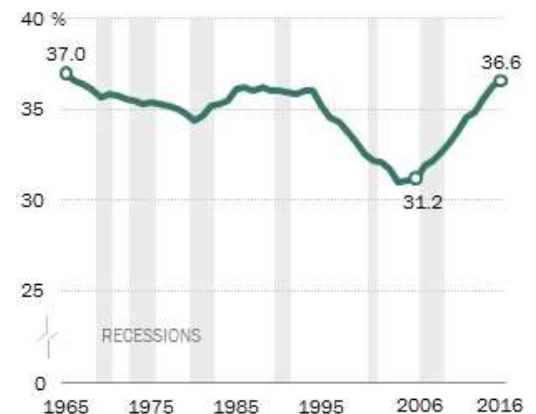
Figure 14

**Significant growth in the number and share of households renting their home since 2006**

Number of household heads, in millions



% of household heads who rent their home



Note: Data labels are for 1965, 2006 and 2016. Figures for 1979, 1981, 1989, 1993 and 2000-2016 reflect revised estimates. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau estimates of housing inventory.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



A higher percentage of renters in Ripon are considered cost burdened. For 2018, only 47.4% of renters in Ripon lived in a rental unit where they spent less than 30% of their income on rent; 57.1% in the County and 55% in the State. The fact that the percentage of renters in Ripon who are cost burdened is a full 10% higher than the County and 8% less than the State, indicates there is not enough access for affordable renting opportunities.

Figure 15

Owner Affordability												
	City of Ripon				Fond du Lac County				Wisconsin			
	2010		2018		2010		2018		2010		2018	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 20.0 percent	881	42.7%	1,224	64.4%	13,482	46.0%	16,548	58.2%	701,610	44.6%	885,414	56.8%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	266	12.9%	231	12.2%	4,747	16.2%	4,207	14.8%	242,430	15.4%	217,068	13.9%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	341	16.5%	123	6.5%	3,463	11.8%	2,875	10.1%	182,179	11.6%	135,992	8.7%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	136	6.6%	67	3.5%	2,057	7.0%	1,201	4.2%	121,296	7.7%	84,079	5.4%
35.0 percent or more	441	21.4%	255	13.4%	5,545	18.9%	3,585	12.6%	327,133	20.8%	237,205	15.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,065</b>		<b>1,900</b>		<b>29,294</b>		<b>28,416</b>		<b>1,574,648</b>		<b>1,559,758</b>	

Source: 2010 & 2018 U.S. Census ACS 5-Year Estimates

Figure 16

Renter Affordability												
	City of Ripon				Fond du Lac County				Wisconsin			
	2010		2018		2010		2018		2010		2018	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 15.0 percent	170	15.2%	161	12.7%	1,620	15.3%	2,325	20.0%	86,608	13.3%	114,095	15.7%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	9	0.8%	248	19.6%	1,480	14.0%	1,948	16.7%	93,024	14.2%	106,768	14.6%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	205	18.3%	119	9.4%	1,271	12.0%	1,409	12.1%	88,656	13.6%	97,123	13.3%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	177	15.8%	71	5.6%	1,509	14.2%	959	8.2%	77,853	11.9%	82,991	11.4%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	96	8.6%	175	13.8%	915	8.6%	1,085	9.3%	56,857	8.7%	63,529	8.7%
35.0 percent or more	463	41.3%	490	38.8%	3,797	35.8%	3,912	33.6%	250,079	38.3%	264,303	36.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,120</b>		<b>1,264</b>		<b>10,592</b>		<b>11,638</b>		<b>653,077</b>		<b>728,809</b>	

Source: 2010 & 2018 U.S. Census ACS 5-Year Estimates

As you can see in Figure 17, housing values for owner-occupied housing units in Ripon are lower than in the State or County. The median value for housing in Ripon was \$120,900 in 2018. Compare that with the County at \$162,700 and the State at \$173,600; that equates to 35% and 44% higher values than Ripon, respectively. Fond du Lac County had the largest increase in median housing value at 14%, while the State and Ripon increased only by 3-4%. Low housing values in Ripon are a symptom of the age of Ripon's housing stock.

Figure 17

Owner Occupied Housing Value												
	City of Ripon				Fond du Lac County				Wisconsin			
	2010		2018		2010		2018		2010		2018	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than \$50,000	139	6.7%	118	6.1%	1,575	5.4%	1,621	5.7%	74,890	4.7%	79,627	5.1%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	605	29.3%	450	23.3%	5,421	18.5%	4,193	14.7%	210,950	13.3%	210,320	13.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	868	42.0%	793	41.1%	8,821	30.0%	7,108	24.9%	352,973	22.3%	322,467	20.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	253	12.3%	286	14.8%	5,740	19.5%	5,599	19.6%	345,355	21.8%	312,331	19.9%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	144	7.0%	249	12.9%	4,901	16.7%	6,029	21.2%	354,131	22.4%	361,770	23.1%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	41	2.0%	32	1.7%	2,233	7.6%	3,376	11.8%	179,009	11.3%	211,311	13.5%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	575	2.0%	390	1.4%	51,892	3.3%	58,652	3.7%
\$1,000,000 or more	15	0.7%	0	0.0%	97	0.3%	184	0.6%	11,408	0.7%	11,562	0.7%
<b>Total Owner-Occupied Housing</b>	<b>2,065</b>		<b>1,928</b>		<b>29,363</b>		<b>28,500</b>		<b>1,580,608</b>		<b>1,568,040</b>	
Median Value	\$116,300		\$120,900		\$143,000		\$162,700		\$169,000		\$173,600	

Source: 2010 & 2018 U.S. Census ACS 5-Year Estimates

From 2013 to March of 2020, Ripon issued 22 single-family home permits and 15 multi-family home permits, which equates to 37 new housing units (see Figure 18).

At the time the last Comprehensive Plan was written in 2009, 55.3% of Ripon’s 3,111 housing units were over 40 years old. Even taking this new data into account, the majority of Ripon’s housing stock is still over 40 years old. This becomes even more apparent when you consider the fact that there were 418 housing units in 2009 that were between 31 and 40 years old. Since it is now 2020, those 418 housing units are now included in the total number of homes over 40 years old.

Figure 18

Building Permit Data	
Type of Permit	2013 to March 2020 Total Permits
Single Family Residential (new)	22
Multi-Family Residential (new)	15
Totals - Residential (new)	37

### A.3 Mobility

This element provides a baseline assessment of the City of Ripon’s transportation facilities and provides a basis for creating goals, policies and actions to guide the future development and maintenance of transportation facilities in the City of Ripon.

#### Transportation Modes

##### Rail:

Wisconsin and Southern Railroad operates a freight line that runs north/south through Ripon. More information can be obtained at [www.sorrailroad.com](http://www.sorrailroad.com). Passenger rail service is not available in Ripon. The nearest Amtrak station is in Columbus, which is about 45 miles away.



#### Transit:

Ripon does not have local mass transit service. Lamers Bus Lines (<https://www.golamers.com/lamers-connect/>) has an intercity connect bus that stops in Waupun, which is about 20 miles away. Lamers Connect Green Bay – Appleton – Madison bus route runs daily and services the cities of Green Bay, Appleton, Oshkosh, Ripon, Waupun, Beaver Dam, Columbus and Madison.

Ripon Taxi does provide tax service within the City limits of Ripon and Koeppen Transport provides transportation services for individuals of any age with mobility challenges.

#### Air:

The nearest international airport is Appleton International Airport (ATW). Located 45 miles northeast of Ripon, in Outagamie County, the airport has regularly scheduled commercial passenger air service. Allegiant, American, Delta and United Airlines all fly out of ATW. In addition to commercial passenger service, air freight, chartered flight service, car rentals and aviation technology services are also provided at the airport. More information can be found her: <https://atwairport.com/>.

Local airports servicing Ripon are the Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh and the Ripon Airport, both about 20 miles away. Neither airport has regularly scheduled commercial passenger air service, but both offer numerous other services, including private charter service.

#### Water:

There are no ports within an hour of Ripon.

#### Trails (see Map 13):

- **Northwestern Trail:** A packed gravel base walking and biking trail that begins at the Ripon Public Library and goes 3.5 miles to the west.
- **South Woods Trails:** Located off S. Union Street, the South Woods area has several paths and trails.
- **Annie Starr Woods:** An area adjacent to South Woods that contains trails open to the public.
- **Mascoutin Valley Trail:** Located on Locust Road north of Ripon and formerly known as the Ripon/Berlin Trail, this gravel trail is good for hiking, biking, and equestrian uses.
- **Kiwanis Trail:** Located off Thomas Street, this trail is a short, but challenging hiking trail.
- **Ceresco Prairie Conservancy:** Located behind the Rodman Center for Arts of Ripon College campus, these trails are good for running, walking, and hiking.
- Snowmobile trails are maintained by the Sno-Odders. More information is available at [www.sno-odders.com](http://www.sno-odders.com).

#### **Street and Highway Classification (see Map 9)**

The street and highway system in the City of Ripon consists of minor arterials, major and minor collectors, and local roads. These classifications are from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) and are based on which primary function the street or highway serves – the movement of vehicles through an area or to provide access to adjacent land. Arterials accommodate the movement of vehicles while local streets provide direct access to individual parcels of land. Collectors serve both local and through traffic by providing a connection between arterials and local streets. Designated major collectors within the City include STH 23, STH 44, STH 49, and CTH “E.” Designated minor



collectors within Ripon include S. Union Street, Hall Street, Watson Street, W. Thorne Street, and CTH “FF.” The remaining streets within the City are local and provide access to residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses.

### **Transportation Plans and Programs**

#### City of Ripon

City officials review and budget for transportation projects as part of the City’s annual budget and capital improvements plan (CIP) process. A copy of the CIP can be obtained at City Hall. The City of Ripon uses the PASER rating system to evaluate pavement surface condition of the streets and as a guide to budgeting for street repairs and improvements.

#### Fond du Lac County

Fond du Lac County prioritizes and budgets for transportation improvements according to a five-year capital improvement plan. The current plan indicates the only project in the Ripon area is asphalt repaving of CTH “KK” from STH 23 to the Green Lake County line in 2012. The capital improvement plan is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

#### East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

East Central’s transportation program does not specifically address any projects in the Ripon area. More information is at [www.eastcentralrpc.org/planning/transportation.htm](http://www.eastcentralrpc.org/planning/transportation.htm).

#### Wisconsin Department of Transportation – Northeast Region

The City of Ripon and all of Fond du Lac County are part of the Department of Transportation’s Northeast Region. The Northeast Region has just revised the Six-Year (2008-2013) Highway Improvement Program to make necessary maintenance and improvements to the state’s road network. Projects located within the City of Ripon include reconstructing STH 23 from the Green Lake County line to the City of Ripon. This work is currently scheduled to take place between 2010 and 2013. While not included in the Six-Year Program, the City of Ripon has already discussed potential locations for a STH 23 Bypass. The entire Northeast District Six-Year Highway Improvement Program can be viewed at [www.dot.state.wi.us/projects/state/sixyear/docs/nerlisting.pdf](http://www.dot.state.wi.us/projects/state/sixyear/docs/nerlisting.pdf).

#### Wisconsin Department of Transportation

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation offers numerous federal and state programs to local units of government in need of financial aid for desired projects. The form of financial aid provided typically comes as a grant or reduced rate loan to the applicant. Each program’s general goal is to enhance the state’s overall transportation network. Information on these programs can be found at [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov).

## **A.4 Utilities and Community Facilities**

This element provides a baseline assessment of the City of Ripon’s utilities & community facilities and provides a basis for creating goals, policies and actions to guide the future development and maintenance of utilities & community facilities in the City of Ripon.

## Utilities

Figure 19 identifies the utility providers in the Ripon area. Ripon Utilities provides water and wastewater services. The City also provides for stormwater management through the enforcement of stormwater and erosion control ordinances. Electricity and natural gas services are provided through Alliant Energy. The service and capacity of the utilities that serve the City of Ripon appear to be adequate. See Map 10 for City of Ripon Utilities.

Figure 19

Utilities		
Utility	Provider	Notes
Water	City of Ripon	Current capacity is 2.2 MGD and current usage is 1.0 MGD.
Wastewater	City of Ripon	Current capacity is 1.8 MGD; Treatment Plant was last upgraded in 2003.
Stormwater	City of Ripon	City has Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Ordinance.
Solid Waste Disposal	City of Ripon and Advanced Disposal Midwest, LLC	Pick-up every week.
Recycling	Advanced Disposal	Pick-up every other week.
Telecommunications	CenturyLink and Spectrum	
Electricity	Alliant Energy	Transmission through American Transmission Company (ATC).
Natural Gas	Alliant Energy	
<i>Source: City of Ripon</i>		

## Public Safety

Ripon public safety services include a Police Department, Fire Department and first responders. The Police Department is full-service department with 14 officers, 9 additional support staff, and a K-9 unit. Many community programs are offered through the Police Department.

The Ripon Area Fire Department is a volunteer department, which includes 37 volunteers and 10 pieces of apparatus.

Ripon Guardian Ambulance provides first responder services and includes 3 state-of-the-art ambulances, one emergency medical first responder vehicle and a staff of 30 responders including nurses, paramedics, advanced EMT's, and basic EMT's.

The City has intergovernmental agreements with neighboring municipalities and the County for jail and court services. Jail services are provided through the Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Department and the City is served by the Lakeside Municipal Court system. The court serves cities within Fond du Lac County, including the City of Berlin, City of Fond du Lac, City of Green Lake, City of Markeson, City of Princeton, City of Ripon, Town of Empire, Town of Osceola, Town of Ripon, Town of Taycheedah, Village of Brandon, Village of Campbelsport, Village of Fairwater, Village of North Fond du Lac, and the Village of Oakfield.

## Parks (see Map 13)

Ripon has 7 community parks, including a dog park, and 5 mini parks:

- Murray Park: Located on Murray Park Drive with accessible play equipment, restrooms, picnic tables, benches, tennis courts, a basketball court, four little league baseball diamonds, and two softball diamonds. The park has two shelters – an upper and lower. Murray Park Upper Shelter contains 11 tables and seats 80 easily. It has a fireplace, handicapped accessible restrooms, tennis courts, horseshoe pits, basketball court, playground equipment, Frisbee Golf course and nearby are two softball and four baseball fields. Murray Park Lower Shelter has 6 tables and seats 45 easily. It has handicapped accessible restrooms and is placed between two softball fields with four baseball fields and one soccer field nearby.
- Ceresco Park: Located on South Union Street with accessible play equipment and restrooms, picnic tables, park benches, a shelter, and a half-court basketball court. This shelter contains 8 tables and seats 65 easily.
- Selfridge Park: Located on E. Water and Seward Streets with play equipment, a skateboard park, a shelter, accessible restrooms, picnic tables, benches, and horseshoe pits. This shelter contains 8 tables and seats 65 easily. The shelter overlooks Gothic Mill Pond where ice skating is allowed in the winter, weather permitting.
- Barlow Park: Located on Griswold Street with handicapped accessible play equipment and restrooms, picnic tables, park benches, two shelter houses, an open pavilion, horseshoe pits, three sand volleyball courts, three basketball courts, and one base-ball diamond. The Barlow North Shelter includes 16 tables and seats 125 easily. It has a kitchen area, fireplace and handicapped accessible restrooms. The Barlow South Shelter includes 8 tables and seats 60 easily. The Riponfest Pavilion includes 18 tables and seats 140 easily. It does not contain restroom facilities, but restrooms are nearby in the Barlow North Shelter.
- Heritage Park: This park is located on State Street next to Crystal Creek. Park shelters can be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Eagle Park: Located on Pearl and Eagle Streets with handicapped accessible play equipment, picnic tables, park benches, and access to the Northwestern Hiking Trail.
- Dog Park: This park is located in the Town of Ripon and provides a place for dogs to exercise and play. The park is 5 acres, is completely fenced in and has a designated area for small dogs.
- In addition, there are five small parks (Alin, Horner, Creekside, Redman, Stewart) that do not have any facilities or equipment.

Ripon residents also have access to the Fond du Lac County Parks:

Riggs County Park: Located at N8137 Douglas St., Ripon, this park is the most recent addition to the County park system. At 300 acres, Riggs County Park is the County's largest park. Purchased in 1998, the park is planned as a largely natural area park with 180 acres of wetlands, 70 acres of native prairie restoration and about 50 acres of active recreation. Currently the park provides a newly developed



**Riggs County Park**

parking area, shelter, playground, splash pad and walking trails for users. A master plan prepared for the park in 1998-1999 is guiding development of the property.

Ripon College staff and students along with county parks employees have completed an 18-hole disc golf course located at the east end of Riggs County Park. The disc golf course starts and ends by the Adams School parking lot. The course is complete with tee signs, a course layout map and brochure, and tree plantings.

## Schools

Ripon Area School District - the Ripon school system is a K-12 system housed in three facilities (see Map 12):

- Barlow Park School – Grades K-2
- Murray Park School – Grades 3-5
- A combined Middle and High School site – Grades 6-12

## Moraine Park Technical College

Moraine Park Technical College has three campuses - Fond du Lac, Beaver Dam and West Bend. It serves over 16,000 students and has over 100 areas of study, including professional development courses.

More information is available at [www.morainepark.edu](http://www.morainepark.edu).

## Ripon College

Ripon College, established in 1851, is a national leader in innovative liberal arts education. Ripon offers more than 80 areas of study along with unique pre-professional programs. Ripon has a student-to-faculty ratio of 14:1, and the average class size is fewer than 20 students. The campus comprises 250 acres and 27 buildings, 10 of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The College competes athletically as part of the Midwest Conference and offers 21 NCAA Division III varsity teams. The new \$23.5 million Willmore Center for athletics, health and wellness includes new high-tech classrooms, a state-of-the-art fitness center, Wisconsin's best NCAA indoor track and field, performance courts, fitness studios, athletic training center, an open air atrium, new conference and meeting spaces, and other enhancements.

Other recent campus updates include an apartment-style residence hall; enhancements to the student union, dining facilities, student activity spaces; an upgraded recital hall; and, new applied learning classrooms to support our innovative curriculum. The new Franzen Center for Academic Success, featuring free tutoring and mentoring services for all students in a contemporary tech-enhanced learning environment, opened in Fall of 2019.

More information is available at [www.ripon.edu](http://www.ripon.edu).



### University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh

At about 20 miles away, UW-Oshkosh is the closest public university. It enrolls over 10,000 students and offers more than 200 areas of study. It has an average class size of 35 students and a student-to-faculty ratio of 20:1. The University competes in NCAA Division III sports. The campus comprises 185 acres in downtown Oshkosh and has satellite campuses in Fond du Lac and the Fox Cities.

More information is available at [www.uwosh.edu](http://www.uwosh.edu).

### **Public Library**

The City of Ripon also has its own public library. The public library is located on Jefferson Street in downtown Ripon. The library provides full-service media loaning to the surrounding area year round and is part of the larger Winnefox System. More information can be found at [www.riponlibrary.org](http://www.riponlibrary.org).

### **Health Care**

Aurora Health - Full service medical health center located on W. Fond du Lac Street. More information is available at [www.aurorahealthcare.org](http://www.aurorahealthcare.org).

Affinity Medical Group - Full service medical health center located on W. Oshkosh Street. More information is available at [www.affinityhealth.org](http://www.affinityhealth.org).

CHN Medical Center - Full service medical health center located on W. Fond du Lac Street. More information is available at [www.communityhealthnetwork.org](http://www.communityhealthnetwork.org).

Ripon Medical Center - Full-service hospital located on Newbury Street. More information is available at [www.riponmedicalcenter.com](http://www.riponmedicalcenter.com).

TheDACare Clinic - Full service medical health center located on W. Oshkosh Street in Ripon. More information is available at [www.thedacare.org](http://www.thedacare.org).

### **Child Care**

- Discovery Preschool
- Ripon Children’s Learning Center
- Grace Pre-School
- First Steps Daycare
- Bright Beginnings Daycare
- Small World Daycare
- Cathy’s House Daycare

It was indicated during discussions with the Plan Commission that the City does not have sufficient affordable daycare available for workers.

## **A.5 Natural and Agricultural Resources**

This element provides a baseline assessment of the City of Ripon’s natural and agricultural resources. This information provides a basis for creating goals, policies and actions to guide the future development and maintenance of agricultural and natural resources in the City of Ripon.

## **Natural Resources**

### Topography (see Map 3)

Land relief within the City is approximately 130 total feet, ranging in elevation from approximately 860 feet where Silver Creek leaves the city limits to approximately 990 feet in the south-central part of the City between Watson and Newbury Streets near the hospital. Most of the City can be characterized as gently sloping (2-6% slopes); but sloping (6-12% slopes), moderately steep (12-20% slopes), and steep (20-30% slopes) areas can also be found throughout the City.

### Geology (see Map 4)

Ripon's current landscape was largely influenced by the Valdres ice sheet of the Green Bay lobe, during the Wisconsin glaciation, and is situated on the border between what is known as the Green Bay-Lake Winnebago-Rock River Lowland and the Black River/Magnesian Cuesta. Three different bedrock formations lie under Ripon - the Prairie du Chien group, St. Peter Sandstone, and the Galena Dolomite/Platteville formation. These bedrock formations have different characteristics, including their potential for supplying groundwater. Although the rock formations differ from one another, they are thought to be hydraulically connected.

### Soils (see Map 5)

The City is located in an area that is comprised of two soil associations. Approximately half of the City is comprised of soils in the Lomira-Virgil association, while the other half is comprised of soils in the Plano-Mendota association. Soils in the Lomira-Virgil association tend to be well to somewhat poorly drained, silty, moderately permeable soils underlain by calcareous till. Future development will be most limited in those areas comprised of Virgil soils, as they tend to have a seasonal high groundwater table that comes within 3 feet of the soil surface. Soils in the Plano-Mendota association tend to be well drained, silty, moderately permeable soils underlain by calcareous till. Generally, soils in the Plano-Mendota association offer little impediment to development. A band of Hixton and Knowles soils is present in the west half of the City. These two soils are shallow, having typical depths to bedrock of 2-4 feet.

## **Environmental Characteristics** (see Map 6)

### Surface Waters

According to WDNR's Surface Water Data Viewer, three navigable waterways are found in the City. These include Silver Creek and two of its smaller tributaries. Silver Creek has been listed as a 303(d) water, meaning it is not meeting the water quality standards described in the Clean Water Act. The Mill Pond is located on the east side of the community.

### Wetlands

Development in wetlands can destroy important environmental benefits, including the filtering of storm water runoff and the provision of wildlife habitat. The DNR and the Corps of Engineers have regulating authority over all wetlands, including the placement of fill materials within a wetland. In general, the most restrictive regulations apply to proposed development projects. Mapped wetlands are present within the city limits. The wetlands within the City are associated with Silver Creek and its

tributaries. This link (<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wetlands/>) is a useful point of reference for community officials, developers, and/or interested persons to gain direction with wetland questions related to development projects or protection issues. The page provides links to specific administrative rules, discussions on wetland laws and programs, as well as other wetland issues.

### Floodplains

Portions of the City are located in areas that are susceptible to flooding. According to the FEMA flood rate map produced for the City, these areas are located along Silver Creek and one of its tributaries. Future development in and around these areas will be restricted. Building can occur between the floodway and floodfringe (between the 10 and 100-year flood event) if the lowest first floor elevation is two feet above the 100-year flood elevation, or the basement is flood proofed.

### Watersheds

The City is located in the Big Green Lake Watershed. The Big Green Lake Watershed has been selected as a priority watershed due to the high sediment and nutrient loads it discharges into Green Lake.

### Woodlands

Only a few scattered woodlands are found within the city limits. Development in woodlands can destroy important environmental benefits that these areas provide to the community including the provision of habitat for wildlife. Wooded areas in the City provide an aesthetic amenity for the community.

### **Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) are areas within a landscape that encompass especially valuable natural resource features that should be protected from development. The following areas within the City should be considered environmentally sensitive:

- Navigable waters with a 75-foot buffer
- WDNR wetlands with a 75-foot buffer
- FEMA floodplains
- Moderately steep to steep areas (>12% slopes)
- Areas that provide habitat for threatened and endangered species.

### **Wildlife Habitat and Threatened and Endangered Species** (see Map 8)

Federal and state records provide general information on wildlife habitat and threatened and endangered species and should be consulted as part of the review process for new development projects. Information on wildlife habitat and threatened and endangered species is available from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at -

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/endangeredresources/laws.html>

### **State Natural Areas** (see Map 7)

State Natural Areas (SNAs) protect significant landscape features, geological formations, and archeological sites throughout Wisconsin. These areas are valued primarily for research and educational purposes, while providing rare safe havens for scarce plants and animals. Site protection



is provided by land acquisition, donations, conservation easements, and cooperative agreements. The closest SNA to Ripon is Ripon Prairie, a one-acre remnant of dry-prairie that houses plant species characteristic to that community type. Ripon Prairie is owned by Ripon College.

### **Public Wildlife Recreation Land**

The DNR has divided the state into five regions for public land management purposes. Fond du Lac County is part of the northeast region and has three wildlife areas. The closest to Ripon is the Eldorado Wildlife Area. This site contains 6,371 acres of state-owned hunting land that includes brush, grass, marsh, and woodlands. In addition to hunting, the Eldorado Wildlife Area provides opportunities for dog training, snowmobiling, boating, and fishing. Each area has unique wildlife, recreational opportunities, and physical features. Likewise, each area has special rules and terms of use to which strict adherence is required. Persons utilizing these areas can find specific information by consulting the following web page: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/>

### **Groundwater**

According to the state's Groundwater Susceptibility Map (see the link below), most of Ripon is located in an area deemed to be moderately to highly susceptible to groundwater contamination. The reasons for this designation are the relatively shallow depths to bedrock (<50 feet) and the sandy soils found within the City. More information can be found at –

<http://wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/find/fonddulac/susceptibility.html>

The primary potential pollution sources to the City's groundwater are areas where industrial spills have occurred, contamination from adjacent agricultural lands, and leaking underground storage tanks.

Tests of private wells located in agricultural lands surrounding the City indicate moderate levels of nitrate contamination. Nitrate is the most widespread groundwater contaminant in the state and is caused chiefly by agricultural practices such as manure spreading and fertilizer applications. Although the nitrate concentrations were not above the safe drinking water standard of 10 parts per million, nitrate contamination can be used as a proxy for other contaminants, such as pesticides.

Tests of the City Ripon's municipal well indicate that its drinking water exceeds the current arsenic drinking water standards of 10 parts per billion. The arsenic levels observed in the City's drinking water are likely caused by declining groundwater levels. This drop in groundwater exposes the bedrock within the City's aquifer to oxygen, causing a chemical reaction that releases arsenic into the City's drinking water supply.

More information regarding groundwater that is specific to Fond du Lac County can be found at <http://wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/integrate/develop.html>.

### **Agricultural Resources**

#### Farmland

Much of the City of Ripon has been built in areas where soils are classified as prime for farmland. Soils that are good for agricultural purposes are generally good for development purposes.

### Agricultural Impact Statement Program

An agricultural impact statement is required when the builders of a public construction project have the power to condemn property (eminent domain) and will acquire more than five acres of land from any farm operation. Agricultural impact statements analyze the potential impact of public construction projects on farmland and farm operations and recommend ways to lessen those impacts. Examples of public construction projects include highway expansions, the placement of utility transmission lines, construction of pipelines, or the building of wastewater treatment plants, for example. More information about this program can be found at -

[https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs\\_Services/AgriculturalImpactStatements.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/AgriculturalImpactStatements.aspx)

### Farmland Preservation Plan

This program assists in preserving Wisconsin's valuable farmland by assisting counties in the creation of agricultural preservation plans through the formation of exclusive agriculture zoning districts. Landowners enrolled in the plan receive a state income tax credit. Much of the land outside the city limits zoned as exclusive agriculture is enrolled in this program. Further information about Fond du Lac County's Farmland Preservation Plan can be gained from these two web sites:

[https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs\\_Services/FarmlandPreservation.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/FarmlandPreservation.aspx)

<https://www.fdlco.wi.gov/departments/departments-n-z/planning-development/farmland-preservation-plan>

## A.6 Cultural Resources and Community Character

This element provides a baseline assessment of the City of Ripon's cultural resources. This information provides a basis for creating goals, policies and actions to guide the City in preserving and maintaining its cultural resources and community character.

### State and National Register of Historic Places

primary responsibility of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Division of Historic Preservation (DHP) is to administer the State and National Register of Historic Places programs. According to the State Register of Historic Places, 9 historic properties are located in the City of Ripon (see Figure 20).

Information regarding the State and National Register of Historic Places can be found by contacting the DHP at (608) 264-6500 or at the following web site: [www.wisconsinhistory.org/hp/register/](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/hp/register/).

The City also has a Historical Society and a Historic Preservation Commission. The Historic Preservation Commission considers matters relating to the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements or sites of special character, archeological, architectural, or historic interest or value.

Figure 20

Historic Properties		
Property Name	Location	Year Listed
Baptist Church	133 E. Fond du Lac St.	2007
First Congregational Church	220 Ransom St.	1986
John Scott Horner House	336 Scott St.	1984
Little White School House	SE corner of Blackburn and Blossom St.	1973
Longfellow School	221 Spaulding Ave.	1997
Marcellus Pedrick House	515 Ransom St.	1976
St. Peter's Episcopal Church	217 Houston St.	1974
Watson St. Commercial Historic District	Watson St. (Seward to Jackson) and Jackson and Scott St. (Watson to Blackburn)	1991
Jacob Woodruff House	610 Liberty St.	1974
<i>Source: City of Ripon</i>		

### Community Character

#### Community Arts and Festivals

Opportunities to participate in or enjoy the fine arts are available through the Ripon Summer Players, Ripon College, Green Lake Festival of Music, Jazzfest/Friday Night Concerts, and Ripon public school events. The Ripon Area Chamber of Commerce and Ripon Main Street also provide family festivals throughout the year.

#### Built Environment

Residential - Housing in the City of Ripon can be described as eclectic, manicured, and historic. Styles range from older, restored Victorian homes referred to as “Painted Ladies” to Cape Cods to ranch homes to condominiums. While there is evidence of homeowners improving, and not just maintaining, their homes, there are also areas where the condition of the housing is in decline due to its age.

Commercial - There are two distinctly different commercial environments. One is in the downtown core, which is characterized by historic and/or older buildings. The second is the development along STH 23, which is newer and is more representative of “strip” development.

There is a Historic Downtown Design Manual that was adopted in 2008 and has design guidelines for Ripon’s Central Business District (see Map 16).

#### Natural Environment

The topography of the City of Ripon provides several scenic viewsheds where once can see a large area of the city. The Mill Pond, which is located in the eastern portion of the City of Ripon, and Silver Creek, which flows west through the city, are for the most part, hidden and underutilized community assets.



## A.7 Collaboration

With over 2,500 units of government and special purpose districts Wisconsin ranks 13<sup>th</sup> nationwide in total number of governmental units and 3<sup>rd</sup> nationwide in governmental units per capita (Source: WIDOA Intergovernmental Cooperation Guide). While this many government units provide more local representation it does stress the need for greater intergovernmental cooperation. This element provides a baseline assessment of the Ripon's intergovernmental relationships. This information provides a basis for creating goals, policies and actions to guide the future intergovernmental cooperation activities in the Ripon.

### State Guidelines

Wisconsin State Statutes provide guidelines for intergovernmental cooperation and boundary agreements between municipalities. This statute enables adjoining communities to enter into agreements that will benefit all.

Mutual aid agreements are a type of intergovernmental cooperation. For example, fire departments use this method to extend fire protection from one municipality to another. The biggest advantage is that each fire department can share equipment and manpower in times of major fires that would otherwise limit resources or response times.

Boundary agreements are typically found in urbanizing areas where there is a desire on the part of adjacent municipalities to agree on where each municipality will provide services. These agreements contribute to better planning and the efficient and economical provision of municipal services.

### Governmental Jurisdictions

#### Town of Ripon

- The Town of Ripon surrounds the City of Ripon.
- The City and the Town have a history of working together, including the Strategic Plan of the Ripon Community Planning Consortium and this Comprehensive Plan.
- The City exercises its extraterritorial platting review powers.
- The City and the Town do not have a boundary agreement.

#### Fond du Lac County

- The City and the County actively cooperate in the area of county highway maintenance and improvement projects for roadways in the city limits.
- The Health and Human Services Department performs various activities and social service programs for eligible city residents.
- The County Planning Department administers shoreland-floodplain zoning.

#### State of Wisconsin

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) - The City of Ripon is within the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Northeast Region. The City actively engages in discussion and planning activities for projects with the WisDOT.

Department of Natural Resources - The City is aware of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources rules and regulations and has had discussions with this agency.



### School District

The Ripon Area School District covers the entire City of Ripon. The potential impact of planned and future growth and development in the City of Ripon could affect school district enrollments. If a major housing project is proposed, the City of Ripon will notify the Ripon Area School District.

### East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC)

The City of Ripon is within the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission region but is not under contract for planning services. The City has had discussions with and periodically attends programs sponsored by ECWRPC.

## A.8 Economic Prosperity

This element provides a baseline assessment of the City of Ripon’s economic prosperity and includes information on income, educational attainment, employers and local, regional and state economic development programs and organizations. This information provides a basis for creating goals, objectives, policies, maps, and actions to guide the future economic development activities in the City.

Figure 21 details the educational attainment of City of Ripon, Fond du Lac County, and State residents 25 years and older according to the 2010 & 2018 U.S. Census 5-year estimates. In year 2018, 88.6% of City residents 25 years or older, had at least a high school diploma. This figure is lower than both Fond du Lac County (91.8%) and the State (91.8%). The City also lags behind both the County and State in residents with Bachelor’s and Associate’s degrees. Presumably, this accounts for the lower income of City residents verses the average for the County and State.

Figure 21

Educational Attainment						
Educational Attainment	City of Ripon		Fond du Lac County		Wisconsin	
	2010	2018	2010	2018	2010	2018
Less than 9th grade	4.7%	3.8%	3.9%	2.8%	3.7%	2.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	8.2%	7.5%	7.6%	5.5%	6.9%	5.3%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	35.2%	35.4%	40.1%	36.6%	34.0%	30.9%
Some college, no degree	20.5%	20.7%	20.8%	20.6%	20.6%	20.7%
Associate's degree	10.7%	8.2%	9.5%	11.9%	9.0%	10.7%
Bachelor's degree	11.9%	14.7%	12.2%	16.0%	17.1%	19.4%
Graduate or professional degree	8.8%	9.6%	5.8%	6.7%	8.6%	10.1%

Source: 2010 and 2018 US Census ACS 5-year Estimates (for those 25 and older)

Income levels are shown in Figure 22. As you can see in the chart, a much higher percentage of Ripon residents (seen as the dark red color) make \$34,999 or less as compared to the State and County. Ripon’s median income level in 2018 was \$47,525, which is over \$10,000 less than the State’s (\$59,209) and the County’s (\$59,373).

The top 12 employers in Ripon are found in figure 23. As you can see, five of the top 12 are food processing companies and three are public institutions (K-12 schools, Ripon College and Ripon Medical Center). Relying too heavily on a small number of employment sectors could leave Ripon vulnerable

to market volatility and recessions. A more diversified economy would provide greater resiliency because Ripon’s economic health would not be tied to a single market sector. As Ripon is considering future land uses, attention should be given to directing marketing efforts, and possibly funding, at attracting new businesses and at retaining the existing business base, including the small, local businesses, like the ones on Main Street.

### Economic Development Programs and Organizations

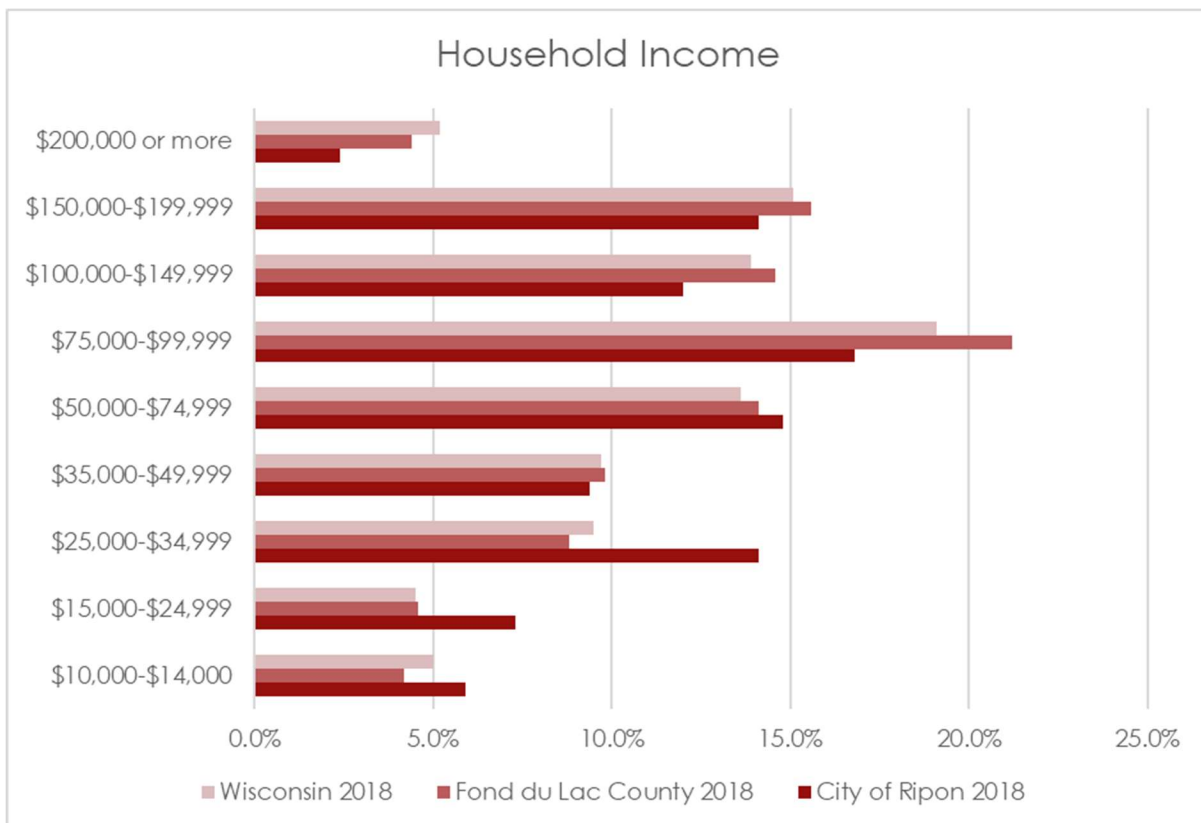
#### City of Ripon

The City of Ripon has a Housing and Community Development Authority (CDA) that acts as an agent of the city in planning and carrying out community development programs and activities.

The City also has a Business Improvement District (BID), which assists in efforts to achieve a livable, attractive, economically viable, and dynamic downtown; to improve and maintain the quality of life in the downtown; and to encourage economic vitality in the greater Ripon area. BID activities are supported by a special assessment on properties in the district.

The City also utilizes tax increment financing districts (TIDs) to help spur economic growth in various areas of the city. The City currently has 10 active TIDs.

Figure 22



Source: 2010 and 2018 US Census ACS 5-year Estimates (in inflation adjusted dollars)

Figure 23

Top 12 Employers	
Employer	Product/Service
Alliance Laundry Systems	Laundry equipment
Condon Oil Co.	Oil and gas producer
Ripon Community Printers	Newspapers/publications
Ripon School District	K-12 education
Ripon College	Liberal arts education
Ripon Medical Center	Medical services
Accurate Controls	Security automation systems
Seneca Foods	Food canning
Webster's Marketplace	Grocery
Ripon Pickle	Pickles
Heritage Wafers	Cookie production
J.M. Smucker Co.	Jams and jellies

Source: City of Ripon

### Ripon Main Street

In 1989, Ripon was one of the first communities selected by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce to participate in the Wisconsin Main Street Program. Ripon is one of over 35 communities in Wisconsin benefiting from technical assistance and training programs initiated by the National Trust's Main Street Program and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). The WEDC provides technical assistance to communities in the planning, management, and implementation of strategic development projects in downtowns and urban neighborhoods.

In 2007, the City adopted the “Downtown Ripon Strategic Plan”, which was jointly funded by Ripon Main Street and the City of Ripon. The purpose of the Plan “...is to build on the existing foundation and provide strategies and recommendations that will bring Ripon’s downtown to a higher level of strength and vitality without compromising its current success or its historic character.” While the Plan lists over eighty individual projects, seven were identified as receiving priority. They are:

- North End Redevelopment (Brewery Creek)
- Downtown Alumni Housing Concept
- Gateway and Wayfinding Signage
- Cultural and Continuing Education Programs at Ripon College
- Enhance Little White Schoolhouse
- Local Foods Visitor Center and Retail Shop
- Center for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Assistance

More information can be found at the organization’s website – [www.riponmainst.com](http://www.riponmainst.com).

### Ripon Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce focuses on special events, attractions and the promotion of existing businesses in and around the City of Ripon. More information can be found at the Chamber’s website – [www.ripon-wi.com](http://www.ripon-wi.com).

### Envision Greater Fond du Lac

Envision Greater Fond du Lac was formed on July 1, 2017 as the unified organization of the former Fond du Lac Area Association of Commerce (AC) and former Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation (FCEDC) organizations. The organization strives to enhance and grow existing program and service offerings through attraction of new businesses, growth of existing businesses, strengthening of workforce and community development, and development of new areas of opportunity throughout the county. More information can be found at [www.envisiongreaterfdl.com/](http://www.envisiongreaterfdl.com/).

### NEW North

The New North, Inc. is a nonprofit, regional marketing and economic development organization with the goal of fostering collaboration among private and public sector leaders throughout the 18 counties of Northeast Wisconsin, known as the New North region (Figure 24). It is a regional partner to the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and the State of Wisconsin, as well as local economic development organizations and private investors. The New North marketing efforts attempt to unite the 18-county region both internally and externally around brand development. More information can be found at [www.thenewnorth.com/about/](http://www.thenewnorth.com/about/).

Figure 24



## A.9 Land Use

This element provides a baseline assessment of the City of Ripon land use. Information includes existing land uses, existing & potential land use conflicts, natural limitations for building site development, and land use trends. This information provides a basis for creating goals, policies, maps and actions to guide the future land use activities in the Village of Palmyra.

### **Land Use Categories**

All the land in the City is categorized according to its primary use. Those categories are described in the following list and illustrated on Map 1 Existing Land Use.

*Note: For the purposes of this list, “dwelling unit” is defined as a building or a portion thereof designed exclusively for residential occupancy and containing provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation for not more than one family.*

- *Cropland* – land used for the production of food or fiber.
- *Farmstead* – a residential structure associated with agricultural land and typically without urban services (public water or sewer).
- *Single Family Residential* – a structure that only contains one dwelling unit (as defined above).
- *Multi-Family Residential* – a structure that contains two or more dwelling units.
- *Mobile Home Park* – a contiguous parcel developed for the placement of manufactured homes.

- *Commercial* – a location where retail goods and/or services are sold or where office activities take place.
- *Industrial* – a property where goods and products are manufactured, produced, or stored.
- *Quarries* – a property where the extraction of metallic or nonmetallic minerals or materials takes place.
- *Institutional* – properties owned and/or used by governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, and community organizations. These can include the Village Hall, public works buildings, County, State, and Federal structures, schools, churches, and others.
- *Recreational Facilities* – a property where recreation is the primary activity and where there is typically no commercial or residential use. The Village, County, or State usually owns these properties.
- *Open/Undeveloped Land* – land that has been platted for development but remains unused.
- *Transportation* – land dedicated solely for the purpose of air transportation.
- *Utilities/Communications* – land used for private or public utility installations, such as water towers, lift stations, electric substations, cell towers.
- *Woodlands* – land which is primarily forested and without structures.
- *Water* – rivers, lakes, streams.
- *Open Space* – land that is without structures and is neither forested nor used for agricultural purposes.

Figure 25 shows the relative percentage of existing land uses in the City as of the year 2015, which is the most recent survey year. This data was put together by East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission using publicly available data, city maps and aerial photos.

The City's existing land use pattern is indicative of a generally small rural Wisconsin City. The dominant land use within the City is residential (22%), followed by cropland (19%) and open land (13%).

### **Potential Conflicts**

The most notable potential land use conflicts within the City are those between residential and industrial uses on the northeast side, and between the quarry and residential uses on the west side.

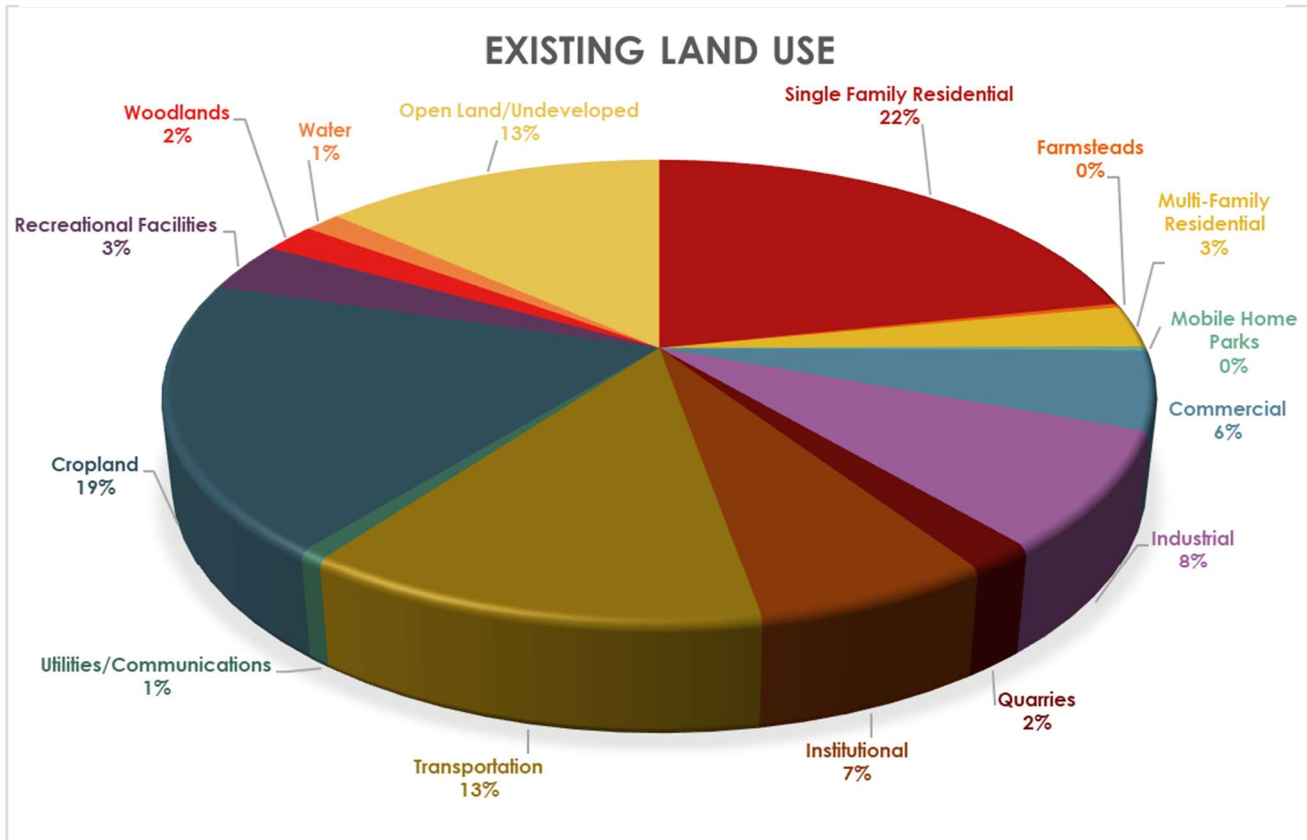
Other existing or potential land use conflicts stem from natural limitations to development, such as wetlands, floodplains and steep slopes (see Maps 3-6).

### **Development Limitations**

All land does not hold the same development potential. Development should only take place in suitable areas. Suitability is determined by several criteria, including:

- A community's Comprehensive Plan.
- Compatibility with surrounding uses.
- Special requirements of a proposed development.
- Ability to provide utility and community services to the area.
- Cultural resource constraints.
- Ability to safely access the area.
- Physical constraints, such as soils, depth to bedrock, wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, etc.

Figure 25



Topography is an important determinant of development suitability (see Map 3). Lands with steep slopes (20 % or greater) are generally poorly suited for urban development and for most agricultural purposes and, therefore, should be maintained in natural cover for water quality protection, wildlife habitat, and erosion control purposes. Lands with less severe slopes (12%-20%) may be suitable for certain agricultural uses, such as pasture, and for certain urban uses, such as carefully designed low-density residential use, with appropriate erosion control measures. Lands that are gently sloping or nearly level are generally suitable for agricultural and for urban uses.

Soil limitations are also an important factor in development. Map 5 shows soil limitations based on data from the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The soils are put into three categories:

1. Not rated.
2. Somewhat limited.
3. Very limited.

Somewhat limited means that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for development. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design or installation. Fair performance and moderate maintenance can be expected.



Very limited means that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for development. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design or expensive installation procedures. Poor performance and high maintenance can be expected.

Another important determinant of land suitability for development is the presence of water and an area's susceptibility to flooding. Lands that are classified as wetlands, have a high-water table, or are in designated floodplains are rarely suitable for rural or urban development. Map 6 has information on flooding frequency.

### **Development Efforts**

Development efforts in Ripon have been focused on the revitalization of the downtown core, the rehabilitation of existing housing stock and the construction of new housing.

The Ripon Main Street program is one of the programs working on strategic development initiatives downtown. This program is discussed in more detail in the Economic Prosperity section above.

Residential properties have also been a focus for redevelopment and rehabilitation. The City has three housing programs aimed at rehabbing and rebuilding the City's aging housing stock. One of these programs uses Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to give eligible homeowners a 0% interest loan for home repairs. There are income restrictions based on family size. The loans can be used for many types of repairs including replacing doors and windows, electrical upgrades, repairing/replacing siding and roofing, lead-based paint removal, repairing/replacing HVAC systems.

The City has two other programs, separate from the CDBG-funded program:

1. Renew Ripon Housing Program – provides a 0% interest deferred payment loan of up to \$10,000 for structural, mechanical or electrical improvements to existing homes.
2. Build Ripon Housing Program – provides a grant of up to \$10,000 toward the construction of a new home within the City's corporate limits.

More information on the above programs can be found on the City's website at [www.cityofripon.com](http://www.cityofripon.com).

## Appendix B: Public Participation Plan

### RESOLUTION NO. 2020- 10

#### A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

**WHEREAS**, the City of Ripon has decided to prepare a comprehensive plan under the authority of, and procedures established by, Section 66.1001(4), Wis. Stats; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats, requires that the governing body of the local governmental unit adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Ripon Planning Commission will be holding two meetings – the first, to discuss issues and opportunities; and the second, to discuss a full draft of the plan – both of which will allow for public comment; and


**WHEREAS**, the City of Ripon Planning Commission will be holding an additional public hearing prior to adopting the updated comprehensive plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Ripon shall also maintain a list of interested persons, who are owners of property or who have a leasehold interest in property pursuant to which they may extract nonmetallic mineral resources, who submit a written or electronic request to receive notice of any amendment or update to the comprehensive plan; and

**WHEREAS**, at least 30 days before the public hearing described above is held, the City shall provide written notice to all such interested persons. The notice shall be by mail or in any reasonable form that is agreed to by the person and the City, including electronic mail, voice mail, or text message.


**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Ripon Council hereby adopts the written procedures outlined above as its public participation procedures meeting the requirements of Section 66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats, for its current comprehensive planning efforts.

  
Lori Rich, City Administrator

  
Gary A. Will, Mayor

AYES 6 NAYES 0  
PASSED THIS 14<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2020

Approved as to form:

  
Ludwig L. Wurtz, City Attorney



## Appendix C: Maps