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PLAN COMMISSION
OFFICIAL NOTICE & AGENDA
Wednesday, August 19, 2026
2:30 pm – Marathon Municipal Center

1. CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL: K. HANDRICK, M. AHRENS, M. TELFORD, C. STIEBER, S. CHEREK, L. OLBRANTZ, L. WIESMAN

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

a. Virtual Meeting Guidelines

This meeting will be recorded and available upon request

b. Public Participation at Government Meetings

4. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 3, 2026 PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Discuss and Approve Conditional Use Permit for Use of an Electronic Sign Submitted by St Matthew's Church

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion and Direction on Residential Subdivision Development Guidelines

7. DISCUSS DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

a. Future Land Use – Residential Density

8. SET FUTURE MEETING(S) – NEXT STEPS IN PLANNING PROCESS

9. ADJOURNMENT



PUBLIC VIRTUAL ACCESS

Join Teams Meeting: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting>

Meeting ID: 265 468 778 661 631

Passcode: Qu97jQ3q

Kurt Handrick, Jr.
Village President

Cassie Lang
Village Clerk / Deputy Treasurer



PLAN COMMISSION/PUBLIC HEARING

MINUTES

Monday, August 3, 2026

1. PUBLIC HEARING began at 4:34 pm

- a. The Conditional Use Permit Application for an Electronic Sign Submitted by St. Matthew's Church Administrator Cherek opened the Public Hearing explaining that the Board of Appeals approved a variance request to St Matthew's Church allowing them to install an electronic sign over the permitted 8 square foot (2'x4') maximum area allowed according to Zoning Code 13.12.8. The application request showed a 32 square foot (4'x8') electronic portion of the overall sign. A sign proof displayed a total of 3 signs in 1 – the electronic sign positioned above signs for St Matthew's Church and Little Lions Childcare. The BOA also granted a variance for the overall size of the 3 signs, with a total square footage of 53.12, over the 40 square foot max allowed in Code 13.12.9. No public comments were made. Public hearing was closed.

2. CALL TO ORDER at 4:38 pm

ROLL CALL: K. HANDRICK-Present, M. AHRENS-Present, M. TELFORD-Present, C. STIEBER-Present, S. CHEREK-Present, L. OLBRANTZ-Present, L. WIESMAN-Present

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

- a. Virtual Meeting Guidelines
This meeting will be recorded and available upon request
- b. Public Participation at Government Meetings

5. APPROVAL OF JUNE 23, 2026 PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

MOTION – Approve June 23, 2026 Plan Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Olbrantz second by Stieber. Motion passed by voice vote.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Review and Possible Action of Conditional Use Permit Application for an Electronic Sign Submitted by St Matthew's Church
Cherek explained that according to Zoning Code 13.12.8(2) the Plan Commission is required to review all applications for electronic signs via a CUP. He shared a draft CUP outlining conditions that match with Zoning Code 13.12.8, including restrictions on the light emitted, message rotation frequency and hours of use. With the Board of Appeals granting a variance on the proposed area or the sign, there was not a size restriction in the draft. The Commission agreed to have Cherek work on a more finalized CUP with Attorney VanderWaal and bring back to the next Plan Commission meeting on August 19th for possible approval. No action taken today.
- b. Review and Possible Action on Building Permit Application for an Unclassified Use – Zoning Code 13.2.2(2)
 - i. Review Zoning Code 13.2.2 – Definitions & Table 13-5(A): Table of Allowable Land Uses - Subsection: Accessory Uses/Structures
The Village received a building permit for a storage structure of which Cherek questioned the classification of use. According to zoning code 13.3.2(2), questions to the classification of use need Plan Commission recommendation and final determination by the Village Board. Table 13-5(A): Table of Allowable Land Uses, determines sheds/storage buildings to be permitted, however, Ordinance 13.2.2 Definitions, spells out what a structure is but does not define a shed or storage building. Cherek brought this to the Plan Commission to define uses. They discussed whether the structure in question was a carport, or could be classified as a shed if sides were attached. Ultimately, the Plan Commission decided to allow the structure for temporary use and have Cherek

work with Attorney VanderWall to change language in the Ordinance to include definitions of sheds and storage buildings.

7. FUTURE MEETING DATE(S) & TIME(S)

- a. Plan Commission Meeting – Comprehensive Planning – Wednesday, August 19, 2026 – 2:30 pm

8. ADJOURNMENT at 6:20 pm

Motion to made by Telford second by Stieber. Motion passed by voice vote.

Cassie Lang
Village Clerk / Deputy Treasurer

**ORDER GRANTING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR
ST MATTHEWS CHURCH
VILLAGE OF MARATHON CITY,
MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

WHEREAS, a complete application has been filed by ST MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, (hereinafter "Applicant") for a monument sign to display illumination messages as a conditional use for Church and Village community events, on Applicant's property located at 302 County Road NN, Marathon City, WI; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant's application and submitted documents consists of a completed and Conditional Use Permit Application dated July 13, 2026, Variance Request letter dated July 13, 2026, and Sign Permit Application on June 29, 2026 that depicts the Illumination Sign design details along with location on Subject Property; and

WHEREAS, Applicant represents and warrants that the application and materials submitted heretofore are true, accurate, and correct; are incorporated fully herein and shall be relied upon by the Village in its determination(s) herein; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant is the fee simple owner of that property located within the Village of Marathon City with a mailing address and Parcel ID as follows:

302 County Road NN
Marathon City, WI 54448
Parcel ID: 151-2806-082-0958
("Subject Property")

WHEREAS, the Subject Property is zoned CF - Community Facilities and Institutions pursuant to the Zoning Code of the Village; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to §13.5.16 and Article 12, Section 13.12.8(2) of the Zoning Code, The Plan Commission shall review all applications for electronic message unite signs that the Applicant proposes in its Application and is permitted as conditional accessory use in the CF Community Facilities and Institutions District use; and

WHEREAS, Applicant further intends to utilize the Subject Property for those permitted uses identified in the CF Community Facilities and Institutions District and as set forth in that Conditional Use Permit Application with the Village of Marathon City; and

WHEREAS, upon receipt of the completed application for a Conditional Use Permit, Variance Request and materials identified hereinabove, the Village Clerk properly referred the same to the Board of Appeals and Plan Commission of the Village of Marathon City for a public hearings and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, upon referral of the Conditional Use Permit application by the Village Clerk, the Plan Commission for the Village of Marathon City scheduled a public hearing thereon as soon as practical; and

WHEREAS, upon the necessary publication of the required notice of public hearing as required by §13.4.8(4) of the Zoning Code, the Plan Commission held a public hearing on the application on August 3, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission, following the public hearing and necessary study and investigation, having given the matter due consideration, and having based its recommendation on those factors set forth in §13.4.8(6) Zoning Code of the Village of Marathon City including the health, general welfare, safety and economic prosperity of the Village, as well as the Comprehensive Plan of the Village, recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit with conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board after review of the recommendation of the Plan Commission and after it also conducted the necessary study and investigation, having giving the matter due consideration, and basing its determination on the effects of those standards as set forth in §13.4.8(6) as well as §13.5.16 of the Zoning Code, and as long as the conditional use operates in strict compliance with the following conditions resolves, orders and finds that:

IT IS THEREFORE, ORDERED AND RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

Commencing upon the date hereof, a Conditional Use Permit for the Subject Property is hereby granted as set forth herein. The Conditional Use Permit granted herein shall apply only to the specific use of the Subject Property by St. Matthews Lutheran Church, and the Conditional Use Permit shall continue and exist only so long as the Subject Property is operated in strict compliance with the terms of this Permit. This Conditional Use Permit is subject to initial and continued compliance with each and every one of the following conditions, restrictions, and limitations:

1. This Conditional Use Permit is granted to allow an electronic message sign as depicted in the application, to be constructed as set forth in the application and related materials under the following conditions:
 - A. Illumination Restrictions:
 - (i) Illumination shall be designed and maintained to eliminate negative impacts on surrounding rights-of-way and properties. The light from an illuminated sign shall not be of an intensity or brightness that will create a negative impact on property uses in direct line-of-sight to the sign.
 - (ii) Flashing, flickering and/or other lighting which may distract motorists are prohibited.
 - (iii) The sign shall comply with the applicable provisions of the electrical code as adopted by the Village and must be UL Listed.

(iv) The sign shall not be illuminated in a manner that interferes with (including glaring or blinding), misleads or confuses traffic.

(v) External light sources shall be directed and shielded to limit direct illumination of any object other than the sign.

(vi) In no instance shall the amount of illumination attributable to the sign, as measured a distance of 10 inches from the face, exceed 60 foot-candles above ambient lighting conditions.

(vii) In no case, with all lighting components energized, shall the lighting intensity of any sign, whether resulting from internal or external illumination, exceed 60 foot candles when measured with a standard light meter held at a distance of ten inches from the sign face.

(viii) The electronic message portion of the sign shall not exceed 0.3 footcandles above ambient light conditions measured from a distance based on the area of the sign [measurement distance = $\sqrt{(\text{Area of Sign Sq. Ft.} \times 100)}$], perpendicular to the sign face, and using an illuminance meter capable of accuracy of two decimals. Example: A 24 square foot electronic message center would be limited to 0.3 footcandles when measured at a distance of 49 feet. Measurement Distance = $\sqrt{(24 \times 100)} = 49$ feet.

(vx) The sign shall be equipped with photosensitive equipment which automatically adjusts the brightness and contrast of the sign in direct relation to the ambient outdoor illumination.

(x) Messages displayed on the sign shall not change, scroll, flash, rotate or otherwise transition more frequently than once every four (4) seconds.

B. Time Restrictions: The electronic message board shall be turned off, or otherwise not illuminated, between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. No messages or light emitted from the sign shall be visible during these hours.

2. This Conditional Use Permit is granted solely and exclusively to the Applicant for only so long as it continues to own in fee simple the Subject Property. This Conditional Use Permit is not transferrable to any other person or entity without the prior approval of the Village.

3. This Conditional Use Permit is conditioned upon the Applicant and the Subject Property being and remaining compliant with all other Village, County, State, and Federal laws, rules, and regulations. The Applicant shall apply for, receive, and file proof of such permission with the Village Administrator of all other required local, state, and federal permits before activities commence.

4. The terms, conditions, and representations of the submittals by the Applicant for Conditional Use Permit dated July 13, 2026, are hereby incorporated herein and made a part of the conditions hereof to the extent not otherwise modified by the requirements herein and to the extent so modified, the conditions set forth herein shall control.
5. The Applicant shall promptly reimburse the Village for all costs and expenses of any type that the Village incurs in connection with this Conditional Use Permit, including by way of enumeration without limitation, the cost of professional services incurred by the Village (including legal and other consulting fees) for review of and preparation of the Conditional Use Permit, attendance at meetings or other related professional services as well as for any actions the Village is required to take to enforce any of the conditions in this Conditional Use Permit due to a violation of these conditions by the Applicant.
6. Any use not specifically listed as permitted shall be considered to be prohibited except as maybe otherwise specifically provided herein. In case of a question as to the classification of use, the question shall be submitted to the Plan Commission for recommendation and Village Board for determination.
7. No use is hereby authorized unless the use is conducted in a lawful, orderly, and peaceful manner. Nothing in this Permit shall be deemed to authorize any public or private nuisance or to constitute a waiver, exemption, or exception to any law, ordinance, order, or rule by the Village, Marathon County, State of Wisconsin, United States, or other duly constituted authority, except only to the extent that it authorizes the use of the Subject Property in any specific respects described herein.
8. Should this permitted Conditional Use be abandoned or discontinued in any manner for twelve (12) months or greater or continued other than in strict conformity with the conditions of the original approval or should the Applicant be delinquent in payment of any monies due and owing to the Village, this Conditional Use shall be deemed terminated and therefore null and void.
9. Any change, addition, modification, alteration and/or amendment of any aspect of this Conditional Use, including but not limited to an addition, modification, alteration and/or amendment to the use, premises, structures, land or owners other than as specifically authorized herein, shall require a new permit and all procedures in place at the time must be followed.
10. Should any paragraphs or phrase of this Conditional Use Permit be determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unlawful, illegal, or unconstitutional, said determination as to the particular phrase or paragraph shall not void the remainder of this Conditional Use and the remainder shall continue in full force and effect.

11. If any aspect of this Conditional Use Permit is in conflict with any other aspect of the Conditional Use Permit, the more restrictive provision shall be controlling as determined by the Village Board.
12. Copies of this Order shall be filed in the permanent records of the Village Board for the Village of Marathon City and copies sent to the proper authorities as well as the Applicant.

Approved this _____ day of August, 2026.

VILLAGE BOARD, VILLAGE OF MARATHON CITY

By: _____
Kurt Handrick, Village President

Attest: _____
Cassandra Lang, Village Clerk

Approval/Acceptance of Applicant dated this ____ day of _____, 2026.

ST MATTHEWS CHURCH

Applicant:

By: _____

Attest: _____

Chapter Seven

Land Use

Land use is a crucial component of livability and provides a basis for the formulation of policy to coordinate a sustainable pattern of development. The existing natural landscape and land use patterns influence future land use and development. Balancing the needs of the community with land use issues requires that each situation be considered individually and that the community seeks the solution which fits the unique challenges it faces.

Previous Plans and Studies

Village of Marathon City Comprehensive Plan, 2017

The Village of Marathon City Comprehensive Plan is a policy plan that describes existing and future land uses, and regulatory tools for land use. The overall goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide consistency between official mapping, zoning and subdivision ordinances, local plans, and other implementation tools.

Marathon County Comprehensive Plan, 2026

The Marathon County Comprehensive Plan chapter on land use analyzes pattern of development, existing land use, and future land use. The plan's land use goal is as follows: *Marathon County makes sound land use decisions which balance the needs of agriculture, recreation, economic development, and growth to wisely maximize the land's potential.* Objectives to achieve this goal include:

- Promote the preservation of agricultural land.
- Promote practices that preserve soil health and land productivity.
- Encourage revitalization of former residential properties in rural areas.
- Provide tools for managing and coordinating growth.

Regional Comprehensive Plan, 2025

The RCP's Land Use chapter looks in detail at the land uses through the ten-county region and identifies the following issues and trends related to land use:

- **Dispersed Land Use Patterns.** As the Region continues to age, a dispersed population will impact the ability of residents to access services. There are also concerns about continuing to fund infrastructure as a result.

- **Contamination and Blight.** Older neighborhoods in the Region may have sites contaminated by former industry and structures that have fallen into disrepair. There is an opportunity to rehabilitate these properties to save infrastructure costs compared to new construction.
- **Environmental Features.** Development pressures can fragment woodlands and other wildlife habitat, increase runoff into waterways, impact aesthetics, and contribute to erosion if not designed properly.
- **Land Use Demand.** Work-from-home may increase the number of people living in certain areas, and decrease demand for commercial space, influencing land use patterns and infrastructure needs.
- **Renewable Energy.** While renewable energy provides environmental and economic opportunities, large scale solar and wind power is approved at the State level, with few tools for municipal and county government to manage its location, screening, and other impacts.
- **Comprehensive Plans.** While many communities and counties have adopted comprehensive plans, they are frequently not being updated as required by Wis. Stats. 66.1001. See Map 7 for Comprehensive Plan status.

Existing Land Use

The Village of Marathon City is bordered by four towns: Stettin to the northeast, Marathon to the southeast, Cassel to the southwest, and Rib Falls to the northwest. The northern part of the Village is crossed by STH 29 running east-west.

The Big Rib River is a dominant land feature in the Village, bisecting the Village east-west. The originally platted section of the Village is to the south of the River and is made up primarily of small lots, including most of the single-family residences and small-scale commercial uses. These small-scale commercial areas are located between the River and 4th Street. Most Village public services are also located south of the Big Rib River, including the Village Hall, the library, and the different facilities of the Marathon School District.

North of the River, many larger lots are found, with both commercial and residential properties. This area includes a significant amount of wetlands which limit development. Commercial development is congregated near the STH 29 interchange, providing ease of access to Village residents as well as people coming from other communities. The Business and Industrial Park has several large employers as well as space to expand and develop.

Most of the existing agricultural land within the Village is found along the Village boundary. This includes the land to the far south of the Village along STH 107 and CTH B, to the east along CTH NN, and in the newly annexed lands north of STH 29. Several quarries or gravel pits are located on the northeast side of the Village, on both sides of STH 29 west of STH 107.

Knowledge of the existing land use patterns within a community is necessary to develop a desired “future” land use pattern. The **Existing Land Use Map** was developed using air photos from a countywide flight in 2025. Eleven basic categories were used to classify the various existing land uses. The categories include Agriculture, Commercial, Governmental, Industrial, Open Lands, Outdoor Recreation, Residential, Transportation, Utility, Water, and Woodlands.

Land use classifications are groups of land uses that are compatible, and that separate conflicting uses. The classifications are not zoning districts and do not have the authority of zoning but are intended for use as a guide when making land use and zoning decisions.

Existing Land Use Classifications

The **Existing Land Use Map** outlines the existing land use pattern throughout the Village. The intent of an existing land use map is to illustrate the location of existing land use categories within the Village for planning purposes. Land use classifications are grouped by the use most central to each parcel. For example, lands classified as residential may also have a barn or home-based business on site.

Existing land use classifications and acreage totals are presented in **Table 21**. Industrial uses account for the largest share of the Village’s land area at about 18 percent. The next largest land use category is Agriculture at about 17.5 percent, followed by Woodlands and Residential. Uses such as Commercial, Governmental, Industrial, Open Lands, Outdoor Recreation, Transportation, and Utilities occupy the rest of the Village.

Table 21: Existing Land Use, 2025		
Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total
Agriculture	366	17.5%
Commercial	71	3.4%
Governmental	102	4.9%
Industrial	372	17.9%
Open Lands	57	2.7%
Outdoor Recreation	62	3.0%
Residential	319	15.3%
Transportation	226	10.9%
Utility	3	0.1%
Water	159	7.6%
Woodlands	348	16.7%
Total	2,085	100.0%

Source: NCWRPC

Development Trends

Land Supply

The Village has great potential to expand in the future if adjacent land owners wish to annex their properties into the Village. Unlike most municipalities in the nearby Wausau metropolitan area, Marathon City is not bounded by any other incorporated municipalities. The towns adjacent to the Village each have their own unique identity, but the amenities of the Village may draw other nearby landowners to join.

There are also opportunities for new development within the Village itself. Recently annexed lands, mostly along the north side of Marathon City, present great opportunities for new development and growth. The Future Land Use map presents a rough ideal of how the Village should develop these lands. Additionally, several commercial and residential buildings within the Village are vacant or in need of revitalization, and could be ideal locations for redevelopment.

Land Demand

Based on the population projections discussed in Chapter 1, **Table 22** summarizes the projected land demand based on the current acres of each land use per person:

Wisconsin DOA Projections project a declining demand for land within the Village over the next several decades. The County's projected need for an additional 6,336 housing units by 2040, decreasing household sizes, and the Village's status as one of the most suitable and desirable locations within the County for residential development, make the DOA's projected decrease in demand for land within the City unlikely.

NCWRPC Projections project slightly lower decreases in demand for land than the DOA projections. Given that there is a significant projected need for housing in Marathon County by 2040, and the suitability and desirability of the Village for future development, future land demands are likely to be closer to the NCWRPC projections than the DOA projections.

Though the DOA's population projections are considered the official state projections, the Village being able to provide water and sewer infrastructure and the high quality of the Marathon School District means that land demand for future development will likely exceed the DOA projections. Therefore, the NCWRPC projections predict an alternative scenario that could result from these factors.

Table 22: Land Use Demand in Acres				
Projection	Category	2020-2030	2030-2040	2040-2050
WI DOA	Projected new residents	-92	-94	-110
	Residential (0.22 acres/person)	-21	-21	-25
	Commercial (0.05 acres/person)	-5	-5	-5
	Industrial (0.26 acres/person)	-24	-25	-29
	Total	-49	-50	-59
NCWRPC	Projected new residents	-27	-27	-26
	Residential (0.22 acres/person)	-6	-6	-6
	Commercial (0.05 acres/person)	-1	-1	-1
	Industrial (0.26 acres/person)	-7	-7	-7
	Total	-14	-14	-14

Source: Wisconsin DOA & NCWRPC

As previously mentioned, there is a projected need for an additional 6,336 housing units in Marathon County by 2040. With a strong school district and the provision of sewer and water infrastructure, the Village of Marathon City is well suited to fill projected housing demands within Marathon County. Additionally, shrinking household sizes means that demand for housing can continue even if there is not a population increase, since more housing units are needed to house the same number of people when household sizes decrease. Therefore, it is more likely that there will be demand for land within the Village in the future despite projected decreases in population.

Residential

Residential demand is measured by examining population projections from the Wisconsin DOA and the NCWRPC. Population projections range from a DOA projected decrease of 296 residents between 2020 and 2050 and an NCWRPC projected decrease of 80 residents between 2020 and 2050. While Table 22 shows projected decreases in residential land demand within the Village over the next several decades, factors such as decreasing household sizes, a significant projected need for housing throughout Marathon County, and the Village's appeal for development opportunities make it more likely that demand for future residential development will be in contrast to these projections.

Commercial and Industrial

Commercial and industrial development is subject to market forces and difficult to predict. Based on the DOA & NCWRPC projections, there is a projected decrease in demand for both commercial and industrial development for each decade between 2020 and 2050. Should economic development efforts reverse these projected decreases in demand by DOA, then more land may be needed for these types of development.

Land Values

Table 23 displays the assessed land values in the Village of Marathon City. It is important to note that tax exempt lands are not included in values for Table 22. Overall, land value per acre in the Village is valued at about \$172,851 per acre based on assessed land values from tax information submitted to the Department of Revenue. Residential properties have the highest value per acre, followed by those properties designated as Manufacturing and Commercial.

Table 23: Assessed Land Value (per acre), 2025		
Land Classification	Total Value of Land and Improvements	Average Value per Acre
Residential	\$144,033,500	\$809,177
Commercial	\$37,474,200	\$123,677
Manufacturing	\$73,565,400	\$275,526
Agriculture	\$95,800	\$297
Undeveloped	\$195,600	\$776
Forest	\$405,700	\$3,559
Agricultural Forest	\$74,600	\$1,913
Other	\$838,700	\$93,189
Total	\$256,683,500	\$172,851

Source: WI Department of Revenue

Managed Forest Law & Public Lands

The Managed Forest Law (MFL) was established in Wisconsin to encourage better forest management and provide tax relief to the woodland owners. Currently, there are no lands within the Village enrolled in the MFL program. According to the most recent statement of assessment submitted to the DOR there are over 226 acres of public lands within the Village.

Future Land Use Map

The Village of Marathon City **Future Land Use Map** represents the anticipated future pattern of land uses. The map includes distinct land use categories to guide where new residential and non-residential development should be encouraged to located or where development should be discouraged. See the Land Use Descriptions for a general overview of each land use category on the map.

The Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map. The Future Land Use Map is general in nature and was developed as a general guide for future development in the Village. Although general, the future land use plan map indicated appropriate future land uses, and as a result shows where rezoning may occur. In many areas the existing zoning districts already reflect the desired future land uses; while in other areas, zoning map or text changes may be required to meet some of the desired future land uses.

The identification of desired future land use types through the map does not imply that an area is immediately appropriate for rezoning. Given service demands and a desire for controlled growth, careful consideration to the timing of zoning decisions is essential. In some places, it may be desirable to rezone land to reflect the planned land use designations as soon as possible. In other cases, it may be appropriate to wait to rezone the area until an actual development proposal is brought forward.

Future land use planning assists local governments with balancing individual property rights and community goals, minimizing conflict between different land uses, and maximizing use of public expenditures. It is essential that future land use planning is ongoing and flexible. Periodic plan updates ensure that the plan continues to reflect future community preferences.

Village Plan Commission members participated in a mapping exercise with NCWRPC staff to identify the desired future land uses by using eleven common Land Use Map Classifications, as described below. Village Plan Commission members used their broad knowledge of the Village to draw shapes on a map representing the different land uses. The goal was to produce a generalized land use plan map (future land use) to guide the Village's growth.

The map includes eight land use categories to guide where new residential and non-residential development should be encouraged to locate or where development should be discouraged. Descriptions of each land use category are provided below.

DRAFT

Future Land Use Map Classifications

Agriculture

Areas recommended to be preserved for the purpose of general crop farming or the raising of livestock. The following zoning districts are considered to be compatible with the intent of this land use district: (A) Agricultural.

Commercial

Areas recommended for commercial and retail developments. The following zoning districts are considered to be compatible with the intent of this land use district: (C-1) General Commercial and (C-2) Downtown Commercial.

Governmental

Areas recommended for government buildings, libraries, school, churches, etc. The following zoning districts are considered to be compatible with the intent of this land use district: (CF) Community Facilities and Institutions.

Industrial

Areas recommended for industrial developments. The following zoning districts are considered to be compatible with the intent of this land use district: (I-1) Commercial/Light Industrial and (I-2) Industrial.

High Density Residential

Areas recommended for high density residential development, typically consisting of smaller lot sizes and consisting of single-family houses, two-family homes, and multi-family housing. The following zoning districts are considered to be compatible with the intent of this land use district: (R-1S) Single Family Residential – Small Lots, (R-2) Single and Two-Family Residential, and (R-3) Multifamily Residential.

Low Density Residential

Areas identified for low residential density, often featuring larger lot sizes and/or lots located in a more rural setting. The following zoning districts are considered to be compatible with the intent of this land use district: (R-1L) Single Family Residential – Large Lots and (R-4) Rural Residential.

Conservation and Recreation

Areas recommended for parks, sport fields, and other outdoor recreation spaces. The following zoning districts are considered to be compatible with the intent of this land use district: (CR) Conservancy and Recreation

Water

Areas with surface water features that preclude development. The following zoning districts are considered to be compatible with the intent of this land use district: Water

2025 Wisconsin Act 173

Wisconsin Act 173 became law in 2026, and it requires comprehensive plans to project residential land demand in five-year increments and list the minimum and maximum densities for areas mapped for residential use in a municipality's future land use map. Areas that are owned by local, state, and federal government, as well as areas within the 100-year floodplain or wetlands, are excluded from density calculations. For the Village of Marathon City, the densities permitted are described below. Additionally, **Figure 9** provides a table showing residential uses allowed via permitted use and conditional use within the Village of Marathon City.

High Density Residential: (R-1S) Single Family Residential – Small Lot, (R-2) Single- and Two-Family Residential, and (R-3) Multifamily Residential are to be used for this land category. Locations mapped as High Density Residential have a maximum density of 7.98 dwelling units per acre (R-1S), 3.11 dwelling units per acre (R-2), and 15.56 dwelling units per acre (R-3). See sections 13.5.5, 13.5.7, and 13.5.8 of the Village's Zoning Ordinance for permitted densities for this land use and zoning districts.

Low Density Residential: (R-1L) Single Family Residential – Large Lots and (R-4) Rural Residential are to be used for this land category. Locations mapped as Low Density Residential have a maximum density of 1 unit per acre (R-1L) and 0.17 units per acre (R-4). See sections 13.5.6 and 13.5.9 of the Village's Zoning Ordinance for permitted densities for this land use and zoning districts.

Agriculture: (A) Agriculture is to be used for this category. Single-Family detached dwellings are allowed as a permitted use within this zoning district and land category, while mobile home parks are allowed via a conditional use permit. Locations mapped as Agriculture have a maximum density of 0.17 dwelling units per acre. See section 13.5.14 for permitted densities for this land use and zoning district.

Commercial: (C-1) General Commercial and (C-2) Downtown Commercial are to be used for this land category. Single-Family Attached Dwellings (<5 units on a lot), Multifamily Dwellings (<5 units on a lot), Multifamily Dwellings (>4 units on a lot), and Zero Lot Line uses are allowed as a conditional use within the C-2 zoning district. Community Living Arrangements serving nine to 15 persons and 16 or more persons are allowed as a conditional use within the C-1 zoning district. Locations mapped as Commercial allow for a maximum density of 4.36 dwelling units per acre (C-1) and 15.56 dwelling units per acre (C-2). See sections 13.5.10 and 13.5.11 for permitted densities for this land use and zoning districts.

Note that this does not mean that this comprehensive plan automatically re-zones areas in each land use category as the zoning district listed for each land use category. Rather, a rezoning and/or comprehensive plan amendment in the future should ensure that the zoning district and future land use category are consistent with each other. Table 22 lists the land demand in acres based on population projections from DOA and NCWPRC. Because these projections are only available in ten-year increments, and Act 173 requires five-year increments, the five-year demand is calculated by dividing each decade in two as indicated in **Table 24**. Note that the DOA projection reflects the “low” range of acreage demand and the NCWPRC projection reflects the “high” range of demand, with actual demand likely falling somewhere between the two.

Figure 9: Allowable Residential Uses

Key: P = Permitted Use; C = Conditional Use; X = Special Requirements (See Supplemental Regulations in Article 7)													
Table 13-5(A): Table of Allowable Land Uses													
Residential	R-1 (S)	R-1 (L)	R-2	R-3	R-4	C-1	C-2	I-1	I-2	A	CR	CF	X
Single-Family Detached Dwelling	P	P	P		P					P			
Two-Family Dwelling			P	P									
Single-Family Attached Dwelling (<5 units on a lot)				P			C						
Single-Family Attached Dwelling (>4 units on a lot)				C									
Mobile home, Mobile Home Park				C	C					C			X
Multifamily Dwelling (<5 units on a lot)				P			C						
Multifamily Dwelling (>4 units on a lot)				C			C						
Adult Daycare Home / Senior Living Facility				C									X
Community Living Arrangement													
Serving three to eight persons	P	P	P	P								C	X
Serving nine to 15 persons			C	C		C						C	X
Serving 16 or more persons			C	C		C						C	X
Zero Lot Line			C	C	C		C						X

Source: Village of Marathon City Zoning Ordinance (Updated Dec 2, 2024)

Table 24: Act 173 Residential Demand Projections

Projection and Residential Land Use	2025-2030	2030-2035	2035-2040	2040-2045	2045-2050	Total 2025-2050
DOA Projected Land Demand	-10	-11	-11	-12	-12	-56
NCWRPC Projected Land Demand	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	-15

Source: DOA & NCWRPC

Land Use Programs and Tools

The principal land use program in Wisconsin is the comprehensive planning program, while the primary land use tools are zoning, subdivision ordinance, and official mapping.

Comprehensive Planning Programming

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law was established in state statutes in 1999. The comprehensive plan is intended to be a local government's guide to community physical, social, and economic development. Comprehensive plans are not meant to serve as land use regulations in themselves; instead, they provide a rational basis for local land use decisions with a twenty-year vision for future planning and community decisions.

The Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law does not mandate how a local community should grow, but it requires public participation at the local level in deciding a vision for the community's future. The uniqueness of individual comprehensive plans reflects community-specific and locally driven planning processes.

While a local government may choose to include additional elements, a comprehensive plan must include at least all of the nine elements below as defined by the Comprehensive Planning Law (s. 66.1001).

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

Zoning

Zoning is the major implementation tool to achieve proposed land uses. The Village of Marathon City enforces its own zoning ordinance. Under the ordinance, zoning regulations are applied to zoning districts to regulate land use and development. The Village has five residential, two commercial, two industrial, and four special districts under the current zoning code. The zoning map identifies the locations where each district is sited.

Basically, zoning is a set of regulations used to minimize land use conflicts and promote development that supports a community's values. It regulates how property is used and how development occurs as well as the physical placement of buildings on land. Under Wisconsin Statutes, counties and local units of government are authorized to adopt zoning ordinances.

A zoning ordinance consists of a written text and a map. The text of a zoning ordinance specifies the permitted land uses, the size of buildings, yard/lot dimensions, and other prerequisites in obtaining permission to develop, while the zoning map arranges the community into districts or zones, such as agriculture, residential, commercial, or industrial. Each of these districts has different regulations. The goal of the zoning ordinance is to establish a reasonable development pattern by keeping similar and related uses together and separating dissimilar, unrelated, incompatible uses, particularly in relationship to transportation facilities, utilities and public services and facilities.

Consistency between Land Use and Zoning

Land use and zoning designations are related, but not necessarily identical. Land use categories tend to be fairly general whereas zoning districts regulate specific land uses and development requirements. Because the land use categories are general it is common for more than one zoning district to correspond to each land use category. It is also possible that some zoning districts might be consistent with more than one land use designation.

Achieving consistency between land use and zoning is required by State Statutes. This generally occurs when a community is considering a proposed zoning change. The decision to approve a zoning change must be based on the adopted comprehensive plan, and specifically, the future land use map. Generally, if the requested zoning is consistent with the land use designation on the property it should be approved, unless unique circumstances indicated the rezoning would negatively impact surrounding properties or the community. If a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation, the community should consider denying the rezoning request.

In situations where a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation - but the community believes the requested zoning is appropriate in the specific location and would benefit the community - the zoning change can be approved, however, the land use map should be amended accordingly to establish land use and zoning consistency. The process for amending the land use map is discussed in greater detail in the Implementation Chapter.

Shoreland Zoning

All counties, including Marathon County, are mandated by Wisconsin law to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates development in shoreland and floodplain areas for the entire county outside of villages and cities in accordance with state shoreland zoning standards. Municipalities may apply their own zoning in shoreland areas as long as it does not impose requirements regulated by a county.

Land Division

The Village of Marathon City has their own Subdivision Ordinance. Subdivision regulation relates to the way in which land is divided and made ready for development. A community can control the subdivision of land by requiring a developer to meet certain conditions in exchange for the privilege of recording a plat. While imposing conditions restricting the use of private property, the cumulative effect of land

subdivision on the health, safety, and welfare of a community is so great as to justify public control of the process.

There is some overlap between zoning and subdivision codes in terms of standards. Both ordinances, for example, can set lot sizes. Both can deal with the suitability of land for development. Implementing important plan techniques such as rural cluster development often requires use of the zoning ordinance and the subdivision ordinance.

A local land division code can provide the Village the means to review and regulate new divisions of land to ensure consistency with the vision, goals, objectives, land protection criteria, and other recommendations of an adopted plan. The ordinance would require administration and enforcement by the Village. Therefore, local control of divisions of land would require Village oversight. It also adds a layer of government involved in regulating proposals for land divisions.

Official Mapping

An Official Map is a map adopted by a municipality that specifies locations of future roads and other utilities or public facilities, along with right-of-way widths and other specifications. When a land division is approved, it must accommodate dimensions for future facilities according to the Official Map. Currently, the Village of Marathon City does not have an official map.

Other Tools

Additional tools and approaches can be utilized by the Village to achieve the goals of the plan. These include but are certainly not limited to the following: fee simple land acquisition, easements (purchased or volunteered), deed restrictions, land dedication, and ordinances or programs regulating activities such as impact fees, land division, building permits, and erosion control.

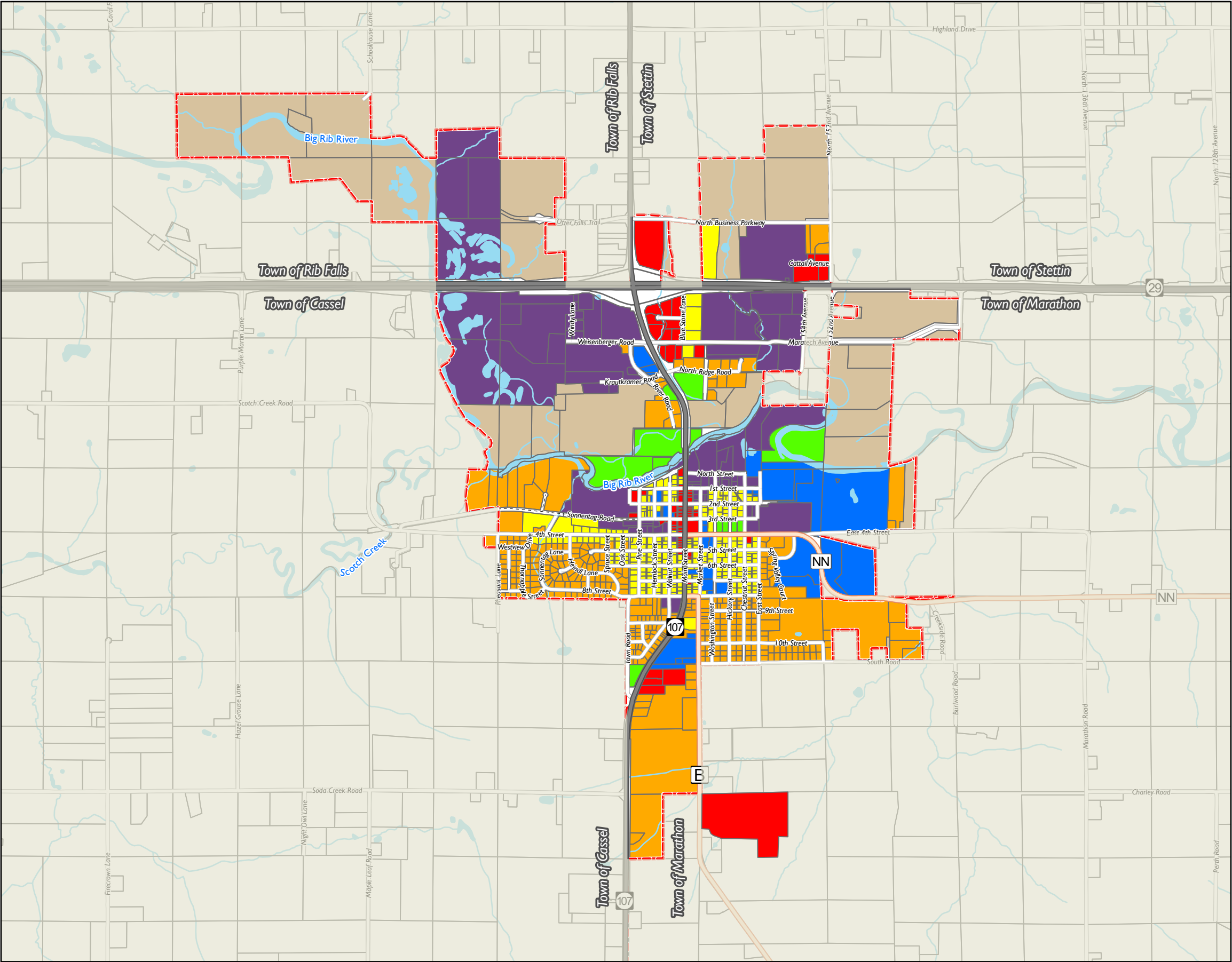
Land Use Issues

- **Limited Land** b| Limited land supply for new housing in the Village appears to be one factor in out-migration of residents to the countryside where larger lots are available for building.
- **Site Planning** b| The development of a general site plan for recently annexed lands will assist the Village in maintaining a desired growth pattern and maximizing the available lands.

Goals, Objectives & Policies

Land Use Goal: The Village of Marathon City makes sound land use decisions to balance the diverse needs of the community and to wisely maximize the land's potential.

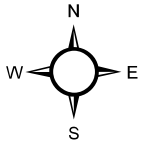
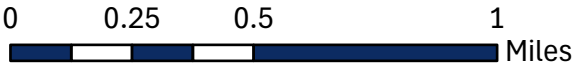
1. Provide tools for managing and coordinating growth and development.
 - a. Explore the creation and adoption of an official map to site the locations of future infrastructure.
 - b. Maintain clear and open communication with neighboring Towns to discuss potential annexations.
2. Preserve Marathon City's downtown as the center of the community.
 - a. Develop a long-term downtown development plan.
 - b. Enhance the streetscape of the downtown to identify it as a unique shopping location.
 - c. Concentrate manufacturing businesses in the Business and Industrial Park and encourage businesses aimed at the local community to locate downtown.



Future Land Use

- Minor Civil Division
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- On-Off Ramps
- Parcels

- Future Land Use
- Agriculture
 - Commercial
 - Governmental
 - Industrial
 - High Density Residential
 - Low Density Residential
 - Conservation and Recreation
 - Water



Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co
This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



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