



# City of Rhinelander, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan 2016



# City of Rhinelander

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## Prepared by

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# Chapter 1 • Background and Demographics

## Background

The City of Rhinelander is located in Oneida County. It is the only incorporated community in the county, and serves as the county seat. Rhinelander is a major commercial and industrial center of the “northwoods.” The City has a population of over 7,700 people in 2013, which is about 21 percent of the total county population. See the Locational Map (Map 1).

This plan replaces the previous City of Rhinelander Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2008.

## Community History

Rhinelander was born in the boom days of logging. Settled in 1880, it was first called Pelican Rapids. Two years later it was granted a charter and named after a man who probably never even saw the city—F.W. Rhinelander of New York. Rhinelander was president of the Milwaukee, Lake Shore and Western Railroad (now the Chicago and North Western), and the grateful residents renamed their community in his honor after the railroad agreed to come to the city.

Rhinelander was made to order for the logging industry, lying in a belt of 700 million feet of pine and 300 million feet of hemlock and other timber. With the completion of the railroad, the city became a terminal and supply point for the dozens of logging camps to the north towards the Michigan border. By 1890 trains were moving over four lines of track owned by three railroad companies.

Logging hit its peak in the lumberjack town during the 1890's. The demand for Wisconsin pine was seemingly insatiable, but the forest vanished at the rate of millions of feet a year. By the time of World War I, the industry was virtually at an end.

As the logging industry faded, manufacturing took its place. Rhinelander became a major center in the area. Today the city is a retail and government center serving the entire Northwoods.

Chapter 2 has goals, objectives, and policies that relate to cultural resources.



Source: City of Rhinelander

## Previous Plans

All planning efforts need to examine relevant previous plans about the community and the surrounding county and region. Those plans are identified below:

### The City of Rhinelander

A variety of plans have been developed in the city, and those that relate will be discussed in later chapters, such as the Outdoor Recreation Plan, and Safe Routes To School Plan.

#### *Comprehensive Plan, 2008*

The plan was written in compliance with the State of Wisconsin statute 66.1001 which requires all jurisdictions within the state that exercise control over land-use to prepare a comprehensive plan by 2010. The law laid out nine required elements of the plan and requires a public participation process. This plan was adopted on January 9, 2008.

The 2015 Comprehensive Plan is an update to the 2008 plan, and as such follows a similar structure and builds upon the goal of the previous plan.

Previous city plans were prepared in 1981 and 1965.

#### *Downtown Streetscape Project, 2014*

The Rhinelander Downtown Plan provides a market analysis of the downtown; streetscape plans for Brown Street and downtown in general; and an implementation and funding plan. The document builds on City and DRI efforts, and relies upon existing engineering studies and local market knowledge to create a specific and fundable downtown plan that can shape policy decisions and provide useful information to the City and investors.

### Oneida County

A variety of plans have been developed at the county level and those that relate will be discussed in later chapters, such as the Outdoor Recreation Plan, the Land and Water Resource Management Plan, and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan.

## Region

The city is included in the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) area. The NCWRPC is one of nine regional planning commissions in the State of Wisconsin. The North Central region includes ten counties, loosely following the upper Wisconsin River Valley. The NCWRPC is a voluntary association of governments tasked with the mission of providing planning assistance to the communities throughout the Region.

### *Regional Livability Plan*

The 2015 North Central Wisconsin Regional Livability Plan (RLP) is an update to the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Focusing on the four topic areas of housing, economic development, transportation, and land use, the RLP identifies trends and sets goals to make the region more livable for all residents. This plan will be referred to in several of the following chapters.



## Planning Process

The city adopted a Public Participation Plan for the planning process. A copy of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) can be found in the attachments at the end of the plan.

After several months of individual chapter review, the Plan Commission recommended approval of the plan in 2016. A public hearing was held and the plan was approved by the City Council. See resolution and ordinance at the end of this plan.

## Goals, Objectives and Policies

Each of the following comprehensive plan chapters concludes with a set of goals, objectives and policies, which will be used to guide the future development of the community.

For purposes of this planning process, goals, objectives and policies are defined as follows:

**Goals:** Broad statements that express general public priorities about how the community should approach development issues during the next 20 years. These goals are based on key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the community.

**Objectives:** More specific than goals and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.

**Policies:** Rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals

and objectives. The policies are intended to be used by decision-makers on a day-to-day basis.

## Demographics

The review of the socio-economic trends throughout the county are important to understanding what has occurred and what is likely to occur in the future. Below we look at total population, age distribution, households, educational levels, employment and income levels. All of these will be examined in some detail.

## Population

In 2013, 7,710 people lived in the city, which is a small decrease in population since 2000. Rhinelander's population grew between 2000 and 2010, but has dropped to below 2000 numbers by 2013, for a total loss of 25 people. Oneida County lost a larger percentage of its population during the same timeframe, while the State of Wisconsin saw significant population growth.

Table 1 displays total population for the city, each local unit of government (minor civil division) surrounding the city, the county, and the state. Oneida County and all of the surrounding towns except for the Town of Pine Lake have seen population decreases. The Town of Pelican had the largest decrease, both in number of people and in percent change.

The Land Use Chapter further examines population, including population projections.

**Table 1: Population**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2013	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	7,735	7,798	7,710	-0.32%	-25
Town of Crescent	2,071	2,033	2,058	-0.63%	-13
Town of Newbold	2,710	2,719	2,709	-0.04%	-1
Town of Pelican	2,902	2,764	2,765	-4.72%	-137
Town of Pine Lake	2,720	2,740	2,736	0.59%	16
Oneida County	36,776	35,998	35,868	-2.47%	-908
State of Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,706,871	6.40%	343,196

Source: U.S. Census

## Age Distribution

Population distribution is important to the planning process. In particular, two groups are examined here. They are the 17 years of age and younger, and the 65 and older population groups. These are often referred to as dependent populations and each has different needs. The younger group requires schools, and the older group is retiring. Comparing these groups over time to both the county, and the state, demographic changes in the city and surrounding towns are identified.

Between 2000 and 2013, the percentage of persons 17 and younger decreased by 14 percent in the city; a slightly smaller decrease than Oneida County's -21 percent. As displayed in Table 2, all divisions experienced a loss of population in this age range.

During that same time period, persons 65 and older remained almost the same, with a 0.3 percent loss. All of the surrounding towns, except Newbold,

experienced growth in this population segment. The county had a 16 percent growth in this age range.

Combined Tables 1, 2, and 3, reflect an aging population. The area has fewer younger persons and has added older persons overall, which results in the median age increasing 38.9 in 2000, to 40.0 in 2010, and to 43.7 in 2013.

## Households

A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. The city trend of households reflects the national trend of fewer people living within the same household. As more people decide to live alone and more couples are having fewer children or no children at all, the number of households has increased faster than the population as a whole. Most towns, the city, the county, and the state all

**Table 2: Persons 17 Years of Age and Younger**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2013	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	1,811	1,657	1,552	-14.3%	-259
Town of Crescent	531	378	345	-35.0%	-186
Town of Newbold	616	525	559	-9.3%	-57
Town of Pelican	732	533	571	-22.0%	-161
Town of Pine Lake	616	550	516	-16.2%	-100
Oneida County	8,203	6,639	6,483	-21.0%	-1,720
State of Wisconsin	1,368,756	1,339,492	1,325,144	-3.2%	-43,612

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 3: Persons 65 Years of Age and Older**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2013	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	1,583	1,490	1,578	-0.3%	-5
Town of Crescent	387	372	426	48.4%	139
Town of Newbold	391	555	385	-1.5%	-6
Town of Pelican	392	508	466	18.9%	74
Town of Pine Lake	330	492	425	28.8%	95
Oneida County	6,884	7,800	7,987	16.0%	1,103
State of Wisconsin	702,553	777,314	802,253	14.2%	99,700

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 4: Total Households**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2013	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	3,214	3,545	3,532	9.9%	318
Town of Crescent	797	857	844	5.9%	47
Town of Newbold	1,114	1,176	1,083	-2.8%	-31
Town of Pelican	1,167	1,183	1,145	-1.9%	-22
Town of Pine Lake	1,063	1,136	1,152	8.4%	89
Oneida County	15,333	16,003	15,797	3.0%	464
State of Wisconsin	2,084,544	2,279,768	2,288,332	9.8%	203,788

Source: U.S. Census

gained population, but the average household size for all those municipalities has decreased over the last decade.

Decreasing average household size will continue to be a trend that is likely to continue through the next twenty years. The number of households within the city has grown by 318 units since 2000. The rate of change of 9.9 percent growth is large compared to surrounding towns that are growing at slower rates of 8.4 and 5.9 percent or losing household. As Table 4 shows, Rhinelander is growing in households at the same rate as the State.

The State of Wisconsin Department of Administration calculates household projections for all municipalities. According to 2013 projections, the City of Rhinelander is expected to continue to grow in households until a peak at 3,603 in 2025, and then begin decreasing the number of households to have 3,270 in 2040. The

four surrounding towns are projected to grow slowly in households and peak in 2040.

The Housing and Land Use elements further examine how these population and household trends will affect number of housing units, and how they may be placed on the land.

### Educational levels

Educational attainment improved overall during the period. Since 2000, the number of high school graduates as a percentage of those over 25, increased in the city from 79.1 percent in 2000 to 87.5 percent in 2013, an 8.4 percent increase. All of the surrounding towns had increases as well.

The number of people 25 and older with four or more years of college decreased from 1,056 in 2000 to 819 in 2013. Surrounding towns, however, saw more people with at least 4 years of college completed between 2000 and 2013. Oneida County gained 1,100 people with four or more

**Table 5: Persons 25 and Over Who Have Completed Four Years of High School or More**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2013	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	4,175	4,555	4,775	14.4%	600
Town of Crescent	1,271	1,319	1,451	14.2%	180
Town of Newbold	1,689	2,106	1,796	6.3%	107
Town of Pelican	1,749	1,882	1,959	12.0%	210
Town of Pine Lake	1,666	1,882	1,906	14.4%	240
Oneida County	22,498	24,903	25,008	11.2%	2,510
State of Wisconsin	2,957,461	3,460,939	3,343,833	13.1%	386,372

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 6: Persons 25 and Over Who Have Completed Four Years of College or More**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2013	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	1,056	727	819	-22.4%	-237
Town of Crescent	374	469	511	36.6%	137
Town of Newbold	413	570	505	22.3%	92
Town of Pelican	332	464	493	48.5%	161
Town of Pine Lake	414	463	455	9.9%	41
Oneida County	5,280	6,065	6,380	20.8%	1,100
State of Wisconsin	779,273	964,412	1,026,728	31.8%	247,455

Source: U.S. Census

years of college. The state had a dramatic increase of 31.8 percent from 2000 to 2013.

### Employment

Employment in the City of Rhinelander increased between 2000 and 2013 by 3.8 percent. The Towns of Crescent and Pine Lake also had increases, while the Towns of Newbold and Pelican had decreases. The city experienced the same rate of employment growth as the State of Wisconsin during this period. In terms of occupations, about 23 percent of employed persons in the City are in management and professional, 23 percent in service, 26 percent in sales and office, 8 percent in natural resources and construction, and 19 percent in production and transportation.

Of the 3,475 persons that commute to work, 2,607 drive alone, while only 434 carpoled. The average commute time is ten and a half minutes. Just over 200 persons walk to work in the city.

The Economic Development and Land Use chapters further examine employment, including employment projections.

### Income levels

Median Household Income and Per Capita Income are the two major indicators of income. The city median household income rose over 10 percent over the time period, compared to about 21 percent at the county level, and almost 20 percent at the state level.

Meanwhile, the city per capita income increased by approximately 36 percent; comparable to the County and above the state increase of 29 percent.

**Table 7: Total Employed Persons (16 and over)**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2013	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	3,416	3,798	3,546	3.8%	130
Town of Crescent	1,110	1,004	1,119	0.8%	9
Town of Newbold	1,344	1,401	1,213	-9.7%	-131
Town of Pelican	1,461	1,387	1,349	-7.7%	-112
Town of Pine Lake	1,429	1,501	1,513	5.9%	84
Oneida County	17,199	17,802	16,679	-3.0%	-520
State of Wisconsin	2,734,925	2,869,310	2,839,636	3.8%	104,711

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 8: Median Household Income**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2013	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	\$29,622	\$34,401	\$32,860	10.9%	\$3,238
Town of Crescent	\$48,475	\$66,964	\$65,862	35.9%	\$17,387
Town of Newbold	\$40,722	\$58,542	\$62,125	52.6%	\$21,403
Town of Pelican	\$36,053	\$44,352	\$51,369	42.5%	\$15,316
Town of Pine Lake	\$43,750	\$51,563	\$51,108	16.8%	\$7,358
Oneida County	\$37,619	\$45,857	\$45,759	21.6%	\$8,140
State of Wisconsin	\$43,781	\$51,598	\$52,413	19.7%	\$8,622

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 9: Median Per Capita Income**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2013	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	\$16,047	\$21,009	\$21,900	36.5%	\$5,853
Town of Crescent	\$20,697	\$37,804	\$37,013	78.8%	\$16,316
Town of Newbold	\$20,392	\$31,214	\$26,031	27.7%	\$5,639
Town of Pelican	\$18,566	\$29,221	\$29,833	60.7%	\$11,267
Town of Pine Lake	\$21,515	\$33,826	\$37,243	26.6%	\$5,728
Oneida County	\$19,746	\$28,085	\$27,041	36.9%	\$7,295
State of Wisconsin	\$21,271	\$26,624	\$27,523	29.4%	\$6,252

Source: U.S. Census

## Race

In 2013, over 97 percent of the City residents were White. The largest minority group identified was Black race, at 1.7 percent. Following Black was Hispanic, American Indian, Other, and Asian & Pacific Islander. In 2000, almost 98 percent listed their race as White and people identifying as Black and Hispanic combined to less than 0.5 percent of the population. Although there have been percentage changes since 2000, these represent very small numbers of people.

The city has a similar race distribution to the county. Over 10 percent of the state's population is categorized as minority.



# Chapter 2 • Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources

## Background

This second chapter covers natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources, parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.

## Previous Studies

A variety of plans are reviewed as they relate to natural, agricultural, and cultural resources. These plans provide a starting point for the planning process.

### Rhineland Area Pathways Project, 2003

The Rhineland Area Pathways Project (RAPP) is the ongoing work of a volunteer citizens committee to spearhead the development of a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian pathway system in Rhineland.

Two loop paths and two linear paths were established. Eleven detailed segment descriptions provide analysis of the opportunities and constraints for developing each segment of path.

### Oneida County Land & Water Resource Management Plan, 2012

This county level Plan addresses critical environmental issues, including water and land conservation. Implementation of this plan will help protect and improve the valuable water and soil natural resources in Oneida County. Ten overall goals were identified. They are:

1. Slow the spread of invasive species;
2. Protect shoreland areas;
3. Restore shorelands;
4. Reduce sources of nonpoint source water;
5. Educate the public about groundwater quality;
6. Protect lake ecosystems from recreational pressure degradation;
7. Improve forest silviculture for multiple uses;
8. Promote online resource information distribution;
9. Minimize impacts on our natural resources from mining activities;
10. Reduce wildlife conflicts.

### City of Rhineland Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2015

The plan assesses the existing recreation system in Rhineland; identifies needs for improvement; set goals and objectives for creating improvements, and established recommendations for upgrading the local recreation system over the next five years. The plan's goals are:

1. Upgrade & maintain existing park facilities.
2. Create new park facilities.
3. Become a more bicycling and walking friendly community.
4. Promote outdoor recreational opportunities available in the county forest.
5. Create new parks.

### Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2014-2018

The primary purpose of this recreation plan is to provide continued direction in meeting the

current and future recreation needs of the County. This direction takes the form of an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities followed by establishing recommendations to meet identified needs.

Recreational projects listed in the plan, include:

- Develop trails and routes through Oneida County according to the Multiple Use Trail and Route Plan Map.
- Develop silent sport trails in the Washburn Lakes Silent Sports area as presented by RASTA to the Forestry Committee
- Continue to work with volunteer groups to maintain trails.
- Review existing intensive use areas in the County Forest and consider whether or not to add new Aesthetic Management Zones around those uses.
- Continue to manage the county forest for hunting and trapping opportunities.
- Encourage local residents to design their own water trails and to advertise them to local clubs and chambers of commerce.

## Land Resources

All plans must consider the natural environment in which a community exists. Understanding the physical landscape is critical to the growth of a community. Natural restraints and environmental issues need to be identified to plan properly. This section of the plan gives an overview of the local climate, area topography, and soil types.

### Climate

Rhinelanders has a continental climate characterized by cold, snowy winters, warm summer days and cool summer nights. The short frost-free period during the summer limits the production of crops to forage, small grain, and suitable vegetables. Precipitation is fairly well distributed throughout the year, reaching a peak in summer. Snow covers the ground during much of the period from late fall through early spring. Rhinelanders had an average annual snowfall of 60.18 inches from 1980 to 2010.

September is usually the wettest month of the year and February is the driest. Precipitation averages 31.33 inches annually. Average annual wind speed is 21 miles per hour, and is highest in April.

### Topography

Oneida County is in the Northern Highland physiographic region of Wisconsin, a gently arched dome underlain by crystalline rock. Most of the county is a pitted outwash plain. Other areas consist of glacial till or glacial drift. The landscape is the result of several glacial advances and retreats that took place over northeastern and central Wisconsin some 12,500 to 20,000 years ago. Numerous and inconsistent soil variations and numerous, unique geologic and topographic features emerged. These features include extensive ground moraines in the southeastern and southwestern parts of the county, a remnant end moraine near Rhinelanders, and a number of parallel ridges adjacent to drumlin fields in Forest and Langlade Counties.

Oneida County's physical landscape is defined not only by forest, wetlands, streams, woodlots, hills, and other natural features, but perhaps most by the density of the lake area in the northern part of the county and in Vilas County; one of the most extensive lake districts in the world.

See Map 1 to view some of the natural resources discussed above.

### Soils

Area soils are related to the physical geography, climate, and vegetation. Silty deposits cover the glacial deposits in the southern, eastern, and western parts of the county. The soils in these areas are among the best suited in the county for agricultural crops and hardwood forests. Over time, human activity affects soil formation by altering and accelerating natural soil processes. Clearing, burning, cultivating, and urbanization can affect soil structure, porosity, and soil nutrients. By reviewing the soil maps and other information, it is possible to determine the best uses for a particular area. See the 1993 Natural Resource Conservation Service Soil Survey of Oneida County for more information.

Limitations for constructing basement are either due to a high water table or a shallow depth to bedrock. A “severe” limitation indicates that one or more soil properties or site features are so unfavorable or difficult to overcome that a major increase in construction effort, special design, or intensive maintenance is required. Contaminated soils are discussed in the Economic Development chapter of this plan.

See Map 1 to see where soils severely limit basement construction.

## Water Resources

Lakes, impoundments, rivers, and wetlands are a major component of the natural environment in Rhinelander. This section of the plan examines surface water, wetlands, floodplains, and groundwater topics. See the Water Features Map (Map 1).

### Surface Water

The Wisconsin and Pelican Rivers flow through the heart of Rhinelander. Boom, Thunder, and Bass Lakes are impoundments of the Wisconsin River, which travels from the northwest area of the city into downtown. The Pelican River flows from the southeast along Old 8 Road into Rhinelander, and joins the Wisconsin River on the southern border of the city.

All of Oneida County is located in the Upper Wisconsin River drainage basin. The City is within 4 watersheds – Rhinelander Flowage to the north, Pelican River to the east, Noisy and Pine Creeks to the south, and Woodboro to the west. See the DNR Rhinelander Area Watershed Map at the DNR website for more information.

### Outstanding and Exceptional Waters

Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs) share many of the same environmental and ecological characteristics.

An exceptional resource water is a lake, stream, or flowage exhibiting the same high quality resource values as outstanding waters, but may be affected

by point source pollution or have the potential for future discharge from a small sewer community.

- Slaughterhouse Creek is listed as an exceptional resource water.

### Impaired Waters

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to develop a list of impaired waters, commonly referred to as the “303(d) list.” A water body is considered impaired if a) the current water quality does not meet the numeric or narrative criteria in a water quality standard or b) the designated use that is described in Wisconsin Administrative Code is not being achieved. A documented methodology is used to articulate the approach used to list waters in Wisconsin. Every two years, states are required to submit a list of impaired waters to EPA for approval.

Two water bodies in the Rhinelander area are listed as not meeting the standards set under the U.S. Clean Water Act, Section 303(d):

- Slaughterhouse Creek due to unspecified metals leaching from the closed landfill.
- Lake Julia due to atmospheric deposition of mercury.

### Closed Rhinelander Landfill

The City of Rhinelander closed the landfill in 1979 and various cap enhancements and monitoring systems have been in place for a period of years. Monitoring wells placed adjacent to the site are still showing pollutants discharging to both Slaughterhouse Creek and Pelican River. The approximately 38-acre site may have a value for uses which are consistent with closed landfill sites after a final remediation plan is developed.

### Wetlands

Swamps, bogs, marshes, potholes, wet meadows, and sloughs are all considered wetlands. Wetlands are important for groundwater aquifer recharge and they play many critical roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle. They act as water storage “sponges” in times of high water by absorbing excess water and then slowly releasing it

back into the watershed. Connected wetlands that are adjoined or adjacent to floodplains and other water bodies may help minimize flooding damage. As more impermeable surfaces are developed, this excess capacity for water runoff storage becomes increasingly important.

Wetlands have valuable ground and surface water purification capabilities, because potentially harmful compounds and bacteria in the water are absorbed into plant tissues, potentially buffering the adjacent water body. Wetlands occur in areas where the water level is usually near or above the soil surface. Through succession, wetlands fill naturally over time through these processes due to sedimentation and organic accumulation.

In addition to their ecological value, wetlands are an important recreational, educational, and aesthetic resource. Wetlands offer breeding and nesting grounds for waterfowl and for many other animals dependent on aquatic habitats. Maintaining these attributes provides opportunities that improves habitat that supports activities such as hunting and wildlife observation.

Wetlands that filter or store sediments or nutrients for extended periods may undergo fundamental changes. Sediments will eventually fill in wetlands and nutrients will eventually modify the vegetation.

Such changes may result in the loss of this function over time. Eradication of wetlands can occur through the use of fill material. This can destroy the hydrological function of the site and open the area to improper development. The WDNR sets minimum standards for managing wetlands to help reduce the negative impacts of developing in or near wetland areas.

View Map 1 for general wetland areas in the Rhinelander area.

### Floodplains

A floodplain is generally defined as land where there is a one percent chance of flooding in any year (also known as the 100-year floodplain). The primary value of floodplains is their role in natural flood control. Flood plains represent areas where excess water can be accommodated whether through drainage by streams or through storage by wetlands and other natural detention/retention areas. Specific areas that will be inundated will depend upon the amount of water, the distance and speed that water travels, and the topography of the area. If uninterrupted by development, the areas shown on a map as floodplains should be able to handle the severest (regional) flood, i.e. those that have a probability of occurring once every one hundred years.



Wetlands. Source: City of Rhinelander

There is a value in preserving and protecting these natural flood control areas from encroachment. First, by preventing development in the floodplain, the cost of building dikes, levies, or other man-made flood control devices will be saved. Second, for each structure that is constructed in a flood-prone area, that flood-prone area expands, potentially subjecting other structures originally built outside the delineated flood hazard area to the risk of flooding. Each new structure (or modification to existing) placed in the flood plain puts more life and property in danger.

Counties, cities, and villages are required to adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances. Floodplain zoning is designed to protect individuals, private property, and public investments from flood damage. These regulations prohibit development in the floodway, the most dangerous flood area.

In order to participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program, the County, and the City of Rhinelander have completed a Flood Insurance Study and a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) that encompasses Oneida County. This FIRM delineates the "A" Zones including the floodway and flood fringe which are those areas inundated by the 100-year flood within the County.

See Map 1 for floodplain locations.

## Groundwater

Groundwater in the Rhinelander area comes from an aquifer of glacial drift. Yields from wells in this type of aquifer can range from a few gallons to over 2,000 gallons per minute. Currently, several wells yield more than 1,000 gallons per minute.

Overall, groundwater quality is good. The total mineral content is less than 150 milligrams per liter. The main components in the water are calcium and magnesium. In some areas, particularly within moraines, the ground water is hard. A large concentration of iron is in the ground water throughout the county, but is not considered to be a health hazard.

More information on the municipal well water provided to all Rhinelander customers is listed in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter.

## Woodlands

Significant tracts of woodland exist throughout the city. These forested areas are primarily associated with streams and wetlands. Forest cover provides many vital functions, which are diverse in nature; forested lands provide for recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, and wildlife habitat as well as protection of sensitive environmental areas. Regulation of the removal of woodland plant material is desirable to protect scenic beauty, to control erosion, and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface waters. Tree cover is also important to reduce erosion and effluent and nutrient flows into surface waters.

In an urbanized area like the City of Rhinelander, tree cover is very important. According to the U.S. Forest Service, the urban tree canopy provides an important stormwater management function by intercepting rainfall that would otherwise run off paved surfaces and be transported into local waters through the storm drainage system, picking up various pollutants along the way. Urban trees also reduce heating and cooling costs, lower air temperatures, reduce air pollution, increase property values, provide wildlife habitat, and provide aesthetic and community benefits such as improved quality of life.

See Map 1 for woodland areas.



Artesian well. Source: City of Rhinelander

## Rare Species and Natural Communities

The City of Rhinelander and nearby towns cover 56 land sections with occurrences of aquatic and terrestrial plants, animals, and/or natural communities of endangered status as identified in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory. Each section identified may have several different species or just one species.

- Many contiguous sections with aquatic occurrences follow the Wisconsin River upstream northwest from Rhinelander to the Oneida County Line.
- Fourteen contiguous sections with both aquatic and terrestrial occurrences exist within the City of Rhinelander.

Holmboe Conifer Forest is State Natural Area #79, located near the Wisconsin and Pelican River confluence just south of State Highway 17. According to the DNR, Holmboe Conifer Forest features a variety of old-growth northern forest types on very steep morainal topography along the south bank of the Pelican River. A hemlock forest occupies the north-facing and lower ridge slopes. The drier sites are wooded with white and red pines, white birch, and a mixture of northern hardwoods. The north-central portion is occupied by a black spruce and tamarack wet forest. Canada yew occurs along a seepage area located between the moraine hills on the south and the swamp conifer forest near the river. Holmboe Conifer Forest is owned by The Northwoods Land Trust and was designated a State Natural Area in 1983.

Wisconsin's biodiversity goals are to identify, protect and manage native plants, animals, and natural communities from the very common to critically endangered for present and future generations. Knowledge, appreciation, and stewardship of Wisconsin's native species and ecosystems are critical to their survival and greater benefit to society. Original vegetation types for the City of Rhinelander and surrounding areas were white spruce, balsam fir, tamarack, white cedar, white birch, and aspen, which came from a map of Finley's Original Vegetation.



Woodlands beautify the City. Source: NCWRPC



Hemlocks in the Holmboe Conifer State Natural Area. Source: Aaron Carlson

## Agriculture

Hodag Farmer's Market in Pioneer Park provides about 30 booths worth of fresh food to Rhinelander residents on a weekly basis. A second weekly market is currently being developed at another site. Three grocery stores and several convenience stores provide daily access to fresh and processed foods.

There is no active agriculture in the City of Rhinelander, nor are there any prime agricultural soils. The surrounding towns have agricultural uses, with potato farming occurring the closest in the Town of Stella. There are tree farms in the area too.

## Recreational Resources

The Rhinelander area park and recreation system consists of several parks throughout the city and a golf course. The Rhinelander School District and area private schools also provide neighborhood playgrounds and other recreational fields. Additionally, soccer fields are located near the airport.

Parks and schools are discussed in Chapter 4.

## Historic & Cultural Assets

A brief community history is located in Chapter 1. Historical buildings are identified here. The unique history of the Hodag is described on the next page.

ArtStart is run by a group of volunteers, organized as a non-profit organization, who have transformed the historic Federal Building in downtown Rhinelander into a destination arts and cultural center. The City of Rhinelander purchased the building from the Federal Government for \$1 and leases it to ArtStart.

Pioneer Park Historical Complex is a collection of historical buildings and exhibits. The complex is home to the Rhinelander Logging Museum, which was built in 1932 and contains logging artifacts. Pioneer Park is also home to the Rhinelander Schoolhouse Museum, the Soo Line Depot and model railroad display, a museum dedicated to the Civilian Conservation Corps, a museum dedicated to outboard motors and a sawmill.

There are four structures in the City of Rhinelander that are listed on the National Register of Historical Places: First National Bank (ca. 1900-1924), the Oneida County Courthouse (ca. 1900-1924); the Solon and Mathilda Sutliff House (1923); and the West Side School (ca. 1924-1958).

Architecture and History Inventory in Rhinelander contains 138 buildings—23 buildings circa 1800-1900, and 95 buildings from 1900-Present.



Historic West Side School.  
Source: Wisconsin Historical Society

## History of the Hodag

From *The Living Legend of Rhinelander's Hodag* (hodagpress.com/about.htm), 2006. Reprinted with permission.

The Hodag first made its appearance in the autumn of 1893 near the lumbering frontier community of Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Eugene Simeon Shepard (1854-1923), timber cruiser, real-estate broker, and community jester stumbled across the beast while hiking near his Rhinelander home.

It was not until three years later that a determined Eugene Shepard captured a live Hodag. In the autumn of 1896, Shepard and a group of lumberjacks surprised a Hodag in its den and asphyxiated the monster with a heavy dose of chloroform. Shepard then transported the Hodag to the Rhinelander fairgrounds and confined it to a pit resembling its den “in order that the animal would not discover the deception being practiced upon him.” Days before the opening of Oneida County’s first fair, Shepard announced that he would proudly exhibit his recently captured beast.

To the casual observer, Shepard’s Hodag ploy was a practical joke pulled by Rhinelander’s most celebrated prankster. A more in-depth investigation of the circumstances surrounding the Hodag’s creation, however, reveals a far more serious side of the beast. In addition to comprising a known jokester’s most successful ploy, Rhinelander’s Hodag was, and continues to be, a very serious, preconceived promotional project. To be sure, the Hodag played an important role in making Rhinelander what it is today—the regional industrial center of Northern Wisconsin with an odd twist of local color.

In the autumn of 1896, Rhinelander found itself in the midst of a very significant crisis. Although founded just fourteen years earlier on the sole strength of the lumber industry, the city that grew up overnight had all but depleted the very thing that gave it life—the surrounding pine forests. Indeed, half the city’s sawmills had already closed and moved on, and the few remaining were forced to extend their operations farther and farther from their mills each season. Countless other lumbering frontier communities had flourished with the industry and disappeared with the trees. Would Rhinelander follow suit? The city’s leading citizens—those who had invested time, money and measureless energy into forging a community out of the northern Wisconsin frontier—were determined that Rhinelander would survive the demise of the great



The Hodag. Source: NCWRPC

stands of pine. To this end, Eugene S. Shepard eagerly donated his unusual talents and odd personality.

The businessmen who comprised the community’s elite struggled to keep Rhinelander growing while the surrounding lumber supply dwindled. Prompted by the city’s newspapers, Rhinelander began a tireless campaign of city promotion. Working through organizations such as the Rhinelander Businessmen’s Association and the Rhinelander Advancement Society, Shepard and others attempted to attract agriculture, tourism, and non-lumbermill-related industry to the city.

Rhinelander, as the seat of the newly created Oneida County, spearheaded the county’s drive toward agricultural development. By 1896 the Oneida County Agricultural Society planned its first annual Fair and Exposition. Unfortunately, the sparsely settled county had very little agricultural produce to exhibit because farming in the cut-over was still unproven and extremely difficult. Even the city’s leading weekly confessed, “The farm product and livestock exhibit cannot be expected to be very extensive in a community where agricultural interest has only commenced to be developed.” Acknowledging the lack of exhibit substance, the fair organizers appealed to the city’s most flamboyant and popular entertainer for guidance. Under these circumstances Shepard created the captured Hodag—to be exhibited at the fair and bring people to Rhinelander.

While amusing Shepard and others, the Hodag brought people to Rhinelander. In doing so, the town promoters felt the Hodag fulfilled a crucial step in the process of booster-assisted city growth. Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the Hodag is that it continues today, over 100 years later, to fulfill a similar promotional role.

# Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources Goals, Objectives, & Policies

## Goal 1:

Maintain the natural beauty of Rhinelander, while at the same allowing the city to expand to meet the future growth needs.

### Objective 1:

Retain views of white pine, rivers, and forested areas.

#### Policies:

- A. Identify viewsheds to maintain the natural scenic beauty.
  - i. For example, if the industrial site at the east end of River Street and the north end of Maple Street becomes available for development, then providing a 45 degree viewshed that connects the ends of both streets toward the water, would preserve the end-of-street views of the river.
- B. Discourage removing trees from hillsides.

- C. As bridges are reconstructed, continue to require edge-of-bridge car barriers to allow views of the scenery beyond them.
- D. Require site plans for any proposed new development to ensure that reasonable measures are taken to protect sensitive natural areas.
- E. Require developers to use best management practices to minimize adverse impacts when it is not possible for development to avoid sensitive natural areas.
- F. Encourage the development of a walking and biking trail system throughout Rhinelander to take advantage of existing natural amenities.

## Goal 2:

Protect and preserve the city's cultural and historical resources.

### Objective 1:

1. Preserve the Hodag as a symbol of Rhinelander.

#### Policies:

- A. Continue to perpetuate the Hodag through Chamber of Commerce initiatives.
- B. Develop various ways throughout the community to celebrate the Hodag.

### Objective 2:

Work to enhance the historical resources in the city.

#### Policies:

- A. Continue to support the Pioneer Park Historical Complex.
- B. Identify and inventory all historical sites in Rhinelander.
- C. Encourage preservation of historic buildings of significance by having a local resident, staff member, or consultant available to answer questions about all parts of the process.
- D. Maintain certified local government status through the Wisconsin Historical Society, so the City can qualify for additional funding and technical assistance from the state.



# Chapter 3 • Housing

Housing is one of three basic needs (i.e. food, shelter, & clothing), and the right housing will allow Rhinelander's residents to thrive. Communities indirectly provide housing by creating policies that encourage various types of housing to exist and where to place them. Knowing what housing exists and what housing needs exist are key to identifying what policies to create. This chapter assesses the age, structural, value, and occupancy characteristics of housing in Rhinelander.

## Previous Studies

### Regional Livability Plan

The 2015 North Central Wisconsin Regional Livability Plan (RLP) is an update to the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Focusing on the four topic areas of housing, economic development, transportation, and land use, the RLP identifies trends and sets goals to make the region more livable for all residents.

Housing trends identified include decreasing household sizes and increasing percentages of owners and renters paying more than 30 percent of their income toward housing costs. The housing goal is to "promote a variety of safe and affordable housing options that meet the needs of all community members." The three identified objectives to reach this goal are 1) ensure a wide mix of housing is available to residents of all income levels, 2) stabilize and upgrade existing housing stock, and 3) provide support for an aging population to successfully age at home in their communities.

## Housing Issues

A variety of housing related issues were identified throughout the planning process, and are listed below.

### Affordability

According to the 2010 Census, 17 percent of Rhinelander households reported incomes below \$15,000 per year, and about 23 percent of city residents have incomes below \$25,000. For many of these people this poses a difficulty in paying for decent, safe, and sanitary housing. For 48 percent of renters and 28 percent of homeowners in the city, this means that they must spend more than thirty percent of their income on housing.

### New Housing Subdivisions

Initial thoughts in Rhinelander were that everyone wanted new housing on wooded lots. The 2015 survey results show that most people want new housing in "traditional city neighborhoods on city-sized lots" (39%) or "on large wooded lots" (24%). Housing placed "above storefronts downtown" or "in multi-unit buildings" each received 12% of respondent votes. Therefore, the city could pursue housing in multiple areas—extending the street grid, and encouraging housing above stores in downtown and some multi-unit buildings. Wooded lot residential would continue to be served by housing development in surrounding towns, and where necessary in the City to preserve wetlands and other natural features.

## Existing Housing Stock

In 2010, the City of Rhinelander had a total of 3,981 housing units, compared to 3,430 in 2000 and 3,293 in 1990. Over the last decade 551 housing units were added in Rhinelander, which represents an increase of 16 percent, meanwhile the State increased by about 21 percent over the same period, see Table 10. The four surrounding towns combined added 890 housing units over the last decade. See the residential areas identified on the Existing Land Use Map (Map 7).

Table 11 indicates that over 13 percent of total housing units in the City were built since 2000. Almost half of the City's housing units were constructed prior to 1970. As a comparison, housing construction in Oneida County has peaked in the 1970's, with about 20 percent of housing units built in this decade. The slower years for housing construction in the County were before 1950.

**Table 10: Total Housing Units**

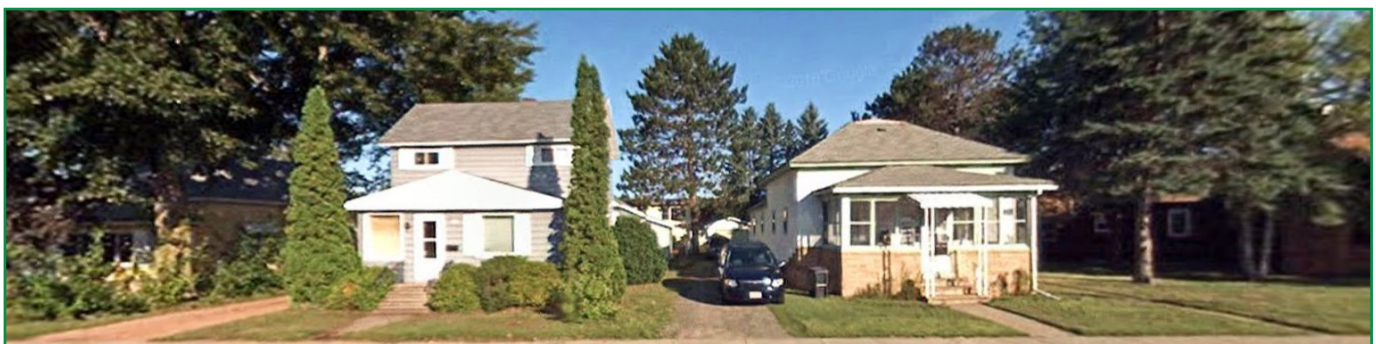
Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	3,293	3,430	3,981	16.06%	551
Town of Crescent	1,014	1,034	1,252	21.08%	218
Town of Newbold	2,006	2,074	2,327	12.20%	253
Town of Pelican	1,679	1,532	1,715	11.95%	183
Town of Pine Lake	1,287	1,381	1,617	17.09%	236
Oneida County	25,173	26,627	30,125	13.14%	3,498
State of Wisconsin	2,055,774	2,321,144	2,624,358	13.06%	303,214

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 2: Year Structure Built**

Year	Rhinelander	Rhinelander %	Oneida County %	Wisconsin %
2000 to 2009	433	10.3%	14.4%	12.9%
1990 to 1999	142	3.4%	15.6%	14.0%
1980 to 1989	423	10.0%	14.5%	9.8%
1970 to 1979	558	13.2%	20.5%	14.9%
1960 to 1969	651	15.4%	10.6%	9.8%
1950 to 1959	577	13.7%	8.2%	11.3%
1940 to 1949	484	11.5%	6.4%	6.0%
1939 or earlier	954	22.6%	9.7%	20.9%

Source: U.S. Census



Single family housing (1-unit detached). Source: Google Street View

**Table 12: Type of Structure**

Structure Type	Rhinelanders				Oneida County % 2010	Wisconsin % 2010
	Number of Units		Percentage			
	2000	2010	2000	2010		
1-unit detached	2,233	2,145	66.1%	52.1%	81.6%	66.3%
1-unit attached	43	187	1.3%	4.5%	1.4%	4.3%
2 units	417	748	12.3%	18.2%	3.5%	7.1%
3 to 4 units	179	237	5.3%	5.8%	1.7%	3.7%
5 to 9 units	175	219	5.2%	5.3%	1.9%	4.8%
10 to 19 units	60	168	1.8%	4.1%	0.9%	3.3%
20 or more units	232	212	6.9%	5.1%	1.6%	6.6%
Mobile home or other	38	201	1.1%	4.9%	7.4%	3.9%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 12 shows what type of housing exists in Rhinelanders, and how it has changed over the last decade (2000 to 2010). There are fewer houses (1-unit detached, & 1-unit attached) in 2010, than in 2000, but over half of the housing units in the City are single-family homes. A variety of multi-unit apartments or condos were built between 2000 and 2010. About 160 mobile homes were moved to the City between 2000 and 2010.

### Value Characteristics

Median values of single-family houses and duplexes in the City of Rhinelanders were over \$102,000 in 2010, as displayed in Table 13. Surrounding towns all had median housing values over \$150,000 for single-family and duplexes, and values in the Town of Crescent exceeded \$180,000. Meanwhile the

county and state median household values in 2010 were \$172,800 and \$169,000 respectively.

Between 2000 and 2010, median rents throughout Oneida County were lower than the state. Median rents in the City of Rhinelanders rose over 40 percent over that period, as shown on Table 14. Rents in the towns of Pelican and Pine Lake have increased over 60 percent since 2000.

Table 15 shows that as of the year 2010 in the City of Rhinelanders about 28 percent of owners and 47 percent of renters spent at least 30 percent of their household income on housing. The Town of Crescent is the only surrounding community with less than 30 percent of households, owners or renters, spending more than 30 percent on housing.

**Table 13: Median Value for specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelanders	\$72,700	\$102,800	41.4%	\$30,100
Town of Crescent	\$119,100	\$180,700	51.7%	\$61,600
Town of Newbold	\$122,600	\$173,300	41.3%	\$50,700
Town of Pelican	\$101,900	\$152,300	49.5%	\$50,400
Town of Pine Lake	\$114,400	\$164,700	44.0%	\$50,300
Oneida County	\$106,200	\$172,800	62.7%	\$66,600
State of Wisconsin	\$112,200	\$169,000	50.6%	\$56,800

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 14: Median Gross Rents**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	\$434	\$608	40.1%	\$174
Town of Crescent	\$475	\$578	21.7%	\$103
Town of Newbold	\$550	\$689	25.3%	\$139
Town of Pelican	\$460	\$756	64.3%	\$269
Town of Pine Lake	\$485	\$780	60.8%	\$295
Oneida County	\$460	\$618	34.3%	\$158
State of Wisconsin	\$540	\$713	32.0%	\$173

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 15: Percent of Households that spent 30% or more of Household Income on Housing**

Minor Civil Division	% Owners	% Renters
City of Rhinelander	28.0%	47.8%
Town of Crescent	9.6%	11.0%
Town of Newbold	34.1%	39.7%
Town of Pelican	36.5%	41.5%
Town of Pine Lake	33.2%	44.2%
Oneida County	17.5%	47.1%
State of Wisconsin	16.6%	47.0%

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 16: Percent Owners and Renters**

Minor Civil Division	% Owners	% Renters
City of Rhinelander	50.3%	49.7%
Town of Crescent	83.2%	16.8%
Town of Newbold	91.2%	8.8%
Town of Pelican	83.0%	17.0%
Town of Pine Lake	81.8%	18.2%
Oneida County	77.8%	22.2%
State of Wisconsin	69.5%	30.5%

Source: U.S. Census

### Housing Definitions:

#### *Specified Owner Occupied Housing Units*

Total number of owner occupied housing units described as either a one family home detached from any other house or a one family house attached to one or more houses on less than 10 acres with no business on the property.

#### *Gross Rent*

This is contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, and water) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid for by the renter (or paid for the renter by someone else). Gross rent is intended to eliminate differentials which result from varying practices with respect to the inclusion of utilities and fuels as part of the rental payment.

### Occupancy Characteristics

Occupied housing is divided between owner occupied units and renter occupied units. As the urban center of the area, the City of Rhinelander has a higher percentage of renter occupied units than the surrounding towns, see Table 16. All of the surrounding towns have less than 20 percent of their housing stock occupied by renters. Even though Oneida County contains mainly rural land, it has over 20 percent of its housing stock occupied by renters, because three urban areas – Rhinelander, Minocqua, and Woodruff – increase the rental housing average for the county.

Table 17 displays the change in total owner occupied units over time. Since 2000, there was nearly a 6 percent increase in owner occupied units. Both the county and state percentages of owner occupied units increased, by 2.6 and 8.7 percent's respectively from 2000 to 2010.

**Table 17: Owner Occupied Units**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	1,907	2,018	5.8%	111
Town of Crescent	689	756	9.7%	67
Town of Newbold	1,006	1,050	4.4%	44
Town of Pelican	985	1,016	3.2%	31
Town of Pine Lake	887	969	9.2%	82
Oneida County	12,213	12,540	2.7%	327
State of Wisconsin	1,426,361	1,551,558	8.8%	125,197

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 18: Renter Occupied Units**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	1,307	1,527	16.8%	220
Town of Crescent	108	101	-6.5%	-7
Town of Newbold	108	126	16.7%	18
Town of Pelican	182	167	-8.2%	-15
Town of Pine Lake	176	167	-5.1%	-9
Oneida County	3,120	3,463	11.0%	343
State of Wisconsin	658,183	728,210	10.6%	70,027

Source: U.S. Census

Table 18 displays renter occupied units. Since 2000, there has been over a 16 percent increase in renter occupied units. Rental units decreased in all the surrounding towns except the Town of Newbold, which had a percent increase on par with the City. Occupied rental units also increased for both the county and state over the same period, by 10.9 and 10.6 percent's respectively.

Table 19 identifies seasonal housing units in the area. The City has relatively few seasonal units. There are many seasonal units in the surrounding towns, and throughout the whole county, and between 2000 and 2010, the number of units almost everywhere has increased over 50%.

**Table 19: Seasonal Units**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	36	58	61.1%	222
Town of Crescent	223	337	51.1%	114
Town of Newbold	889	1,073	20.7%	184
Town of Pelican	302	468	55.0%	166
Town of Pine Lake	276	404	46.4%	128
Oneida County	10,429	12,566	20.49%	2,137
State of Wisconsin	142,313	193,046	35.6%	50,733

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 20: Median Age**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	38.9	43.2	11.0%	4.3
Town of Crescent	10.4	48.0	18.8%	7.6
Town of Newbold	42.8	49.1	14.7%	6.3
Town of Pelican	40.1	16.7	16.5%	6.6
Town of Pine Lake	40.2	46.7	16.2%	6.5
Oneida County	42.4	48.0	13.2%	5.6
State of Wisconsin	36.0	38.5	6.9%	2.5

Source: U.S. Census

## Demand Characteristics

Rhinelander's median age continues to increase. In 2000 it was 38.9, and in 2010 it was 43.2, see Table 20. The surrounding towns and the county all are older; however the state's median age is younger overall.

Households are getting smaller and therefore more households exist, as shown in Table 21. This trend of declining persons per household has been occurring throughout the nation. In 2010, the City of Rhinelander has an average household size of 2.10 persons per household, down from 2.23 in 2000. The state, county, and surrounding towns all have had a decline in the household size.

**Table 21: Average Household Size**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Rhinelander	2.23	2.10	-0.13
Town of Crescent	2.59	2.37	-0.22
Town of Newbold	2.43	2.31	-0.12
Town of Pelican	2.49	2.33	-0.16
Town of Pine Lake	2.45	2.40	-0.05
Oneida County	2.34	2.21	-0.13
State of Wisconsin	2.50	2.43	-0.07

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 22: Population Projections**

Minor Civil Division	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
City of Rhinelander	7,625	7,730	7,715	7,445	6,995
Town of Crescent	2,120	2,220	2,285	2,280	2,215
Town of Newbold	2,845	2,995	3,095	3,100	3,025
Town of Pelican	2,960	3,145	3,280	3,310	3,260
Town of Pine Lake	2,855	2,980	3,070	3,060	2,970
Oneida County	37,265	38,905	39,985	39,745	38,500
State of Wisconsin	6,005,080	6,203,850	6,375,910	6,476,270	6,491,635

Source: WI DOA

Table 22 displays Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) population projections. Based on DOA projections, the City will gain and then lose residents for a net loss of about 630 residents by 2040. Meanwhile, the county is projected to gain 1,235 new residents. The surrounding towns are all projected to increase in population by 2040.

## Housing Programs

There are a number of programs available to local governments to aid those having trouble affording their housing needs.

### Local Programs

The City maintains an active Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Rehabilitation Program to serve LMI residents throughout the community. A waiting list routinely exists for this program and there may be some need for the City to apply for more revolving loan funds from the state in the future. The CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program is currently promoted through word-of-mouth advertising due to the availability of funds. However, when more funds become available, it would be beneficial to create a formal marketing strategy to promote this community program utilizing the expertise of existing CDBG Committee members and Program Administrative Staff. Annual CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Statistical Reports shall be kept on file in the City Clerk's Office.

### State Programs

*All State programs are changing in 2015. Contact the State for the new programs.*

#### Wisconsin Department of Administration

The Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Housing (DOH), provides grants to general purpose units of local government for housing programs which principally benefit low and moderate income (LMI) households. These funds are primarily used for rehabilitation of housing units, homebuyer assistance, and small

neighborhood public facility projects. CDBG dollars are flexible and responsive to local needs.

In addition, CDBG can be used to leverage other programs or serve as a local match. The grant also can be used as an incentive to involve the private sector in local community development efforts or to respond to area needs. The CDBG program often serves as a catalyst for other community development projects.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), like HOME, aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. It provides an incentive for private entities to develop affordable housing. The credit reduces the federal taxes owed by an individual or corporation for an investment made in low-income rental housing. LIHTC provides funding for the construction of new buildings or the rehabilitation or conversion of existing structures. To qualify, a property must set aside a certain share of its units for low-income households.

### Federal Programs

#### USDA-RD:

Section 502 Homeownership Direct Loan Program of the Rural Health Service (RHS) provides loans to help low-income households purchase and prepare sites or purchase, build, repair, renovate, or relocate homes.

Section 502 Mutual Self-Help Housing Loans are designed to help very-low-income households construct their own homes. Targeted families include those who cannot buy affordable housing through conventional means. Participating families perform approximately 65 percent of the construction under qualified supervision.

Section 504, the Very-Low-Income Housing Repair Program, provides loans and grants to low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes. Improvements must make the homes more safe and sanitary or remove health or safety hazards.

Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance Program provides an additional subsidy for households with incomes too low to pay RHS-subsidized rents.

Section 533 Rural Housing Preservation Grants are designed to assist sponsoring organizations in the repair or rehabilitation of low-income or very-low-income housing. Assistance is available for landlords or members of a cooperative.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program finances land acquisition and site development associated with self-help housing for low-income families. Loans are made to the nonprofit sponsors of development projects and are interest-free. Portions of the loans are forgiven if promised units of housing are completed within a given period. These forgiven “grant conversion” funds may be used to subsidize future development projects.

HOME Investment Partnership Program aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. HOME funds may be used for rental assistance, assistance to homebuyers, new construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of rental housing.

# Housing Goals, Objectives, & Policies

## Goal 1:

Provide an adequate supply of housing for individuals of all income levels and abilities throughout the community.

### Objective 1:

Increase land available for new housing.

#### Policies:

- A. Officially plat roads to extend the existing City street grid.
- B. Identify where historically significant buildings exist, so that demolition in those areas is restricted.
- C. Raze tax delinquent housing that the City now possesses to provide land to build new housing, possibly creating larger parcels.

### Objective 2:

Promote housing types that allow households to spend up to 30% of their income on housing.

#### Policies:

- A. Cooperate with DRI to promote creation of housing above storefronts in downtown.

- B. Encourage development of various types of apartment buildings with inexpensive finishes and shared laundry facilities.
- C. Provide clear explanations of the City's decision processes and expectations to developers, builders, owners, and property managers as they become involved in those processes.
- D. Allow apartments and townhouses as buffers between single family housing and other uses.
- E. To the extent possible, promote a variety of ownership programs to reinforce stability of housing for some income groups.
- F. Promote a variety of programs and services to help stabilize housing for other lower income or special need groups.
- G. Encourage housing designs that serve people with disabilities.

## Goal 2:

Encourage strong, safe neighborhoods for all age groups.

### Objective 1:

Promote the value of City residency as a first choice, and increase housing values.

#### Policies:

- A. Increase curb appeal in existing neighborhoods by encouraging sidewalk terrace (space between curb and sidewalk) plantings in addition to grass and street trees.
- B. Require sidewalks and encourage multiuse path development in new subdivisions.

- C. Complete sidewalks in existing neighborhoods.
- D. Consider revising Rhinelander's sidewalk financing plan to have the City pay 100% of the cost to install and repair all sidewalks. New developments would still be required to pay for installing sidewalks along with roads.
- E. Require foundation plantings and trees as part of site development plans.

## Objective 2:

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Promote infill housing or recreation development in residential areas.

### **Policies:**

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- A. Increase the flexibility within the Rhinelander Housing Code by using the Conditional Use Permit process to encourage infill within existing neighborhoods.
- B. Create mini parks on vacant housing parcels where there is a need for additional outdoor recreation.
- C. Vacate alleys that are no longer needed, so that adjacent parcels have additional land, which will come onto the tax rolls.

## Objective 3:

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Preserve and increase the quality of existing housing.

### **Policies:**

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- A. Advertise ways for residents to weatherize their homes; possibly organizing an energy and water use efficiency fair – or a both at the county fair.

- B. Foster and promote Focus On Energy conservation programs and provide model prototypes and information through pilot programs.
- C. Apply for more revolving loan funds from the state to increase the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Rehabilitation Program in Rhinelander.
- D. Create a formal marketing strategy for the City's CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program.
- E. Review and modify local ordinances and building codes to accommodate housing trends and strengthen existing housing stock.
- F. Identify and preserve dwellings and buildings of distinctive character that add to the City's identity or embody the City's heritage.
- G. Establish a community task force to investigate the reality of enacting a City rental housing code.

# Chapter 4 • Utilities and Community Facilities

## Background

Utilities and community facilities, provided by either public or private entities, are critical for community development. Utilities include things such as electrical service, natural gas, telephone, and cable communications. Community facilities include local governmental buildings, libraries, educational institutions, and maintenance and storage facilities, as well as services like police and fire protection, medical, municipal water and wastewater.

## Previous Studies

A variety of plans were reviewed as they relate to utilities and community facilities. These plans provide a starting point for the planning process.

### Rhineland School District Strategic Plan

The current School District of Rhineland Strategic Plan was adopted in 2014 to cover the five-year period from 2014 to 2019. The plan highlights five goals for the district during this period, and includes the following facilities plan summary:

Long Term Facilities Plan is part of the School District Strategic Plan, and includes: 1) Outdoor Athletics Masterplan; and 2) Facilities Long Range Plan.

The plan documents the long range facilities needs in the school district, and provides the following assessment and recommendations:

The current Rhineland school district enrollment is at 2,379 students. Enrollment projections trend fairly consistent enrollment for the next several years. The existing facilities within the district are all in generally good condition and have had significant mechanical and electrical infrastructure

## Utilities and Community Facilities Issues

- Overcrowding exists at Crescent and Pelican Elementary Schools.
- No industrial park land is available for new development. A new industrial park will require additional utilities. Additional space should be developed for future business growth.

See the Economic Development Chapter in this Comprehensive Plan for more details about the existing industrial parks in Rhineland.

updates. The facilities include the Rhineland High School which also houses Northwoods Community Secondary 6-12 Charter School, the James Williams Middle School, and the Central Intermediate School along with three elementary schools including Crescent Elementary, Northwoods Community Elementary, and Pelican Elementary.

Utilization and space availability are deemed adequate and fairly well used at the High School, Middle School, and Intermediate School. As the study determined ratios based on census and square footage the Northwoods Elementary building the 187 S.F. per student ratio seems to be fine. However the 111 S.F. per student figure at Crescent Elementary and the 140 S.F. ratio at Pelican Elementary are cause for concern. Some of the disparity, may be due in part to the undersized gymnasiums at each facility. With a total of 108,649

S.F within Central, Pelican and NCES elementary buildings, a look at redistributing 828 Crescent, Pelican and NCES elementary students to relieve the overcrowding at the affected schools provided a ratio of 131 S.F. per student, well below the recommended 150-200 square foot range. Therefore redistributing students in existing elementary schools is not an option.

Possibilities to alleviate overcrowding include:

- Option 1 – Additions to Crescent and Pelican Elementary schools (~\$7.8 million);
- Option 2 – Reconfigure grade levels at school buildings (~\$7 million); or
- Option 3 – Build a new 4K to 5th Grade elementary school (~\$26.4 million).

Rhineland Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2015-2020

This plan assesses the existing recreation system in the City of Rhineland; identifies recreation needs based upon public input and recreation standards; sets forth goals and objectives to be used as guidelines in formulating outdoor recreation improvements; and provides recommendations for improving the recreation system over the next five years.

The plan’s goals include:

1. Upgrade & maintain existing park facilities.
2. Create new park facilities.
3. Become a more bicycling and walking friendly community.
4. Promote outdoor recreational opportunities available in the county forest.
5. Create new parks.



School Expansion. Source: Rhineland School District

A variety of recommendations in the plan are based on the above goals. Also in the plan are lists of capital improvements for each park for the next 5-years.

Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2014-2019

The 2014-2019 Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan assess existing recreation facilities in the County and identifies needs and goals for the next five years.

The plan’s goals include:

1. Protect aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems from invasive species.
2. Protect, restore, and enhance Oneida County’s natural resources for outdoor recreation.
3. Support development and connection of trails. – including walking and biking, ATV/UTV, and snowmobiles.
4. Gradually bring parks into ADA compliance.

A variety of objectives are listed under each goal to facilitate implementation.

Oneida County All Hazards Mitigation Plan, 2010

Note: In 2015-2016, an update to the Oneida County All Hazards Mitigation Plan is being developed.

This plan’s primary purpose is to identify how to prevent injury and property damage from natural hazards. Understanding how the natural environment works is a first step in mitigating natural disasters. The All Hazards plan along with the Natural Resource element of this Comprehensive Plan will show how the natural environment and the built environment are in conflict, and how to mitigate that conflict. As an example of such conflict, development in a floodplain is at risk of damage caused by flooding.

The report identified the Rhineland dam as a large dam with a high hazard potential should the dam fail. The report also identified 61 structures located in floodplains throughout the city. In both 1999 and 2000 Oneida County had floods warranting a Presidential Disaster Declaration.

## Inventory & Trends

Utilities and community facilities provided by the City of Rhinelander or by other public or private entities are inventoried and evaluated as to their present condition and adequacy to meet the current and future needs of the City.

Many of the major facilities are identified on the Utilities & Community Facilities Map (Map 4-1).

### Water

#### Drinking Water

The City's Water Utility operates a system consisting of water supply, storage, treatment, and distribution facilities.

#### Water Supply

The Water Utility started in 1894. The first water used by the City came from the Wisconsin River. By 1933, the Utility had changed to a system using wells. Potable water is supplied by four wells, three aboveground storage tanks with a total capacity of 1.2 million gallons, and a 1.25 million gallon underground treatment reservoir. The utility pumps approximately 1.5 million gallons of water per day for residential, commercial, and industrial users as well as for fire protection.

All wells have wellhead protection plans in place to protect the water source from contamination. Rhinelander has a wellhead protection ordinance, which is a water utility ordinance that implements the wellhead protection plan by identifying permitted land uses in the wellhead protection area.

#### Treatment

Chemicals are added into the distribution system at each well and at the CT reservoir. Caustic soda is added for pH control; fluoride is added to prevent tooth decay; polyphosphate is added to sequester iron and manganese, and control concentrations of lead & copper. Chlorine is added for disinfection.

#### Distribution System

The City's water distribution system serves most of the City. The distribution system is made-up of over 66 miles of water mains ranging from 4-inches to 16-inches in size.

#### Waste Water

The municipal Wastewater Department opened a new wastewater treatment plant in 2011 to replace the original 1930's system. The new facility was built with a high capacity to account for future growth and has the ability to handle seven million gallons of wastewater per day. The facility was designed to limit environmental impacts and make for cleaner discharge of treated wastewater into the Wisconsin River.

The Wastewater Utility also owns and maintains the sanitary sewer system, which consists of more than 60 miles of collection and trunk sewers, and twenty lift stations, which feed several miles of force mains.

#### Storm Water

The majority of Rhinelander is currently served by the City's concrete pipe storm sewer system. A stormwater utility was established in 2012. Stormwater management is a task of the Public Works department.

### Public Works

The Department of Public Works, located at 644 Washington Street, is responsible for maintaining the City's streets, sidewalks, curbs, storm sewers and trees in order to provide inviting and safe travel throughout the City.

#### Street Department

The City's street department is responsible for the maintenance of the local road system, storm sewers and waste & recycling removal. The street department garage maintains a variety of equipment and vehicles necessary to maintain the roads including dump trucks, graders, sweepers, and snow blowers, among others.

Rhinelander has been a Tree City USA community since 2013. More than 3,400 communities have made the commitment to becoming a Tree City USA. They have achieved Tree City USA status by meeting four core standards of sound urban forestry management:

1. maintaining a tree board or department,
2. having a community tree care ordinance,

3. spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry, and
4. celebrating Arbor Day.

Street trees are maintained by the Public Works Department.

### Solid Waste and Recycling

The City of Rhinelander contracts for collection of solid waste and recycling for residents. The city provides a 35-gallon cart or 52 stickers and a recycling bin to all single, duplex and triplex dwellings; 65-gallon and 95-gallon carts are also available for an additional charge. Brush and leaf pick-up occurs every spring and fall.

Rhinelander is served by the Oneida County Solid Waste Department. At the Oneida County Landfill, yard waste is composted and sold to the public for their use. Grass, leaves/needles, tree trimmings and brush under ¾ inch diameter are the types of yard waste accepted. A private Transfer Station is located on State Highway 17.

## Public Safety

### Police Department

Three departments provide public safety protection within the City. They are the City of Rhinelander Police Department, the Oneida County Sheriff's Department, and the Wisconsin State Patrol.

#### *City of Rhinelander Police Department*

The Rhinelander Police Department is located at 201 N. Brown Street. The mission of the Rhinelander Police Department is to work in partnership with the community to prevent crime, enhance the quality of life, and provide a safe environment for everyone.

The Rhinelander Police Department Patrol Division's main responsibilities are handling calls for service, traffic enforcement and accident investigations, patrolling the city parks, handling requests for the media, proactive patrol, and giving various presentations to the community. In addition, the patrol function has an officer assigned to the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), a canine unit, and an officer assigned to the Northcentral Drug Enforcement Unit to conduct drug investigations.

The Rhinelander Police Department Investigations Division is responsible for investigating major incidents and complex crimes that occur within the City of Rhinelander. The Department also has a Bicycle Patrol Program and motorcycle patrol as part of a Community Oriented Policing Unit which monitors the downtown area, city parks, neighborhoods, and special events.

#### *Oneida County Sheriff's Office*

The Oneida County Sheriff's Office, located on the east side of Rhinelander just off of STH 17, provides service to all the towns and the City of Rhinelander in Oneida County for law enforcement.

Oneida County Emergency Management is part of the Sheriff's Office.

The Patrol Division is responsible for all initial investigations, crash investigations, and handling calls for service.

Other specialized functions include Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), Crime Prevention, Recreational Safety Patrol, and HAZMAT/Bomb Technician duties. The Sheriff's Office also has an Investigative Division whose duties include serving as criminal investigation and managing the Drug Enforcement Unit and the Police-School Liaison Unit.

Rhinelander is served by an enhanced 911 (E911) emergency response system that is operated by a consolidated Dispatch Center located at the Oneida County Sheriff's Office. The Enhanced 911 Center provides dispatch services for one



Police vehicle. Source: Rhinelander

full time fire department, sixteen volunteer fire departments, three ambulance services, nine first responder groups, one city police department, and one township police department.

The Oneida County Jail is a 200 bed facility built 1999. The pod design allows staff to visually observe the inmate population 24 hours a day. In addition to housing local inmates, the Oneida County Jail houses inmates from the Wisconsin Prison System.

#### *Wisconsin State Patrol*

The Wisconsin State Patrol, located in Wausau, has statewide jurisdiction on all public roads but operates mainly on State and U.S. highways as a matter of general practice to enforce traffic and criminal laws, and help motorists in need. They also help local law enforcement by reconstructing traffic accidents; inspecting trucks, school buses, and ambulances; and helping local agencies with natural disasters and civil disturbances.

#### *Rhineland Fire Department (RFD)*

The Rhineland Fire Department (RFD) and City Building Inspections Department are located at 128 West Frederick Street. Overall the Fire Department conducts about 1,750 runs per year, with approximately 70 percent of these responses for emergency medical assistance. The RFD is also a full paramedic ambulance service. RFD firefighters visit schools, day cares, and senior living facilities on a regular basis to speak with the public about ways they can achieve a safer home environment. Other services to the community include fire extinguisher demonstrations, fire and medical safety talks, specialized type rescues, hazardous materials response, and home smoke detector program. The RFD also conducts semi-annual fire inspections in every commercial building within the city limits.

Rhineland currently has an ISO insurance rating of 3 for its fire protection service. ISO's fire protection insurance is rated on a scale of one to ten, with one representing the best protection and 10 representing an essentially unprotected community.

The RFD has mutual aid agreements with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the volunteer departments in the Towns of Pine Lake, Pelican, Crescent, and Newbold. The RFD is also part of the Oneida County HAZMAT Team and is a state asset for structural collapse.

The Inspection Department is responsible for one and two- family building inspections. The inspectors are certified by the State of Wisconsin to conduct HVAC, electrical, and plumbing inspections in commercial buildings up to 50,000 cubic feet. The Inspection Department is contracted with the Towns of Crescent, Newbold, Pelican, Piehl, Pine Lake, Stella, Three Lakes, and Woodboro for one and two-family building inspection as well.

### Medical Facilities

Saint Mary's Hospital has had a presence in Rhineland since 1896. Affiliated with Ministry Health Care, the facility is located at 2251 North Shore Drive in Rhineland.

The 238,460 square-foot medical campus is a combined hospital and clinic built in 2004, and shared with Ministry Medical Group–Rhineland includes:

- Comprehensive Birthing Center and Women's Imaging Services;



St. Mary's Hospital of Rhineland  
Source: Inspired North on Panoramio.com

- Five state-of-the-art surgical suites and three surgical procedure rooms; and
- Cancer Center equipped with the latest technology available in medical and radiation oncology.

A variety of medical and dental clinics are also located throughout the city, including a VA clinic.

### Assisted Living Facilities

A variety of assisted living facility options are available in the Rhinelander area. Between the mix of options available, Rhinelander facilities can care for over 200 adults.

- Adult Day Care provides the elderly and other adults with services when their caregivers are at work or need relief.
- Adult Family Homes is a place where 3 or 4 adults that are not related reside and receive care, treatment or services that are above the level of room and board and that may include up to 7 hours per week of nursing care per resident.
- Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF) is a place where 5 or more unrelated people live together in a community setting. Services provided include room and board, supervision, support services, and may include up to 3 hours of nursing care per week.
- Residential Care Apartment Complex (RCAC) includes independent apartment units in

which the following types of services are provided: room and board, up to 28 hours per week of supportive care, personal care, and nursing services.

- Skilled Nursing Facility (Nursing Home) is a residential facility that provides 24/7 services for persons requiring more than 7 hours a week of nursing care due to their physical or mental condition.

### Day Care Facilities

According to the state there were 13 licensed daycare facilities located in and around Rhinelander in 2015. These facilities include 5 family, and 7 group day care facilities, as well as one licensed camp facility.

### Educational Facilities

There are a variety of educational facilities in the area – public schools, parochial schools, and a technical college.

#### Public Schools

The School District of Rhinelander serves nine surrounding townships and the City of Rhinelander. The District serves approximately 2,300 students in the three elementary schools, a middle school, a high school, an elementary charter school, and a secondary charter school. A secondary alternative education program and a variety of virtual opportunities are offered to students as well as partnerships for home-school families. A unique program of the District is the Cedric A. Vig Outdoor



Major assisted living facilities on Boyce Dr. Source: Bing Maps

Classroom (CAVOC), which was developed to promote an understanding and appreciation of our natural resources.

The School District of Rhinelander is involved in a competitive activities program and believes in promoting a positive value system for the participating students and the community. At the elementary level, students in grades 4 and 5 compete in basketball and softball. The middle school and high school provide an interscholastic activity program as a member of the Wisconsin Valley Conference, which compliments the required educational program. Participation in activities is a privilege and is intended to be an enjoyable experience, which contributes to the physical, social, mental, and emotional development of the student.

Parochial Schools:

There are three parochial schools that serve the area, Nativity of Our Lord Catholic Elementary School, Zion Lutheran Elementary School, and Seventh Day Adventist School.

Higher Education:

Nicolet College serves the Northwoods from its Rhinelander campus situated on the shores of Lake Julia, and from outreach centers located within the Nicolet District. It is one of 16 colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College System. Created in 1967 as a pilot community college, Nicolet was destined to be unique in Wisconsin. In a state with University of Wisconsin branch campuses and separately administered technical colleges, Nicolet's mission is to combine the two functions and offer a comprehensive educational program incorporating occupational education, liberal studies, and continuing education offerings.

The College offers more than 70 associates degrees, diplomas, certificates, and apprenticeship programs, as well as a University Transfer Liberal Arts program. In addition to academic programs, Nicolet offers Continuing Education courses, the Outdoor Adventure Series, and Learning in Retirement, as well as theatre events, a community library, and an art gallery.

## Parks & Golf Course

The City of Rhinelander maintains a park system that consists of about 56.3 acres. Additional recreation within Rhinelander's exterritorial boundary (1.5 mile buffer) around the city includes a county park and state natural area. Motorized and water trails are accessible from points within the City. Public and private schools also have playgrounds that are generally open to the public after school hours. All parks and playgrounds are shown on the Community Facilities Map (Map 2).

See the **Rhinelander Outdoor Recreation Plan 2015-2020** for additional analysis of existing parks, and recommendations for improvement.

Rhinelander maintains the following parks:

*Mini Parks*

Shepard Park – This 8.4-acre park is located on Boyce Dr (STH 17), and provides open space under a canopy of trees.

Pelican River Boat Landing – This 2.7-acre park is located on Boyce Dr (STH 17), on the former DNR ranger station property. A boat launch was developed here in 2015.

Stevens Port Square – This 0.6-acre park is located on the southeast corner of Davenport St and Stevens St in downtown Rhinelander provides some benches in a landscaped area off the busy road.

Estabrook Green Space – This 0.3-acre park is located on the northwest corner of Rives St and Brown St in downtown Rhinelander provides some benches in a landscaped area off the busy road.

*Neighborhood Parks*

West Side Park – This 5.9-acre park is located on the northwest side of the Wisconsin River. Facilities include a ball field with four sets of bleachers, dugouts, and storage room; playground equipment; ADA accessible restroom; picnic tables and grills; and a BMX track with fencing and lighting (former ball field).

Sarocka Field – This 3-acre ball field is located on N Eastern Ave. Facilities include a sledding hill, tennis

court, softball diamond, playground equipment, and picnic tables.

### *Community Parks*

Hodag Park – The 25.2-acre park is located on Boom Lake, north of downtown. Facilities include the John T. Stafford Babe Ruth Field; Huber Little League Field; Mel Mode Little League Field; 3 picnic shelters with tables and grills; rest benches; an ADA accessible path; playground equipment; ADA accessible restrooms; ADA accessible fishing pier with path; boat landing with three launch piers; water ski show area with storage and concession building, 5 sets of bleachers, and ski jump; tennis court; two sand volleyball courts; and a swimming beach with pier, and ADA accessible changing and restroom building.

Pioneer Park Historical Complex – This 12.4-acre park is located along a former rail line several blocks south of the County Courthouse. Facilities include a logging museum w/ gift shop; historic train depot; one room school house museum; CCC museum; Duke’s Outboard Motor Museum; tennis courts; the Virgil Hoffhein Softball Field that includes bleachers, dugouts, concession stand, scorekeepers stand, and scoreboard; restroom/ice skating warming room; three picnic shelters; picnic area with tables and grills; playground equipment; a second restroom (ADA accessible); benches; and a hockey rink.

### *Special Use Areas*

Rhinelanders’ Northwoods Golf Course and Cross-Country Ski Trail – This public golf course is owned by the City of Rhinelanders and is located along USH 8 by the airport. Facilities include and 18-hole golf course, a clubhouse with restaurant, locker rooms, and pro shop; a tubing hill exists in winter; along with groomed cross-country ski trails.

Band Shell – This 0.5-acre park is on the east bank of the Wisconsin River in downtown, just south of Davenport Street. A band shell exists along with a small lawn.

Snowmobile trails enter Rhinelanders on non-permanent easements to access gas stations and hotels.

The Wisconsin River and the Pelican River are available to canoe on. A portage has been established on the Wisconsin River to get around the Rhinelander dam. All navigable water is available to canoe on. There are 4 public water access points within the Rhinelander area, and they are shown on Map 2.

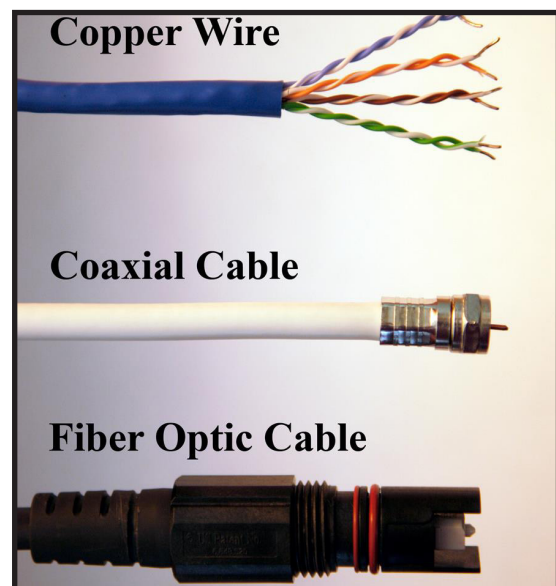
## Energy & Telecommunications

Landline telephone service in the City of Rhinelanders is provided by Frontier. This service features copper wires and digital switches that are linked to a fiber optic cable and digital microwave network. Additional analysis regarding landline and wireless communication can be found in Chapter 5.

Cable TV lines provide a digital signal for TV, internet, and telephone over coaxial cables serving most residents and businesses in Rhinelanders. The lines are maintained by Charter Communications.

Cellular telecommunication service is provided by a variety of companies that have coverage in the area. Roaming agreements between antenna owners, cellular networks, and PCS providers make creating a comprehensive list of providers very difficult. Local providers include: Alltel, Cellcom, Cellular One, and Sprint.

Electrical service in the City of Rhinelanders is provided by the Wisconsin Public Service



Source: Fairfax County, VA.

Corporation. Electrical needs are served by the electrical transmission system. Generating capacity comes from various sources throughout the American Transmission Company (ATC) network of Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and from other states. Rhinelander is mainly connected to a loop with Tomahawk, Merrill, and Wausau for electrical transmission.

Natural gas service in the City of Rhinelander is provided by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation.

The city is served by several radio stations and numerous print media outlets.

## Other Facilities

### City Hall

The current City Hall was built in 1908-09 and is located at 135 South Stevens Street. Many of the municipal functions operate from this location. A Mayor and eight-member Common Council govern the City of Rhinelander.

### Library

The City's public library opened in 1898. The Rhinelander District (RDL) Library is a member of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS), a seven county cooperative public library system. RDL and is also a member of V-Cat, a shared information system administered by WVLS that provides local library users with direct access to over one million items in the collections of thirty-one system members. Additionally, access to library materials from throughout the state and nation is available via the statewide interlibrary loan network.

The RDL serves the residents of the City of Rhinelander and the adjacent Townships of Crescent, Newbold, Pelican, and Pine Lake, as well as the entire county.

The library collection contains titles and holdings in many formats, including books, magazines, large-print, audio-books, microfilm, videocassettes, DVDs, and music CDs. Special collections include art history, genealogy, pre-school education kits and parenting materials. Public Internet access is available in the library at internet terminals and wirelessly.

In 2015, Rhinelander District Library was undergoing a capital campaign for their building expansion. The current library would be extended to the east. Extra space is needed for children's programs, community meeting rooms, space to display local history and genealogy, additional staff work space, and additional space for books.

### Oneida County Humane Society Adoption Center

On July 1, 2012, the Oneida County Humane Society assumed operational responsibility for the Rhinelander Animal Shelter, located at 1852 N Stevens Street, renaming it the Oneida County Humane Society Adoption Center. The shelter currently provides services to all types of animals in Oneida County.

### YMCA & Ice Arena

Together these facilities provide recreational opportunities for the residents of the city and surrounding area. Both are located on the eastern edge of the community along Highway 17.

### Forest Home Cemetery

There are three cemeteries located within the city. They are the Municipal (Forest Home), St. Mary's and St. Joe's.

Forest Home Cemetery is managed by the City's Parks, Buildings, and Grounds Department. There is space projected to accommodate burials over the next 100 years.

St. Mary's and St. Joseph Cemeteries are both operated by Nativity of Our Lord Catholic Parish.

Northland Memorial Park, in the Town of Pine Lake, is operated by Greg Umland.

### Other Facilities

Rhinelander is the county seat and as such is the location of the Oneida County Courthouse, and other county buildings.

Several houses of worship have developed over the decades to serve the spiritual needs of area residents. Some of these facilities have schools, listed earlier in this plan, and some manage cemeteries.

ArtStart is located in the former federal building in the downtown. The Post Office is located in a

building near the Wisconsin River in downtown. The Rhinelander office for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest is located on Hanson Lake Road, along with WisDOT's North Central Region Office. The DNR Service Center covering northcentral Wisconsin is located on Sutliff Avenue.

# Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, & Policies

## Goal:

Provide a safe and healthy environment in Rhinelander for people to live, work, and play.

### Objective 1:

Protect the lives, property, and rights of all in Rhinelander.

#### Policies:

- A. Support local emergency services and facilities (e.g., police, fire, rescue/EMS) through adequate funding, training, facilities, and equipment.
- B. Establish a capital improvement program (CIP) to include a timetable to expand or rehabilitate existing and develop new community facilities.
- C. Promote and continue joint service agreements as a means to consolidate and coordinate services among the City, County, and Towns to achieve better services and cost savings.

### Objective 2:

Support high quality educational opportunities for all residents.

#### Policies:

- A. Cooperate with the Rhinelander School District, Nicolet College, and other educational providers with their potential facility development projects.
- B. Establish a capital improvement program (CIP) to include a timetable to expand or rehabilitate existing and develop new community facilities.
- C. Create and continue joint service agreements between the City and non-profit service providers (e.g. school district, YMCA) as a way to provide additional recreational programming in an economical way to City residents.

### Objective 3:

Provide outdoor recreation for residents and visitors.

#### Policies:

- A. Annually review the Rhinelander Outdoor Recreation Plan, and consider the best ways to implement that plan's recommendations and capital improvements.
- B. Keep the Rhinelander Outdoor Recreation Plan current by updating it every 5 years.

### Objective 4:

Assure a high-quality and abundant supply of water, and manage stormwater falling in the City.

#### Policies:

- A. Maintain water utility and wastewater utility infrastructure.
  - i. Continue separating storm water connections from sanitary sewer mains.
  - ii. Continue developing water supply wells to address future needs.
  - iii. Continue performing Class A wastewater treatment.
  - iv. Upgrade water mains in conjunction with street construction projects.
  - v. Upgrade sewer mains in conjunction with street construction projects.
- B. Limit wastewater and stormwater leakage in wellhead protection areas, so that drinking water is not contaminated.
- C. Remove lead water service lines.
  - i. Create a multi-year plan for replacing all utility lead service lines.
  - ii. Pass an ordinance requiring property owners to replace lead service lines at

the same time the City replaces the lead service line adjacent to the landowner's property.

- iii. Negotiate a special rate with a private contractor to replace landowner's lead service lines.
- iv. Design a replacement program for low-income customers; possibly having the City pay the entire plumbing cost and placing a lien on the property for half the cost.

# Chapter 5 • Technology

Individuals increasingly rely on technology to connect them to their work place, schools, community, family and friends as well as products, services, and information—which includes government information. These technologies include computers; the internet; networks of data-gathering sensors (the internet of things); fiber-optic, cable, and copper wires; and cellular communications.

Technology has the potential to promote citizen involvement in the community and to increase social connectivity. Public records have come to constitute part of the critical infrastructure of our information economy. Most data collected by government sources are open records, so providing easy public access to these records (through a pay portal or for free) will assist businesses and residents with a variety of tasks.

Telecommunications is a critical infrastructure need for businesses. More and more businesses are relying on Internet access for data gathering, online commerce (both for online sales and informational web pages), and video conferencing. Consequently, demand for high bandwidth service is increasing at a tremendous rate. As the community demands more information and resource sharing and as the number of integrated voice and data services continues to grow, businesses may be constrained by telecommunications service if it does not expand.

## Existing Internet Services

Government's role in promoting technology comes in a few ways: 1) to provide an even playing field for businesses and residents to succeed through accessible government information, 2) by allowing right-of-way access and high structure access for

## Technology Issues

- Maintaining and expanding broadband to the area.
- Need to make public information conveniently available to everyone. The City website needs to be modernized, so residents and businesses can easily find what they need.
- What could City government do to improve Internet technology access for residents and businesses?

infrastructure development, and 3) provide free access to high speed internet for everyone through computers and Wi-Fi networks at libraries, schools, and city hall (Wi-Fi only).

### Internet Access at City Buildings

Rhinelanders' main municipal buildings (i.e. City Hall, Public Works Garage, Police Department, Fire Department) all connect to the internet by individual business-class cable circuits. Each building has their own server. Public Wi-Fi is available in the City Hall.

### Internet Access at Rhinelanders District Library

A business class line provides 80 Mbps of service to publicly available internet stations, staff computers, and the publicly available Wi-Fi network.

### Internet Access at Rhinelanders School District

The District has a 1 Gbps connection running between all the schools. As the connection

becomes 2/3s used, then the District will request more bandwidth.

### Internet Access at Nicolet Area Technical College

A fiber line provides 1 Gbps of service to publicly available internet stations, staff computers, and the publicly available Wi-Fi network.

### Internet Access at Industrial Park

The Rhinelander Business District - Hwy 8 West industrial park has access to 10 Gbps of service available for business use. (WEDC)

### High Speed Internet (Broadband) for both Landline

#### & Wireless

Broadband coverage is available in both fixed and mobile types. Fixed broadband includes all wireline and fixed wireless technologies. In Rhinelander, fixed broadband at speeds greater than 25 mbps can be found, which usually happens where cable TV lines exist (Figure 1). Fixed wire providers include Charter via cable line and Frontier via phone line.

Mobile broadband service is typically accessed by smartphones. Mobile broadband coverage in Rhinelander has slower download speeds than fixed, with most of the City at speeds of 3-10 mbps (Figure 2). Wireless providers include AT&T, Cellcom, Sprint, and Verizon. All speeds may not be available by all providers.

## Internet Access Targets (per FCC Order 34-38)

### Schools

Recommended bandwidth target for internet access at schools is

- at least 100 Mbps per 1,000 students and staff in the short term and
- 1 Gbps per 1,000 students and staff in the longer term.

### Libraries

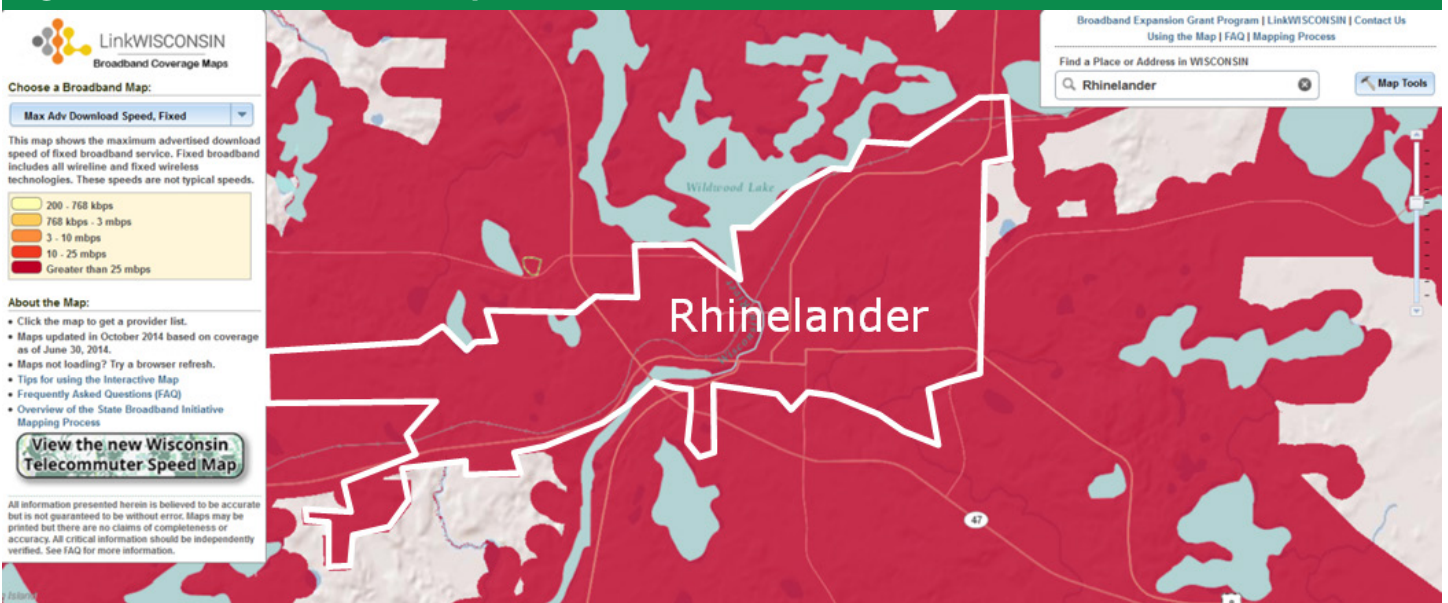
Libraries serving fewer than 50,000 people should have broadband speeds of:

- at least 100 Mbps in the short term, and
- 1 Gbps in the longer term.

## Broadband

FCC updated the broadband speed benchmark to 25 Mbps/3 Mbps (download/upload) to reflect consumer demand and advances in technology. (FCC 2015 Broadband Progress Report)

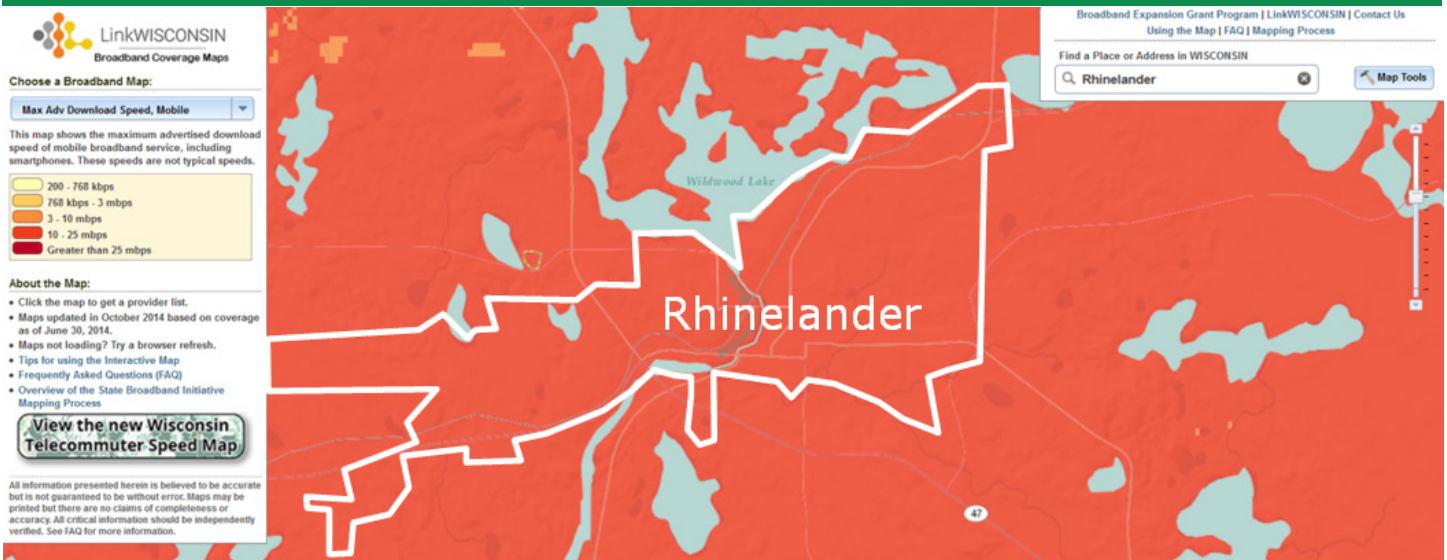
**Figure 1: Maximum Download Speeds, Fixed Wire Service**



**Red = Speeds greater than 25 Mbps**

Source: Link WISCONSIN, June 2014

**Figure 2: Maximum Download Speeds, Wireless Service**



**Orange = Speeds of 3 to 10 Mbps**

Source: Link WISCONSIN, June 2014

## National User Research

The traditional notion of “going online” often evokes images of a desktop or laptop computer and a dedicated high-speed connection. But for many Americans, the reality of the online experience is substantially different. In 2014 nearly two-thirds of Americans own a smartphone, and 19% of Americans rely to some degree on a smartphone for accessing the internet.

Highlights of the Pew Internet Project’s research related to mobile technology:

As of October 2014: 64% of American adults own a smartphone.

As of January 2014:

American adults who:

- Own a cell phone – 90%
- Own an e-reader – 32%
- Own a tablet computer – 42%

Some smartphone owners — particularly younger adults, minorities and lower-income Americans — depend on their smartphone for internet access. Of U.S. adults who own a smartphone, 7% are “smartphone-dependent,” meaning that they do not have home broadband service and have

**Table 23: National Smartphone Ownership, 2014**

<b>All Adults</b>	<b>64%</b>
Sex	
Men	66%
Women	63%
Age Group	
18 to 29	85%
30 to 49	79%
50 to 64	54%
65 +	27%
Education Level	
High School grad or less	52%
Some College	69%
College +	78%
Household Income	
Less than \$30,000/yr	50%
\$30,000 to \$49,999/yr	71%
\$50,000 to 74,999/yr	72%
\$75,000 +	84%
Community Type	
Urban	68%
Suburban	66%
Rural	52%

Source: Pew Research Center, Dec. 2014

**Table 24: Cell Phone Owners in 2014 (among adults, the % who have a cell phone)**

<b>All Adults</b>	<b>90%</b>
Sex	
Men	93%
Women	88%
Race/Ethnicity	
White	90%
African American	90%
Hispanic	92%
Age Group	
18 to 29	98%
30 to 49	97%
50 to 64	88%
65 +	74%
Education Level	
High School grad or less	87%
Some College	93%
College +	93%
Household Income	
Less than \$30,000/yr	84%
\$30,000 to \$49,999/yr	90%
\$50,000 to 74,999/yr	99%
\$75,000 +	98%
Community Type	
Urban	88%
Suburban	92%
Rural	88%

Source: Pew Research Center, Jan. 2014

limited options for going online other than their mobile device.

Lower-income Americans also rely heavily on smartphones for going online – 13% of U.S. adults with an annual household income of less than \$30,000 are smartphone-dependent, compared with 1% of those whose family household income is \$75,000 or more.

Table 24 shows the demographic breakdown of cell and smartphone owners (January 2014).

**In Rhinelander,** about 90% of 2015 Comprehensive Plan Survey respondents access the internet in their home. Smartphone was the second most common with 40.2%, followed by at work (30.2%). 6.4% of respondents regularly use the internet at the library. 12 respondents filled in the “other” category with comments like: “I do not use the Internet”, “at the Laundromat”, and “at a friend or family member’s home”. The lack of options in internet providers was also commented upon.

# Technology Goals, Objectives, & Policies

## Goal 1:

Provide public access to government information, and enable citizen participation through online discussions.

### Objective 1:

Place information online if it is part of the public record.

#### Policies:

- A. Create an online calendar, where the agendas are linked (this would be an upgrade from what is currently done).
- B. Allow people to be notified when an agenda or minutes are posted (e.g. subscription email or text alerts to follow individual committees).
- C. Place zoning ordinance online. Rhinelander's municipal ordinance is already online.

### Objective 2:

Improve city service delivery, business transactions, and information dissemination by using up-to-date technology.

#### Policies:

- A. Provide tools and training to utilize in-field data collection and data usage by city

employees as a way to reduce human errors and increase efficiency.

- B. Provide online business tools for citizens and business interests:
  - i. To pay bills online; and
  - ii. To access, complete, and submit forms online.

### Objective 3:

Provide online civic engagement.

#### Policies:

- A. Determine how staff will reply to resident concerns raised by using online tools. Create these policies before implementing discussion group technology applications.
- B. To augment public meetings, a web application could be added to the city website to allow residents to comment on ideas remotely.
- C. To allow residents to comment on improving physical aspects of their city to staff.

## Goal 2:

Promote access to affordable broadband service in Rhinelander.

### Objective:

Allow right-of-way access and high structure access for technology infrastructure development.

#### Policies:

- A. Implement a joint trench use policy to reduce the number of repeated excavations for the installation and maintenance of communications and utilities infrastructure in public rights-of-way.

- B. Share Rhinelander's capital improvement programs with utility and telecommunication companies.
- C. Require coordination between road and utility construction projects, and restrict the frequency of road excavations.

## Goal 3:

Promote equal access to technology for all citizens at schools, libraries, and other community gathering places.

### Objective 1:

Create public and private Wi-Fi networks in City Hall.

### Objective 2:

Equip conference rooms with video and telephone conferencing, and with a computer and large screen (which may be a large flat-screen T.V.).

### Objective 3:

Consider cooperating with the school district or technical college when buying or maintaining technology.

### Policies:

- A. Each Wi-Fi network should have capacity in each room to accommodate 3 devices per person (currently a cell phone, tablet, and laptop);
- B. Remember to size conference room networks to full capacity for the number of people in the room.

## Goal 4:

Stimulate economic development.

### Objective 1:

Provide business park & office space vacancy information online.

### Objective 2:

Create a plan for the build-out of the fiber-optic infrastructure. This plan will look like a road map of digital connections, similar to a highway map showing highways, main roads, and local roads. Unlike a highway map, where all the roads are governmentally created, almost all of the digital infrastructure is utility owned.

### Objective 3:

Work to increase broadband internet usage among businesses and in the community to increase the likelihood of utility system upgrades.

### Policies:

- A. Link Rhinelander's economic development website to WEDC's interactive industrial park & office space website.
- B. Include the installation of fiber conduit within all City road projects.
- C. Create a fiber-optic map, and schedule road projects to also account for advancing fiber installation throughout the City.
- D. Cooperate with Nicolet College to provide additional distance learning opportunities on-campus and through remote access at home.
- E. Cooperate with the Rhinelander School District to provide additional class opportunities through remote access into the classroom.
- F. Cooperate with Oneida County Economic Development Corporation to encourage businesses to develop on-site access to continuing education, and to develop advanced online commerce.

# Chapter 6 • Transportation

The City of Rhinelander's transportation system includes various modes of travel. The local transportation network is an important factor for the safe movement of people and goods, as well as to the physical development of the city. Understanding where and who is responsible for maintaining each part of the transportation system provides the basis for determining future needs. This chapter identifies who maintains each transportation facility, what condition it is in, and the different ways that people are using each facility, primarily roads, in Rhinelander.

## Previous Studies

A variety of plans were reviewed as they relate to transportation in the Rhinelander area.

### Rhinelander Area Pathways Project, 2003

The Rhinelander Area Pathways Project (RAPP) is the ongoing work of a volunteer citizens committee to spearhead the development of a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian pathway system in Rhinelander.

Two loop paths and two linear paths were established. Eleven detailed segment descriptions provide analysis of the opportunities and constraints for developing each segment of path.

### Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan, 2002

The Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan is intended to guide the development of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Oneida County. An ultimate goal of this plan is to increase the mobility of people within the County by making walking and bicycling viable transportation choices.

## Transportation Issues

A variety of general issues were indentified, they are:

1. Concerns related to maintaining local roadway and bridge infrastructure.
2. Providing bike and pedestrian routes throughout the city.
3. Long-term needs for specialized transportation.
4. Airport expansion.

### Rhinelander Safe Routes To School, 2012

The Rhinelander Safe Routes To School (SRTS) Plan coordinates the opportunity to make walking and bicycling to school safer for children in grades K-8, and to increase the number of children who choose to walk and bike. On a broader level, SRTS programs can enhance children's health and well-being, ease traffic congestion near schools, and improve community members' overall quality of life. Schools involved in this plan are: Central, James Williams Middle School, Northwoods Community Secondary School, Nativity North and Nativity South.

### North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) created this plan in 2004 to guide the development of bicycle facilities in north central Wisconsin. The plan will strengthen the rural character of the County by connecting natural and cultural resource destinations and

by connecting communities through viable and attractive bicycle amenities.

The Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan and the Rhinelander Area Pathways Project both have more detailed trail systems.

#### Connections 2030

Connections 2030 will be a 25-year statewide multi-modal transportation plan that is policy-based. The policies will be tied to “tiers” of potential financing levels. One set of policy recommendations will focus on priorities that can be accomplished under current funding levels. Another will identify policy priorities that can be achieved if funding levels increase. Finally, WisDOT may also identify critical priorities that we must maintain if funding were to decrease over the planning horizon of the plan.

#### State Trails Network Plan

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) created this plan in 2003, to identify a statewide network of trails and to provide guidance to the DNR for land acquisition and development. Many existing trails are developed and operated in partnership with counties. By agreement the DNR acquires the corridor and the county government(s) develop, operate, and maintain the trail. Three proposed trails would connect to Rhinelander 1) Segment 13 from Dresser to Michigan, 2) Segment 15 from Ashland to Rhinelander, and 3) Segment 68 from Rhinelander to Three Lakes.

#### Joint Forest, Oneida, & Vilas Counties: Locally Developed, Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan 2014-2018

Federal transit law requires that any projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities must be derived from a “locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan”.

The purpose of the coordinated planning process is to have stakeholder involvement identify service gaps in elderly and disabled transportation, and to develop strategies to address the service gaps and needs.

#### Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030

The Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030 is an update to the 2000 Plan, which no longer accurately represents the facilities, activity levels and services provided. This Plan also uses the 2010 update to the airport classification system. Every airport in Wisconsin was reanalyzed and revised accordingly. Facility and service attributes (FSAs) were also reviewed and revised by airport classification with recommendations for each airport in Wisconsin.

#### Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport Recommendations:

- Clear approaches of trees.
- Create a land use zoning ordinance.
- Create a vehicle pedestrian ordinance.
- Acquire fee/easement ownership of existing Runway Protection Zones.

## **Inventory and Trends**

The transportation system in Rhinelander includes local roads, county and state highways; bike & pedestrian trails; the airport; rail service; and transit. These various modes of transportation provide the system within Rhinelander, and connect the City to the larger state transportation system. Rhinelander has no water transportation service.

### Roads

Local roads create the primary transportation system. These roads allow people and goods to move within the city and provide connections to the county, state and federal road networks. See the Transportation Map (Maps 3 & 3A).

The Federal Highway Administration (FHA) has established the National Functional Classification for categorizing roads according to their function.

The City of Rhinelander road network consists of roughly 13 miles of arterial roads, about 6.5 miles of collector roads, and about 36.5 miles of local roads. About 56 miles of local roads exist in Rhinelander.

Rhinelander’s roads are functionally classified on Maps 3 & 3A.

The Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) is an Internet-accessible system that helps local governments and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) manage local road data to improve decision-making, and to meet state statute requirements. With Geographic Information System technology, WISLR combines local road data with interactive mapping functionality. The result is an innovative system that allows users to display their data in a tabular format, on a map, or both.

WISLR provides a system for local governments to report local road information (such as width, surface type, surface year, shoulder, curb, road category, functional classification, and pavement condition ratings) to WisDOT, which is required every two years.

Cities can use this information to develop better road budgets and keep track of roads that are in need of repair. See Attachment C.

Annual average daily traffic counts (AADT) are measured and calculated by WisDOT every three years on principal arterials, and less often on all other roads. Monitoring counts provides a way to gauge how traffic volume is changing in Rhinelander.

Traffic counts are shown on Maps 3 & 3A.

The City's road network is maintained by the Public Works Department. One tool used to identify what roads need improvement is the 5-year Road Improvement Plan. This plan outlines projects over a five-year period to maintain and improve the road system through planned projects. The Oneida County Highway Department prepares its own roadway management plan that identifies projects on county highways. WisDOT prepares six-year highway improvement programs by region that identify projects for Interstate highways, U.S. highways, and state highways.

### Functional Classifications

Principal Arterials – serve interstate and interregional trips. These routes generally serve urban areas with 5,000 people or more.

Minor Arterials – accommodate interregional and county-to-county traffic, often in conjunction with principal arterials.

Collectors – take traffic from local roads and provide links to all remaining portions of smaller communities and connect to other higher function roads listed above.

Local Roads – provided direct access to residential, commercial, and industrial developments.



Downtown Rhinelander. Source: Royalbroil

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Biking and walking are essential to maintaining and promoting the quality of life for residents and visitors.

Sidewalks are the primary piece of infrastructure that everyone thinks of when asked where walking is allowed, but the road itself is a walking surface. In Oneida County all roads are legal to walk and bike on. It is not safe to walk in a travel lane of a 4-lane highway, and it would slow down traffic flow, so sidewalks or a 5-foot paved shoulder are usually provided for people to walk on. Walking is only acceptable on low volume streets and streets that are wide enough to allow for parked vehicles. If there are too many parked vehicles taking advantage of this space, then sidewalks should be installed.

Crosswalks are the other piece of infrastructure for people to use when crossing streets. In Wisconsin, every street intersecting another street has crosswalks regardless if they are marked or not.

Some multi-use trails that allow both walking and biking exist in Rhinelander. Usually trails are thought of as for recreation alone, but if planned correctly they can provide an alternative to driving for short trips.

Issues of most concern to pedestrians everywhere are missing sidewalk sections, broken or uneven sections, and intersections without curb ramps.

Paved roads are the main bicycling infrastructure. In Oneida County all roads are legal to walk and bike on. Pavement width, road geometry, traffic volume (both bicyclist and motor vehicles), and speed limit determine if a road is bicycle friendly or not.

Even though all roads throughout the county are available for bicycle travel, several roads are identified on the Wisconsin Bicycling Map as: “not recommended” for bicycle travel due to high traffic and no paved shoulders: USH 8, STHs 47 & 17, and CTHs C, G, & P.

The City of Rhinelander has an ordinance prohibiting bicycles on sidewalks with two exceptions:

1. Bicycles are allowed on sidewalks when riders are in the learning stage, and
2. In some congested areas of Rhinelander sidewalks are signed to allow bicyclists on them.

The Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan, 2002, is comprised of five sections – purpose, background, community input, route selection, and implementation. The following corridors were identified in this plan for development that affects Rhinelander:

1. Rhinelander – Three Lakes;
2. US Highway 8 East (Rhinelander to County Line);
3. Rhinelander – Bearskin Trail;
4. Rhinelander East;
5. Crescent Lake Loop;
6. Rhinelander – Woodruff Trail;
7. CTH G – NTC – Almon Recreation Area.

Route maps are also summarized in the Rhinelander Outdoor Recreation Plan.

The Rhinelander Area Pathways Project (RAPP), 2003, is intended to guide the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities for Rhinelander within the context of the greater urban area. The network’s main loop connects Hodag Park, the middle and high schools, Pioneer Park, and integrates the downtown area with the Riverwalk Mall. See the plan for detailed alignment suggestions.

A recommendation in the Rhinelander Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORP) is to update the 2003 RAPP. Route maps are available in the Rhinelander ORP.

## Airport

The Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport (RHI) is jointly owned by the City of Rhinelander and Oneida County. The airport, located on the west side of the City, has one concrete runway that is



Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport. Source: Google

6,799 feet long, and one asphalt runway that is 5,201 feet long. The airport had just over 25,000 enplanements in 2010 and is classified by WisDOT as a “commercial” airport.

In September 2011, Delta Airlines ended its passenger air carrier service to and from the Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport, and Frontier Airlines provided notice to discontinue service too. Since Frontier was providing Essential Air Service, then they could not abandon service until a new carrier is was found. In 2015, Delta Connection now provides two daily flights between the Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport and the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, and a third flight from Minneapolis-St. Paul in the evening in route to Ford Airport in Iron Mountain, Michigan.

## Rail

Canadian National owns the rail line through the city. Currently the track follows generally along Highway 8, then along Sutliff Avenue, crosses the river and as of 2015 is out-of-service along Brown, Eagle and Curran Streets and out of the city north along County W.

The track northeast of the river crossing is currently out of service but retained by the Railroad for possible future use. If the Railroad chooses to officially abandon the track in the future, there would be an option for the community to purchase

the right-of-way for conversion to a rails-to-trails segment.

Service is generally available seven days a week, and piggyback service is available daily. During the summer one to two trains travel through the city daily, while in the winter months 2 to three trains travel through the city. The historic train depot in Pioneer Park remains on the same site where it was constructed for a former railroad.

## Bus/Transit

No transit service exists in Rhinelander, nor does intercity bus routes exist within Oneida County.

## Transportation Facilities for Disabled

Para-transit is a specialized transit service to serve elderly and handicapped persons who require accessible vehicles and flexible routing.

The Oneida County Department on Aging operates 3 medium wheelchair equipped vans that provide demand response service from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. weekdays.

## Cab Service

A 24-hour, 7-day-a-week, shared-ride cab service operates in the City. This service charges users a rate that is subsidized by Federal and State transportation grants.

# Transportation Goals, Objectives, & Policies

## Goal:

Develop and maintain a well-integrated and cost-effective transportation system that is capable of moving people and goods to, from, and within the community in a safe and efficient manner.

### Objective 1:

Maintain the efficiency, safety and functionality of the City's existing transportation system, which links the urban center with outlying towns, adjacent communities and the region.

#### Policies:

- A. Develop Airport Land Use Ordinance under Wisconsin Statutes protect the public investment in the Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport.
- B. Work with rail service providers and users to address facility or service issues in order to maintain safe and efficient rail operations in the City.

### Objective 2:

Achieve close coordination between transportation facilities and land use development.

#### Policies:

- A. Work with WisDOT to control access onto Highways 8, 17, and 47 to preserve capacity and movement of traffic. Encourage WisDOT to commission/fund highway corridor plans for these highways to address corridor development, intersection deficiencies, sight distances and turning movements.
- B. Plan for extension of major arterials and other roads as necessary to complete connections, provide for appropriate routes for trucks and emergency vehicles and serve planned development areas.
- C. Consider future road locations, extensions or connections when reviewing development plans and proposals.

- D. Work with county and towns to plan for a network of interconnected new roads in planned development areas to control highway access and improve access to these areas.
- E. Avoid land uses that generate heavy traffic on roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use.
- F. Plan for new developments to minimize excessive road construction and avoid burdening the City for maintenance.

### Objective 3:

Support additional transportation options for those who choose not to own a car; and for those without access to an automobile, including the disabled, seniors, youth or low income individuals.

#### Policies:

- A. Revise the City's Sidewalk Ordinances:
  - i. Require sidewalk installation at time of road installation;
  - ii. Add an option for bikeway development, and their use instead of sidewalks;
  - iii. Consider removing the cost of sidewalk installation from landowner to City – just like road installation.
- B. Continue to support shared ride taxi service, which may be through WisDOT procurement, area health care providers, or alternative methods.
- C. Encourage the development of a walking and biking trail & pathway system throughout the City.

# Chapter 7 • Economic Development

This chapter promotes the stabilization, retention, or expansion of the economic base and quality employment opportunities.

## Previous Studies

### Downtown Streetscape Project, 2014

The Rhinelander Downtown Plan provides a market analysis of the downtown; streetscape plans for Brown Street and downtown in general; and an implementation and funding plan. The document builds on City and DRI efforts, and relies upon existing engineering studies and local market knowledge to create a specific and fundable downtown plan that can shape policy decisions and provide useful information to the City and investors.

### Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2014

Oneida County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development District as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). As part of maintaining that designation, the NCWRPC prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report annually. The report summarizes and assesses the economic development activities of the past year and presents new and modified program strategies for the upcoming year.

The seven goals of the 2014 Regional CEDS are:

1. Encourage business retention and expansion to maintain and increase employment opportunities in the Region,
2. Create an innovative atmosphere to foster an entrepreneurially supportive environment,

## Economic Development Issues

### Business & Industrial Development

Additional year round jobs are desired by the community, but there are no industrial park parcels ready for development.

A new industrial park is needed to provide "shovel ready" sites.

### Labor Shortage

The region faces a shortage of skilled labor in the near future due to a combination of factors including commuter migration patterns, job growth, and the number of workers approaching retirement.

### Industrial Parks

There is currently no industrial park land available for new developments.

3. Promote and attract new business to the Region,
4. Encourage the reuse of existing commercial and industrial sites for more sustainable economic development,
5. Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries and technologies,
6. Meet the full range of business' infrastructure needs with emphasis on transportation, utilities, and communications, and
7. Promote and increase communication between Regional and county economic development, workforce development, and other organizations.

### Regional Livability Plan

The 2015 North Central Wisconsin Regional Livability Plan (RLP) is an update to the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Focusing on the four topic areas of housing, economic development, transportation, and land use, the RLP identifies trends and sets goals to make the region more livable for all residents.

Economic development trends include a future workforce too small to meet the employment needs due to job growth and retirements, an average wage below the “living wage” standard for single parent families, and insufficiently fast broadband speeds in the Region’s rural areas.

The plan has four economic development goals:

1. ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce,
2. support and develop a diverse economic base, ensuring economic growth and resiliency,
3. support infrastructure needed for economic development, and
4. develop tourism and the knowledge-based economy into leading economic sectors.

## **Inventory & Trends**

The City of Rhinelander comprises a major portion of the Oneida County economy; therefore this chapter begins with a review of county level data.

### Oneida County

#### Economic Sectors

Eleven economic sectors are displayed in Table 25. In 2010, 17,370 people were employed in Oneida County. The largest employment industries were Services, followed by Retail trade, Government, and Manufacturing. In terms of percentages, the three fastest growing sectors were Professional, Scientific, and Management; Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities; and Government. Overall, Oneida County had employment growth of 3.79 percent between 2000 and 2010.

Over the ten-year period four sectors lost employment: Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Mining; Wholesale Trade; Information; and Retail

Trade. Table 25 displays 2000 to 2010 employment by economic sector.

#### Labor Force

Available county labor force is related to total population. In 2010, the population 16 years and older was 30,370 and the labor force was 18,633—a participation rate of 61 percent. The labor force is simply the number of people aged sixteen and over who are employed or looking for employment.

Unemployment is defined as the difference between the total civilian labor force and total persons employed. In 2000, the county had 6.1 percent unemployment, which was higher than the state rate of 4.6 percent. In 2010, the county had a 6.7 percent unemployment rate, which while higher than the 2000 rate is lower than the state rate of 7.3 percent. See Table 26.

#### Educational Levels

Education and training is critical to maintaining productivity in the county. The vocational-technical education system and the training available are of particular importance. As business and industry continues to grow and change, the demand for highly trained and skilled labor grows. The state provides a variety of initiatives to develop the workforce through education, training, and cooperative ventures with business and industry. Worker training programs are very important as the locational mismatch between worker skills and available jobs continues to widen.

Employment and training services for dislocated workers are primarily delivered through job centers. A job center is located in Rhinelander, which is a one-stop resource for employers to meet their workforce needs and for job seekers to get the career planning, job placement, and training services they need to obtain jobs.

Partnerships between local businesses, governments, and educational institutions are very useful in developing the regional economy. Institutions such as North Central Technical College, and Nicolet College, often direct their programs to the training needs of local workers and businesses. The North Central Wisconsin

**Table 25: County Employment by Sector**

Industry	2000	2010	2000-2010	
			Net Change	% Change
<b>Government</b>	2,061	2,348	287	13.93%
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Mining</b>	526	322	-204	-38.78%
<b>Construction</b>	1,455	1,610	155	10.65%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	2,080	2,121	41	1.97%
<b>Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities</b>	689	788	99	14.37%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	425	329	-96	-22.59%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	2,815	2,578	-237	-8.42%
<b>Information</b>	434	379	-55	-12.67%
<b>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</b>	636	639	3	0.47%
<b>Professional, Scientific, and Management</b>	898	1,050	152	16.93%
<b>Services</b>	6,380	6,844	464	7.27%
<b>Totals</b>	16,736	17,370	634	3.79%

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 26: Oneida County Labor Force**

	2000	2010	Percent Change
<b>Labor Force</b>	18,327	18,633	1.67%
<b>Employed</b>	17,199	17,370	0.99%
<b>Unemployed</b>	1,112	1,263	13.58%
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	6.10%	6.78%	11.12%
<b>Participation Rate</b>	61.90%	61.35%	-0.88%

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Workforce Development Board is an important organization related to this issue.

As identified in the Background and Demographics Chapter of this plan, educational attainment improved overall during the period. Over the last decade, the percent of the population over 25 that are high school graduates or higher increased in the City from 85.1 percent in 2000 to 91.7 percent in 2010, a 6.6 percent increase.

#### Income Levels

There are two measures of income: median household income and per capita income. Median household income provides an indication of the economic ability of the typical family or household unit while per capita income provides a measure of relative earning power on a per person level.

As identified in the Background and Demographics Chapter of this plan, the county median household income in 2010 was \$44,484 and the per capita income was \$26,761. Both median and per capita incomes have risen over the last ten years. Median household income has outpaced the state growth rate, but still lags behind the state median income of \$50,814. Per Capita Income has risen to just above the state per capita income of \$26,624.

#### City of Rhinelander

The previous section provided information at the county level. This section examines city only information. It is important to recognize that the city's economy is the dominant economic driver of the county in addition to the countywide tourism economy.

## Economic Profile

### *Labor Force*

The City's local labor force represents about 21 percent of the total county labor force. Table 27 shows that, in 2010, over 3,700 people were in the labor force, which represents a participation rate of 60 percent. Unemployment decreased by 52 percent in Rhinelander while during the same period unemployment increased in Oneida County.

### *Occupations*

Occupation data from the U.S. Census in Table 28 indicates that most City residents work in Sales and Office, Management and Professional, and Service occupations.

### *Incomes*

Both median income and per capita incomes were discussed in the Issues & Opportunities chapter. The City's median household income in 2010 was \$34,401, and the per capita income was \$21,009. Both median and per capita incomes have risen since 2000, but both are still lower than County and State levels.

### Employment Areas & Existing Facilities

There are four major areas of employment in the city: downtown (includes paper factory), the Lincoln Street corridor, the STH 17 bypass corridor, and the airport industrial park.

The city has a variety of infrastructure amenities for business development, including:

- A commercial airport.
- Several full industrial parks, with all utilities, and easy access to the airport. Vacant buildings in these industrial parks may be available.

- Transportation access to U.S. Highway 8, and State Trunk Highways 47 & 17, and County Trunk Highways C, G, K, & P.
- Both natural gas and electric service provided by utility companies.
- Rail service available.
- Telephone, cable, Internet, and fiber optics provided by utility companies.
- Water, sanitary sewer, and local roads throughout the City.

These types of resources enhance the City's ability to maintain and expand its economic base.

Business and industrial parks are critical economic development infrastructure for a city because they enable communities to attract new businesses or to relocate existing businesses for expansions. An industrial park is a parcel of land that has been developed according to a plan that provides sites for potential business and industrial firms. The "park" is to ensure compatibility among industrial operations and the existing activities of the area

**Table 28: Rhinelander Residents by Occupation, 2010**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Management and Professional	892	23.49%
Service	798	21.01%
Sales and Office	1,227	32.31%
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance	284	7.48%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	597	15.72%

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 27: Rhinelander Labor Force**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b>Labor Force</b>	3,754	3,960	5.49%
<b>Employed</b>	3,416	3,798	11.18%
<b>Unemployed</b>	338	162	-52.07%
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	9.00%	4.09%	-54.55%
<b>Participation Rate</b>	60.80%	59.96%	-1.38%

Source: U.S. Census

in which the park is located, along with providing roads and other infrastructure to accommodate those types of land uses.

Currently, the only suitable industrial land available in Rhinelander is located in industrial park by the airport. Soccer fields fill the only available land in the industrial park, so there is no land available for industrial development in Rhinelander.

#### *Rhineland Industrial Parks*

- Air Industrial Park (Hwy 8 & 47) - 45 acres, none available
- HWY 8 West Industrial Park (Hwy 8) - 41 acres, none available
- Rhinelander Industrial Park (Hwy 17) - 80 acres, none available
- Rhinelander Industrial Park (Aviation)(Hwy 8) - 29 acres, none available

#### Redevelopment & Growth Areas

The most efficient and cost-effective development utilizes existing infrastructure and service capacity. Therefore, new commercial, industrial, and higher density residential development should be located in these areas. This plan identifies areas already served and areas that are most efficiently served by existing infrastructure and services.

Brownfields exist in the various commercial areas of Rhinelander. Once these contaminated sites are cleaned up, then redevelopment can occur on these sites, which makes use again of the existing infrastructure in Rhinelander. According to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources's Bureau For Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) in January 2015, Rhinelander had 5 open file environmental repair (ERP) sites, 3 open file leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites, and 2 conditionally closed LUST sites.

Much of the residential areas are showing their age and could be revitalized (see Housing chapter for age of houses). Downtown is ready for revitalization with some strategies listed in the 2014 Downtown Redevelopment Plan. Throughout the city are scattered vacant and underutilized buildings that

once were industrial type uses. These are possible redevelopment areas too.

#### Commuting

Of the 3,711 workers who lived in Rhinelander in 2010, 83 percent drove alone to work, 8.4 percent carpooled, 6.4 percent walked or took other means, and 1.9 percent worked at home. The average travel time to work was 11.2 minutes.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's On The Map tool, 7,748 people are employed within the City of Rhinelander and 3,210 employed person live within the City. Of the people employed in Rhinelander, 80 percent live outside the city but commuted in for work. Of the employed persons who live in Rhinelander, half also work in the City while half commute to jobs outside the City.

#### Local Economic Development Capacity

The four primary economic development organizations in the community are:

- The City of Rhinelander,
- The Rhinelander Chamber of Commerce,
- Downtown Rhinelander Inc. (a Main Street organization), and
- Oneida County Economic Development Corporation.

Combined, these organizations offer a variety of services to ensure business success, and possible expansion or relocation.

#### *City of Rhinelander*

The City of Rhinelander provides a variety of assistance in the area of economic development. Tax incremental financing is the primary tool along with a county level revolving loan fund. The city industrial park is full.

Typically TIF districts are used to pay for new infrastructure in an area to promote development. Rhinelander has three active Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts, and one environmental TIF in the city.

Rhineland also has a business improvement district (BID) that covers downtown to provide

A TIF district allows local governments to invest in infrastructure and economic development projects and apply the increment of increased property tax revenue realized by those projects in retiring the costs of those improvements.

A BID is a defined area within which businesses are required to pay an additional tax (or levy) in order to fund projects within the district's boundaries.

additional services in the downtown for beautification, street & sidewalk maintenance, and downtown marketing.

#### *Rhineland Area Chamber of Commerce*

The Chamber of Commerce provides general promotion and information about the community. The focus of the organization is tourism and events.

#### *Main Street Organization*

Downtown Rhineland, Inc, a 501(c)3 corporation, is a non-profit volunteer organization devoted to making the historic business district of Rhineland a pedestrian-friendly, warm and charming destination city by providing educational assistance, support and leadership in an effort to spur economic revitalization and historic preservation, as guided by the Wisconsin Main Street Program.

#### *Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (EDC)*

Oneida County EDC is a private/public partnership between business and government. They facilitate new business growth and assist existing businesses with expansion needs. Oneida County EDC is a member of Grow North—a public/private 501(c)(6) organization dedicated to the economic development in eight counties of Northeast Wisconsin.

### Economic Development Programs

The following is a brief listing of county, regional, state, and federal resources and programs to assist economic development efforts in the Region. This

list is only a summary of some of the programs available, and provides the most current program information. The reader should seek current information on any of the programs listed.

#### County Programs

The Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC) provides assistance to the entire county. OCEDC assists individuals investigating the feasibility of going into business, works with existing business to expand and retain economic viability, and works to attract new business to expand the economic base and provide employment alternatives to the citizens of Oneida County. OCEDC also acts as a conduit between business and government on a local, regional, state, and federal level. OCEDC is located at the airport and is staffed by a director and a secretary.

#### Oneida County RLF

The Oneida County Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) is a financing program established to provide loans to business relocating or currently located in Oneida County. The RLF provides a means for businesses to obtain financing, which will in turn promote economic development, provide jobs, increase incomes, and expand the local tax base. Both Industrial and Commercial businesses are eligible for the program. Eligible uses of funds include: Acquisition of land, buildings, and fixed equipment; site preparation, the construction of buildings, and the installation of fixed equipment; clearance, demolition or the removal of structures or the rehabilitation of buildings; payment of assessments if the provision of the facilities will create or retain jobs; and working capital (inventory and direct labor costs only).

#### Regional Programs

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is a designated Economic Development District (EDD) by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Under this designation, the Commission maintains a continuous process of planning assistance that supports the formulation and implementation of economic development programs designed to create or retain full-time permanent jobs and income. The NCWRPC provides services such as:

economic research, marketing, financial packaging, evaluation and analysis of public infrastructure needs that support private economic development activity, and works with local units of government to maintain eligibility for certain grants.

The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) is a regional organization created for the purpose of managing a regional revolving loan fund. The Corporation is comprised of the following counties: Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Oneida, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, and Wood.

#### State Programs

##### *Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)*

WEDC is the state's primary department for the delivery of integrated services to businesses. Their purpose is to 1) foster retention of and creation of new jobs and investment opportunities in Wisconsin; 2) foster and promote economic business, export, and community development.

##### *Wisconsin Small Cities Program - CDBG*

The Wisconsin Department of Administration provides federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to eligible municipalities for approved housing and-or public facility improvements and for economic development projects. Economic Development grants provide loans to businesses for such things as: acquisition of real estate, buildings, or equipment; construction, expansion, or remodeling; and working capital for inventory and direct labor.

##### *The Wisconsin Innovation Service Center (WISC)*

This non-profit organization is located at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater and specializes in new product and invention assessments and market expansion opportunities for innovative manufacturers, technology businesses, and independent inventors.

##### *Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)*

The University of Wisconsin SBDC is partially funded by the Small Business Administration

and provides a variety of programs and training seminars to assist in the creation of small business in Wisconsin.

##### *Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)*

This program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, provides immediate assistance and funding for the cost of transportation improvement necessary for major economic development projects.

#### Federal Programs

##### *Economic Development Administration (EDA)*

EDA offers a public works grant program. These grants are administered through local units of government for the benefit of the local economy and, indirectly, private enterprise.

##### *U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Development (USDA - RD)*

The USDA Rural Development program is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America. Financial programs include support for such essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. USDA-RD promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools. The program also offers technical assistance and information to help agricultural and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their member services.

##### *Small Business Administration (SBA)*

SBA provides business and industrial loan programs that will make or guarantee up to 90% of the principal and interest on loans to companies, individuals, or government entities for financing in rural area. Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation acts as an agent for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that provide financing for fixed asset loans and for working capital.

# Economic Development Goals, Objectives, & Policies

## Goal 1:

Develop a new industrial / business park.

### Objective 1:

Work with the county to develop a joint city-county industrial / business park.

### Policies:

- A. Conduct an industrial park feasibility study.
- B. Identify appropriate areas for a new park and acquire.
- C. Pursue funding opportunities to develop a new park.

## Goal 2:

Attract new business and foster homegrown entrepreneurs.

### Objectives 1

Promote the retention and expansion of the current economic base.

#### Policies:

- A. Encourage infill development on underutilized or deteriorating downtown business district properties.
- B. Encourage infill development throughout the City.

### Objective 2:

Cooperate in countywide economic development initiatives.

#### Policies:

- A. Formally coordinate collaboration among all the economic development entities serving the City to maximize each entity's strength for the good of the community.

*List of entities:*

- i. City Economic Development Committee;
- ii. City's Downtown Works Revolving Loan Fund Committee;
- iii. City's Downtown Infrastructure Improvement Committee;
- iv. City's TIF Joint Review Board;

- v. Rhinelander Chamber of Commerce;
- vi. Downtown Rhinelander Inc; and
- vii. Oneida County EDC

- B. Expand local economic development programs.
- C. Market available land and buildings online.
- D. Continue to develop telecommunications infrastructure.

### Objective 3:

Accommodate home-based business expansion.

#### Policies:

- A. Explore the creation of a business incubator.
- B. Allow home occupations withing appropriate zoning districts.

### Objective 4:

Promote expansion of a skilled labor force.

#### Policies:

- A. Annually review efforts to identify and satisfy employer's workforce needs among the City's Economic Development Committee, Rhinelander School District, and Nicolet Technical College.
- B. Promote the school to work program.

### Goal 3:

Make Downtown Rhinelander a destination.

#### Objective 1:

Create a strong linkage between the Wisconsin River and the central business district through strategic public and private sector cooperation and public works projects.

#### Objective 2:

Implement the Downtown Economic Development & Streetscape Plan.

#### Objective 3:

Upgrade wayfinding signage to direct people to downtown Rhinelander.

#### Objective 4:

Continue to support the downtown BID.



# Chapter 8 • Land Use

## Background

The land use chapter brings together all of the previous sections of the plan to create a future land use plan for the city.

## Previous Plans

### Rhinelanders Comprehensive Plan 2008

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan includes a Land Use chapter. The land use issues that were identified may still be relevant today:

- annexation of land for commercial and industrial development,
- older neighborhoods in need of revitalization and redevelopment, and
- the increasing residential growth in towns surrounding the City.

The plan identified seven goals addressing land use issues:

1. maintain Rhinelanders as a strong, diverse center for the region,
2. manage growth to ensure development and redevelopment occurs in a planned and coordinated manner,
3. revitalize central business districts,
4. enhance and maintain Rhinelanders' neighborhoods,
5. provide a cost-effective system of public services and utilities,
6. develop and maintain a comprehensive park system, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the city, and
7. strive for a safe, clean, and visually attractive community.

## Land Use Issues

### Annexation

The majority of annexation in recent years has been for commercial and industrial type development. This type of development has required sewer & water, as well as fire services. This type of growth is expected to continue to occur around transportation routes into the city. There has been limited annexation for residential for a variety of reasons. Some recent annexation is the result of failed water systems and the need to connect to municipal water and sewer.

There is interest in working with the surrounding communities to develop boundary agreements to better establish growth patterns and better provide public services.

### Revitalization & Redevelopment

Several neighborhoods that are beginning to show signs of age and disrepair, and the traditional commercial areas have also seen some decline.

The city has used tax incremental financing to promote development and revitalization in some areas, but the program has limitations.

### Residential Growth

As a result of the tax rates in the surrounding towns and other life style factors, residential development is occurring in the towns at a greater rate than in the city. This is a long-term issue that needs to be addressed.

### Regional Livability Plan, 2015

The 2015 North Central Wisconsin Regional Livability Plan (RLP) is an update to the Regional Comprehensive Plan, 2002-2020. Focusing on the four topic areas of housing, economic development, transportation, and land use, the RLP identifies trends and sets goals to make the region more livable for all residents.

The land use trends identified are:

- Household numbers will continue to increase as the population increases and fewer people are in each household.
- Land values will continue to increase as agricultural land is converted to nonagricultural uses.
- The continued reduction in farmland will increase the land value of remaining farmland.
- Lower housing and population densities (compared to state levels) will increase the burden on municipalities to provide services like utilities, emergency services, and broadband to citizens; and rural homes will continue to be dependent on septic, well, and LP gas.
- The creation and protection of large continuous tracts of forestland and farmland will continue to make economies of scale better for those lands to remain productive.

#### *What can be done to shift the trend?*

Through a combination of local approaches it is possible to encourage new development within close proximity to established town centers and to preserve rural areas. Overtime, this would increase the number of residents living or working close enough to daily needs to make use of biking, walking, or transit feasible.

The two land use goals are:

1. Preserve and protect the region's landscape, environmental resources, and sensitive lands while encouraging healthy communities; and
2. Manage and reduce vacant land and structures.

## Inventory and Trends

This section describes the general existing land uses in the city, identifies future demands for land, reviews land values, and outlines a future land use plan for the city and the surrounding area.

### Existing Land Use

A land use planning process requires that all of the existing land uses in the community and surrounding area be inventoried. The overall form and arrangement of Rhinelander is determined by its pattern of residential, commercial, industrial and other activities. The location and density of various uses and the way in which they are grouped, directly affects the quality of life in the City.

In this planning process, ten land use categories (see Table 29) were used to classify land use types in the City and surrounding area. Using these categories and the most current air photos of the community, every part of the city and surrounding area was placed into one of ten categories to create the Existing Land Use map. City staff and the City Planning Commission reviewed the map to verify what currently exists in the City.

See Maps 4 and 4A for existing land uses. The existing land use patterns are needed to understand how to develop a desired future land use pattern. Current land use activity in Rhinelander is characterized by a central business district (CBD) in the heart of the city, bounded approximately by the Wisconsin River, Pelham St. and Frederick Street. The CBD is mainly surrounded by residential uses, except to the west with industrial uses along the Rhinelander Flowage. Commercial nodes are found along the outer transportation corridors such as Lincoln Avenue, Highway 17 and Highway 8/47. In all, the City is about 8.5 square miles in size or about 5,400 acres of land. Woodlands and transportation are the largest land uses, followed by residential. See Table 29 for all existing land use category acreages, which were summarized through GIS calculation.

Adjacent to the City is the 1.5 mile radial planning area, which encompasses the City's whole exterritorial area. Considerable forested lands as

**Table 29: Existing Land Use, 2015**

<b>Agriculture</b>	4	0.1%
<b>Commercial</b>	478	8.7%
<b>Government/ Institutional</b>	333	6.1%
<b>Industrial</b>	298	5.5%
<b>Transportation</b>	1,071	19.6%
<b>Outdoor Recreation</b>	385	7.0%
<b>Preservation/ Open Space</b>	131	2.4%
<b>Residential</b>	919	16.8%
<b>Woodlands</b>	1,713	31.3%
<b>Water</b>	134	2.5%
<b>Total</b>	5,466	100%

Source: NCWRPC GIS

well as scattered low-density residential uses and some businesses are in this area. Much of the future growth of the City will occur in this zone as a result of development pressure for City services.

This existing land use information provides the foundation for understanding where future land uses may go. Reviewing what land use patterns have occurred, in addition to reviewing the Natural Resources Map in this plan, will provide some guidance for what land uses are possible on undeveloped lands.

All four towns that surround the city have a comprehensive plan. These plans identify land uses for residential, forestry and other uses. Many of these plans will be updated over the next few years, as comprehensive plans are required to be updated every ten years. The town plans were adopted in various years: Town of Crescent (2007); Town of Newbold (2008); Town of Pelican (2009); and Town of Pine Lake (2003).

### Projections for Land Demand

Population, housing, and employment projections were completed in an effort to identify the demand for land in the City of Rhineland, which is identified in the next section.

#### Population Projections

The Wisconsin Department of Administration's Demographic Services Center prepares population projections for each county and community in the

**Table 30: Population Projections**

	<b>City of Rhineland</b>	<b>Oneida County</b>
<b>2020</b>	7,625	37,265
<b>2025</b>	7,730	38,905
<b>2030</b>	7,715	39,985
<b>2035</b>	7,445	39,745
<b>2040</b>	6,995	38,500
<b>% Change 2020-2040</b>	-8.3%	3.3%
<b>Net Change 2020-2040</b>	-630	1,235

Source: WI DOA

**Table 31: Household Projections**

	<b>City of Rhineland</b>	<b>Oneida County</b>
<b>2020</b>	3,546	16,986
<b>2025</b>	3,603	17,796
<b>2030</b>	3,596	18,344
<b>2035</b>	3,476	18,346
<b>2040</b>	3,270	17,892
<b>% Change 2020-2040</b>	-7.8%	5.3%
<b>Net Change 2020-2040</b>	-276	906

Source: WI DOA

state. These projections estimate that the City will decline in population by about 630 persons by 2040. During this same period, Oneida County will grow by over 1,200 people, as seen in Table 30.

#### Household Projections

Population changes lead to a change in the needed number of housing units. The DOA also projects households. As Table 31 shows, households in Rhineland are also expected to decrease, but at a slightly slower rate than population change. This is due to a projected continued decrease in household size. According to the projections, Rhineland will have 3,270 households by 2040.

### Employment Projections

According to EMSI, Economic Modeling Specialists Intl., a leading labor market analysis tool, Rhinelander is projected to grow from 10,124 jobs in 2015 to 10,858 jobs in 2024, an increase of 734 jobs or 7 percent. The manufacturing industry is projected to grow the most, adding 280 jobs, a 28 percent increase. Other industries projected to grow are Retail Trade; Wholesale Trade; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Finance and Insurance; and Accommodation and Food Service. Job losses are projected for the Health Care and Social Assistance and Crop and Animal Production industries. See the Economic Development Chapter for more detailed information.

### Land Development Demand

#### Housing Land Demand

Translating these various projections into acres of land that will be developed over the next 20-years, results in no new residential land that is needed; based solely on population and household projections. Population is projected to decline and households are projected to decline overall (only a 5-year increase in the number of households is projected in the City from 2020 to 2025, but that gain is wiped out over the following 5-years).

Even though Rhinelander's population is projected to continue a steady decline, the City wants to actively encourage people who work in Rhinelander to live in Rhinelander. The County population is projected to grow over the next 15-years, and the City wants to capture that growth. A revitalized downtown and a variety of new housing options are some of the strategies to grow Rhinelander's population, which will follow the increase in higher employment at businesses within the City.

Some of these new housing opportunities may not require converting farmland or forest acreage to housing acreage, like increasing the number of apartments above stores, and building condos and apartments on former industrial land.

Only 63 people were added to the Rhinelander population between 2000 and 2010, but residential acreage went up 22 acres (897 acres in 2005 to 919

acres in 2015), which resulted in about 0.35 acres per person.

Rhineland is at "full employment" (4.09% unemployment in 2010, see Table 27), which means under 5% unemployment. This means that all new workers (734 new jobs) through 2024 would need to either commute into Rhinelander, or live in Rhinelander.

Since the City wants to capture the additional projected workers in Rhinelander (734 new jobs through 2024 per EMSI) as new residents to Rhinelander, then using the historical amount of land per resident used over the last decade (0.35 acres per person) by the new jobs (734 people) results in an additional 257 housing acres needed.

#### Industrial & Commercial Land Demand

Determining future land demand for industrial and commercial uses will rely on EMSI's employment projections of 734 new jobs to Rhinelander through 2024. In Rhinelander, big box commercial has used 0.06 acres per employee, and industrial plants have used about 0.11 acres per employee. If new buildings are needed for the projected 734 new jobs, then about 80 acres of commercial or industrial land will be needed, which does not include land for City streets or retention ponds.

With retail trade (commercial) jobs in decline throughout Oneida County over the last decade per Table 25, and with the amount of commercial land used in Rhinelander remaining almost unchanged over the last decade, then all 80 acres will be considered as potentially necessary for industrial expansion. EMSI's Employment Projections, earlier in this chapter, show that Retail Trade (commercial) is likely to grow. If commercial land is needed along Lincoln Street, then it will be less than 5 acres that will probably convert from housing land or raze existing stores, and additional commercial land may develop along other highway corridors per the Future Land Use Map. With the full reconstruction of downtown's main streets may come many of the additional retail jobs projected by EMSI, which means that no new commercial land is needed, only fully utilizing what already exists—especially in downtown.

**Table 32: Land Use Demand in Acres**

	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Industrial</b>
<b>2016</b>	919	477	297
<b>2021</b>	983	477	335
<b>2026</b>	1,047	478	374
<b>2031</b>	1,111	479	412
<b>2036</b>	1,176	480	452

Source: NCWRPC

There is no more industrial park land available as of 2015. Even though the industrial land demand in Table 32 is projected in 5-year increments, the City may acquire all the land for a new industrial park in one year. There is also a possibility that much of the projected increase in industrial employment could be satisfied with a second or third shift within existing facilities, which would not require additional land. Many existing industrial employers in Rhinelander are located on parcels that have room for building expansions. Land may only be needed if new companies decide to call Rhinelander home, or if an existing employer decides that their existing facility is no longer economically viable, and they decide to build on a completely new site, like what Printpack has done.

A potential industrial park with 80 acres used for buildings and parking lots may also have about 50 acres for roads and building setbacks, and maybe 25 acres remaining as buildable, but held by all the existing industrial tenants, which totals about 155 acres of industrial park land needed for 80 acres of projected industrial need. Conducting an industrial park study will provide accurate acreage needs and a parcel layout map.

Table 32 displays the projected land needs for residential, commercial, and industrial uses in five-year increments to the year 2036. Existing agricultural land within the City will probably convert to other uses in the next two decades.

#### Redevelopment and Infill Opportunities

The downtown retail area is undergoing a multi-year street reconstruction project with new infrastructure and streetscape elements, which will spur investment in local businesses once those street improvements are made.

**Table 33: Future Land Use, 2036**

<b>Agriculture</b>	0	0.0%
<b>Commercial</b>	608	11.1%
<b>Government/ Institutional</b>	558	10.2%
<b>Industrial</b>	487	8.9%
<b>Transportation</b>	1,613	29.5%
<b>Outdoor Recreation</b>	419	7.7%
<b>Preservation/ Open Space</b>	261	4.8%
<b>Residential</b>	1,290	23.6%
<b>Woodlands</b>	96	1.8%
<b>Water</b>	134	2.5%
<b>Total</b>	5,466	100%

Source: NCWRPC GIS

Pockets of vacant land, brownfields, and functionally obsolete buildings exist throughout the City where new industrial, commercial, and residential development could occur. See the Redevelopment & Growth Areas in the Economic Development chapter for additional information.

#### Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map (Maps 5 and 5A) represents the twenty-year land use recommendations for all lands in the City and the 1.5 mile exterritorial planning area. The land use categories used are described on page 69. The future land use map groups land uses that are compatible, establishes buffering between uses, and separates conflicting uses. Future land use in the surrounding towns came from those respective Town's Comprehensive Plan future land use maps and staff judgement where gaps occurred.

The Plan Commission and City staff identified desired future land uses within Rhinelander by 1) using their broad knowledge of the City, 2) the series of background maps that were prepared as part of the planning process, and 3) their interpretation of the current growth trends. Since City Government cannot predict which land parcels will be developed first, then a full build-out scenario was used to identify potential future land uses of all land within Rhinelander. If a land owner comes to the City to rezone their land, then the City will use this Future Land Use map to determine if

they will allow a rezone to occur. See Table 33, and Maps 5 and 5A for future land use.

Table 33 shows how much land could be classified as developed at full build-out by 2036 in the existing Rhinelander footprint without annexation. For various reasons, people may not want to develop their land any further, so if additional land is needed, then either redevelopment of existing land or annexation would need to occur.

### Annexation

As discussed earlier, the City of Rhinelander will continue to see annexation occur along the major transportation corridors for additional commercial and industrial development in adjacent towns.

Wisconsin Statute, 66.021, Annexation of territory, provides three petition methods by which annexation may occur. Annexation involves the transfer of one or more tax parcels from a town to a city.

Cities cannot annex property without the consent of landowners as required by the following petition procedures:

- Unanimous Approval – A petition is signed by all of the electors residing in the territory and the owners of all of the real property included within the petition.
- Notice of intent to circulate petition (direct petition for annexation) – The petition must be signed by a majority of electors in the territory and the owners of one-half of the real property either in value or in land area. If no electors reside in the territory, then only the landowners need sign the petition.

- Annexation by referendum – A petition requesting a referendum election on the question of annexation may be filed with the city or village when signed by at least 20 percent of the electors in the territory.

The city policy related to annexation is that no sewer or water is provided unless the area becomes part of the city. There are some limited exceptions to this policy including the extension of service to Nicolet Technical College, and some adjoining hookups.

### Equalized Values

Between 1990 and 2000, the City’s equalized valuation grew by about 130 percent, from \$155 million to \$583 million, and meanwhile the County increased by 180 percent. From 2000 to 2010, the City’s equalized valuation has increased by 63 percent, while the County’s grew by 103 percent. For comparison, the Cities of Antigo, Merrill and Tomahawk grew smaller percentages over the last decade, see Table 34.

**Table 34: Equalized Values\***

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	2010	1990-2000 % Change	2000-2010 % Change
City of Rhinelander	155,173,700	356,956,800	583,311,500	130%	63%
City of Tomahawk	59,112,800	145,155,600	208,554,300	146%	44%
City of Merrill	159,192,300	312,613,800	382,255,600	96%	22%
City of Antigo	118,955,000	244,926,400	359,643,100	106%	47%
Oneida County	1,287,004,100	3,604,966,400	7,322,297,600	180%	103%

\* Reduced by TID value increment.

Source: WI DOR

## Land Use Descriptions

A general description of each classification follows:

### Residential

Typical single-family residential development, typically consisting of smaller lot sizes served by municipal sewer and water. This also includes limited areas of higher-density, such as duplexes, and individual condos or apartment buildings that are nestled into mainly single-family neighborhoods.

### Rural Residential

Large lot (half acre and more) single-family residential development, typically on septic systems.

### Multi-Family Residential

Groupings of apartment buildings or condo buildings.

### Commercial

Commercial development includes retail sales, personal and professional services, office, and related types of development. This also includes some areas recommended for mixed use development, where commercial is the dominant use, but residential is a common second floor type use.

### Industrial

Industrial development includes manufacturing, processing, and assembly facilities, and also includes mining operations.

### Governmental/Public/Institutional

Governmental buildings (e.g. City Hall, Fire Department, City Garage), cemeteries, non-profit hospitals and clinics, and utility facilities (e.g. telecommunication towers, electrical substations, sewer, and water).

### Transportation

All transportation facilities are included in this category (e.g. roads, railroad, airport).

### Open Lands

Grasslands fall under this category.

### Preservation / Open Space

Wetlands, State natural areas, and other outdoor recreation properties that are not actively developed fill this category.

### Forestry

Forested lands are included in this category if they are wooded, and are not part of outdoor recreation, or other land uses. Wooded steep slopes are part of this category too.

### Agriculture

Areas of agricultural uses; such as for crop farming, raising livestock, or Christmas tree farms.

### Water

All surface waters are identified here.

# Goals, Objectives, & Policies

## Goals

1. Maintain Rhinelander as a strong, diverse center for the region.
2. Manage growth to ensure development and redevelopment occurs in a planned and coordinated manner.
3. Revitalize Central Business Districts.
4. Enhance and maintain Rhinelander’s neighborhoods.
5. Provide a cost-effective system of public services & utilities.
6. Develop and maintain a comprehensive park system, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the city.
7. Strive for a safe, clean, and visually attractive community.

## Objectives

1. Encourage development to be located within the City where it can be served with a full range of municipal services including sanitary sewer, water and storm sewer in an efficient and economical manner.
2. Utilize existing public facilities to serve new development whenever possible.
3. Encourage pedestrian-oriented neighborhood designs as new developments are platted and existing neighborhoods are revitalized.
4. Efforts should be made to minimize the impacts of new development and infill on the natural environment or existing properties.
5. Discourage incompatible land uses (e.g. high traffic generators, noisy or unaesthetic uses) from locating next to residential neighborhoods.
6. Encourage collaboration between the City and neighboring jurisdictions regarding development policies.
7. Discourage low density, unsewered urban development in the identified growth areas adjacent to the city.
8. Upgrade signage, landscaping, site design and related development standards for commercial, office and industrial development.
9. Encourage infill development on underutilized or deteriorating properties.
10. Plan and coordinate public improvements with private developments, and do not allow private development that is not adequately supported by public facilities and services.
11. Utilize the City’s official mapping authority within the City limits and the extraterritorial planning area to identify a road system that serves the long-term transportation needs of the community, including pedestrian and bicycle routes throughout the planning area.

## Policies

- A. Ensure that the City’s utility system has adequate capacity to accommodate projected future growth and plan for an orderly extension of utilities.
- B. Plan and implement a comprehensive network of sidewalk and bicycle routes and consider pedestrian and bicycle accessibility when selecting sites for new public facilities such as schools, parks, libraries and community centers.

- J. Require stormwater retention on new impervious surfaces consistent with accepted best management practices.
- K. Review all the community costs and benefits of a proposed development prior to approval.
- L. Encourage awareness and adherence to city property maintenance ordinance.
- M. Revise the zoning and subdivision regulations to implement the comprehensive plan.



# Chapter 9 • Intergovernmental Cooperation

## Overview

In general terms, intergovernmental cooperation is any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. Typically, intergovernmental cooperation and coordination refers to the management and delivery of public services and facilities. It is also dependent upon a defined geographic area within which cooperation and coordination may be feasible.

Intergovernmental cooperation can be as simple as communication and sharing information, or it can involve entering into formal intergovernmental agreements and sharing of resources such as equipment, buildings, staff, and revenue. It can even involve consolidating services, jurisdictions, or transferring territory.

Often the action of one governmental unit impacts another. Many important issues are regional in nature. Watersheds, economic conditions, commuter patterns, housing, media markets, and effects from growth and change are all issues that spill over municipal boundaries and impact the region as a whole. Many issues extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries and affect more than one community. For example, air, water, and wildlife pass over the landscape regardless of boundaries so that one jurisdiction's activities.

The City of Rhinelander is surrounded by the Towns of Crescent, Newbold, Pelican, and Pine Lake, and is part of Oneida County. All of these are important intergovernmental relationships for the City. Efforts should be made to maintain good working relationships with the surrounding Towns and County.

## Benefits

There are many reasons intergovernmental cooperation makes sense. Some examples include:

Cost Savings: Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Cooperation can enable some communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly.

Consistency: Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.

Predictability: Jurisdictions that cooperate provide greater predictability to residents, developers, businesses, and others. Lack of predictability can result in lost time, money, and opportunity.

Understanding: As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.

Trust: Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions.

Early Identification of Issues: Cooperation enables jurisdictions to identify and resolve potential conflicts at an early stage, before affected interests have established rigid positions, before the political stakes have been raised, and before issues have become conflicts or crises.

Address Regional Issues: Communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues, which are regional in nature.

The major beneficiary of intergovernmental cooperation is the local resident. They may not understand, or even care about, the details of a particular intergovernmental issue, but residents can appreciate their benefits, such as costs savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

## Tools

### Shared Service Agreements

Wisconsin Statute s.66.0301 enables local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Intergovernmental agreements prepared using this statute, are the most common form of agreement and have been used by communities for years, often in the context of sharing public services such as police, fire, or rescue. This type of agreement can also be used to provide for revenue sharing, determine future land use within a subject area, and to set temporary municipal boundaries. Shared service agreements are utilized to allow this type of cooperation.

### Boundary Agreements

Under Section 66.0307 of the Wisconsin Statutes, municipalities may prepare cooperative boundary plans or agreements. Cooperative boundary plans or agreements involve decisions regarding the maintenance or change of municipal boundaries for a period of 10 years or more. The cooperative plan must include a plan for the physical development of the territory covered by the plan; a schedule for changes to the boundary; plans for the delivery of services; an evaluation of environmental features and a description of any adverse environmental consequences that may result; and the need for safe and affordable housing. Upon adoption by the participating communities and approval by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the cooperative plan has the force and effect of a contract.

### Extra-territorial Jurisdiction Zoning

Any city that has a plan commission may exercise extraterritorial zoning power in the unincorporated areas surrounding the city, under Wisconsin Statute 62.23. The extraterritorial zoning power may be exercised in the unincorporated areas

located within 1 ½ miles of a fourth class city (Rhineland). Using this tool involves lengthy process and requires strong communication with the surrounding towns.

### Extraterritorial Subdivision Review

Wisconsin Statute, 236.10, allows a city or village to exercise its extraterritorial plat review authority in the same geographic area as defined within the extraterritorial zoning statute. The purpose of extraterritorial plat approval jurisdiction is to help cities and villages influence the development pattern of areas outside their boundaries that will likely be annexed to the city or village. This helps cities and villages protect land use near its boundaries from conflicting uses outside its limits.

## Inventory and Trends

Currently there are numerous relationships and several general agreements in place. The following is a summary of existing and possible cooperative efforts, and some general trends.

### Intergovernmental Relationships

#### Local

The Rhineland Fire Department has contracts to provide fire protection to Nicolet College and the Federal Forest. They also have agreements to provide inspection services to the Towns of Newbold, Pine Lake and Woodboro. Currently, there are no agreements to provide fire protection to the surrounding towns; however, this is a possible area for further discussion. The city is also working on a MABUS agreement, which will create a countywide mutual aid system.

St. Mary's Hospital provides ambulance service in the Rhineland area. However, the county heavily subsidizes this service. This is an area that might have some potential for a future governmental agreement.

The Rhineland District Library is the result of an agreement between the City and its four surrounding the towns—Crescent, Newbold, Pelican, and Pine Lake. Oneida County contributes funds for those users outside of this area.

The City also provides sewer & water via an agreement to the Nicolet College campus.

As the county seat, the City is the hub of county government. The Courthouse, as well as a variety of other assets are located in the City, including the County Law Enforcement Center. These all require ongoing communication between the city and county to provide residents of the City and County the best service.

#### Regional

The City of Rhinelander is located within the 10 county region of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC). The NCWRPC, established in 1973 by state statute, is a voluntary association of governments with the mission of providing both local and regional assistance to its member governments. The region includes Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood Counties.

#### State and Federal

As a local unit of government the City has formal relationships with the state and federal government. The City frequently works with the various state departments, such as the Department of Transportation, the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Revenue. Meanwhile, some of the federal agencies that the City works with include the U.S. Army Corps

of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency.

#### Trends

A variety of factors, some long-standing and some of fairly recent origin, are combining to force citizens and local governments in both urban and rural area to confer, cooperate, and in some cases, to join together in a search for better ways to deliver public services in their respective areas. These factors include:

- Local governments financial situation;
- Opportunity to reduce costs by working together;
- Elimination of duplication of services;
- Population settlement patterns and population mobility;
- Economic and environmental interdependence; and

In addition, as more jurisdictions create comprehensive plans and share them with surrounding communities, new opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation will be identified.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, & Policies**

### **Goal 1:**

**Encourage coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.**

#### Objective:

Maintain current agreements and explore additional opportunities with adjacent communities for services, such as fire and ambulance service.

#### Policy:

- A. Establish regular meeting dates with surrounding towns and Oneida County to review service agreements and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

## Goal 2:

Coordinate development and planning activities with surrounding communities and county.

### Objective 1:

Work cooperatively with neighboring towns to develop a land use plan to guide development in the area under extra-territorial jurisdiction.

### Objective 2:

Communicate with surrounding communities when proposed development is on a boundary or could have impacts on the adjacent community.

### Objective 3:

Ensure that annexations proceed in an orderly manner.

### Policies:

- A. Work with the surrounding townships to develop cooperative boundary agreements.
- B. Continue to work with the county and adjacent towns to jointly review and coordinate development under the City's extra-territorial zoning and subdivision review authority, and to review projects under county zoning.
- C. Strengthen lines of communication with the county and neighboring townships regarding potential annexations.

## Goal 3.

Encourage participation by City officials and residents in all levels of government.

### Objective 1:

Encourage close communication between local officials and county and state government organizations.

### Objective 2:

Encourage general participation and feedback from residents through surveys, informational public meetings, newsletters, or other activities.

### Policies:

- A. Continue to maintain physical bulletin boards around Rhinelander where meeting agendas are posted.
- B. Continue using public access taping of public meetings to allow more residents to be involved.
- C. Consider recording informational meetings with public access equipment to dual broadcast the meeting onto 1) the public access channel, and 2) onto the City's website channel.

- D. Consider developing a city newsletter.
- E. Continue to hold community informational meetings or create surveys to solicit public input on various issues affecting the City.

# Chapter 10 • Implementation

## Background

Implementation of this plan depends on the willingness of local officials, both City and county, to use it as a guide when making decisions that affect growth and development in the City of Rhinelander. It is also important that local citizens and developers become aware of the plan.

This Plan, having been prepared as a single unit, is consistent in its parts and there is no inconsistency between them.

The tools and techniques recommended to implement this comprehensive plan are as follows:

### City Decision Making

The City Council should adopt the plan and use it as a guide in decisions that affect development in Rhinelander. The Rhinelander Plan Commission should become very knowledgeable of the plan and use it when making recommendations to the City Council on development issues.

### Citizen Participation/Education

The City of Rhinelander should encourage citizen awareness of the City's comprehensive plan by making it available on the City's website and displaying the plan, or a poster of the plan, at voting places, City Hall, Library, or other community gathering places.

## Tools for Implementation:

### Zoning

Rhinelander's Zoning Code is included as Title 5.07 of the Municipal Code. The code has numerous residential, business, and industrial districts.

Zoning is the major implementation tool to achieve the proposed land uses. A zoning ordinance should be derived from, and be consistent with, the policy recommendations adopted in the comprehensive plan. The desired land uses should "drive" the development of specific zoning ordinance provisions including district descriptions, permitted uses, conditional uses and the zoning map.

A careful review of the Zoning Ordinance should take place after the Comprehensive Plan is adopted.

### Land Division Ordinance

Rhinelander's Subdivision and Platting Code is included as Title 5.06 in the Municipal Code.

The purpose of this ordinance is to regulate and control the division of land within the limits of the Town in order to promote the public health, safety, prosperity, aesthetics and general welfare of the community; to lessen congestion in the streets and highways; and to further the orderly layout and appropriate use of land.

A careful review of the Land Division Ordinance should take place after the Comprehensive Plan is adopted.

### Official Mapping

Rhinelander's Official Map Code is included as Title 5.05 in the Municipal Code.

Cities may adopt official maps. These maps, adopted by ordinance or resolution, may show existing and planned streets, highways, historic districts, parkways, parks, playgrounds, railroad rights of way, waterways and public transit facilities. The map may include a waterway only if it is included in a comprehensive surface water

drainage plan. No building permit may be issued to construct or enlarge any building within the limits of these mapped areas except pursuant to conditions identified in the law.

Official maps are not used frequently because few communities plan anything but major thoroughfares and parks in detail in advance of the imminent development of a neighborhood.

Following the comprehensive planning process it is important that the Official Map reviewed and changes made if needed.

### Other Tools

There are a variety of other local tools that can be used to implement the comprehensive plan. Some of these are: Stormwater and Erosion Control Ordinance, Sign Ordinance, Site Plan Review, Building Codes, fee simple land acquisition, easements (purchased or volunteered), deed restrictions, and land dedication.

### Measuring Plan Progress

As part of the comprehensive planning process, a number of goals, objectives, and policies were developed. When implemented these are intended to provide direction to local leaders and staff, as well as citizens of the City of Rhinelander.

To measure progress towards meeting these goals, objectives, and policies, a variety of actions need to take place, as outlined in the implementation table. Therefore, the task to measure plan progress, is as simple as determining if any action was taken or not, and if that action was taken. These “targets” will provide guidance to the city when specific actions are to be initiated. Based on the targets, measures of progress in achieving implementation of the comprehensive plan can be examined.

It should be noted that many of the policies identified in the plan are continuous or on-going and should also be monitored to measure the plan’s overall success. In addition, many of the objectives and their related actions can be accomplished in the short term, say 1 to 5 years. However, some will take longer to accomplish, say 6 to 10 years or more.

It is recommended that a periodic “Plan Status” report be prepared to summarize the progress toward implementation. This report might be jointly developed by various city departments, as related to their involvement in the implementation of the goals, objectives, and policies developed within this plan. Ultimately, the success of the planning process will be measured by the future quality of life experienced by both residents and visitors to Rhinelander.

### Plan Amendment and Update

The Rhinelander Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a “living” document. While the plan is intended to provide a long-term framework for the community, it must also be responsive to change. As things change so should the plan. Over time it is expected that numerous things, from the economic climate to social demands will create need for change. As such, the comprehensive plan should be amended as needed to keep the plan current and reflective of the community needs.

In addition, periodic updates should be made every five years. Under current law, it is required that an update of the plan be undertaken once every ten years. However, some critical parts of the plan, such as the Future Land Use Plan Map, might warrant annual review. Updates are important to ensure that not only the data and other information is current, but also the plan’s goals, objectives, and policies reflect the desires and needs of the city.

It is important that the public be involved in the update process. To ensure that the public is engaged in plan amendments, the same procedure used for initial plan adoption must be followed. (See Wisconsin Statute §66.1001). Upon Planning Commission review and resolution to make recommended changes to the plan, the City Council shall call a public hearing to allow property owners and citizens time to review and comment on recommended plan changes. The public hearing shall be advertised 30 days prior to the meeting by using a Class I notice. Based on public input, planning commission recommendations, and other facts, the council will then formally act on the recommended amendment(s).

Implementation of this plan depends on the willingness of local officials, to use it as a guide when making decisions that affect growth and development in the City of Rhinelander.

## **Recommended Actions**

This section outlines some overall recommendations to implement the goals, objectives, and policies that are contained in the previous chapters of this plan.

These recommendations are:

1. The City Council should adopt the plan and use it as a guide for decision making. Current and future officials should be provided a copy of the plan.
2. The City's Plan Commission should become knowledgeable of the plan and use it to justify recommendations to the City Council on development issues.
3. The City's staff should incorporate the goals, objectives and policies of the plan into annual budget and department work programs.
4. The City should incorporate any changes to its Zoning Ordinance, Land Division Ordinance and Official Map to establish consistency between these tools and the plan.
5. The City should encourage general awareness of the Comprehensive Plan. It is also important that citizens and developers are aware of the plan. The plan should be available via the City website and at City Hall.
6. The City should provide copies of the plan to the surrounding towns as well as the county.
7. The City should formally review this plan every five years and officially update it every ten years.



# Attachment A • Public Participation Plan







# Attachment B • Resolution and Ordinance







# Attachment C • Road Ratings





**City of Rhineland, Wisconsin  
Comprehensive Plan 2016**