



CLIFTON RIVER FALLS MARTELL GILMAN SPRING LAKE  
OAK GROVE TRIBBLE ELLSWORTH EL PASO ROCK ELM  
DIAMOND BLUFF TRENTON HARTFORD SALEM UNION  
ISABELLE MAIDEN ROCK

# ***PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN***

***—= 2035 =—***

*Prepared by the Pierce County Land Management Department*





## PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2035

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

In October 1999, the State of Wisconsin enacted ambitious land use legislation intended to ensure that by 2010 every city, village, and town in the state would be guided by a comprehensive plan. The law was created to address four major shortcomings in Wisconsin's land use planning:

1. In 1998, only 29 percent of Wisconsin communities had any kind of land use plan.
2. Of the 29 percent of communities with a land use plan, the quality of the plans varied widely. Some plans were updated regularly and addressed a wide range of issues, while others were old, outdated, and poorly conceived.
3. Communities with good plans often did not invest the resources necessary to implement them.
4. Long-standing State provisions offered little to improve the situation.

The result of the "Smart-Growth" planning legislation was a dramatic increase in the number of communities with comprehensive plans guiding their growth and development. A 2010 study estimated that the percentage of Wisconsin communities with comprehensive plans was approximately 90 percent, compared to roughly 25 percent just a decade earlier. Locally, 16 of 17 towns have adopted comprehensive plans, in addition to Pierce County.

Wisconsin's planning law defines the nine elements of a comprehensive plan, and includes several requirements of the communities responsible for creating a comprehensive plan. The law requires that comprehensive plans be adopted in their entirety by the local government's governing body. The law also mandates that certain local programs and actions affecting land use be consistent with the local government's comprehensive plan.

### The 2009 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan Experience

Between August 2006 and August 2009 the county, and its planning consultant (Rudd & Associates), worked to prepare a Comprehensive plan to replace the county *Land Management Plan* adopted in 1996. Changes within and around Pierce County during the period leading up to 2009, coupled with newly adopted Wisconsin Planning legislation necessitated a more extensive planning document to replace the outdated Land Management Plan.

### The 2016 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan Update Experience

In the spring of 2015 Land Management Department staff presented an action plan to the Land Management Committee detailing a proposed review process and outlining opportunities for public participation and input. The plan called for a more minimalistic approach compared to the in-depth undertaking required for the initial development of the 2009 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. It was determined that the LMC would review the existing plan in light of current data, trends, and conditions to identify what changes or modifications, if any, were needed to reflect evolving development pressures, demographics, and community attitudes.



Over a series of 10 public meetings held from August 2015 through September 2016 each element of the Comprehensive Plan was systematically presented for review and discussion of proposed revisions, additions, and deletions to the existing plan’s language. This approach provided a meaningful, transparent opportunity for the Land Management Committee, department staff, public officials, and the general public to assess whether changes or modifications were warranted for each element.

Community members were provided multiple channels to voice comments, opinions, and concerns at all stages of the comprehensive plan revision. All meetings were open to the public and meeting materials and minutes were posted on the Pierce County Land Management Department’s web page where an e-mail address was provided to submit public input directly to the department. Staff reports and meeting materials were also provided in advance to Town Board Chairs. Additionally, an online “Community Attitudes Survey” was produced and made available countywide in an effort to gather as much information as possible to develop an understanding of how community attitudes have evolved since the initial plan’s adoption.

## OVERVIEW

The Pierce County Comprehensive Plan was developed through a public participation and review process and is intended to be reflective of the values, goals, and vision of the residents and communities that comprise Pierce County.

The Pierce County Comprehensive Plan is not intended to pre-empt local comprehensive plans developed under Wis. Stats. 66.1001. Rather, the plan is intended provide guidance to county decision makers as well as provide towns under county zoning with concepts and strategies to implement the goals, objectives, and policies set forth in their own local comprehensive plan.

## PURPOSE AND INTENT

A comprehensive plan is an official public document adopted by ordinance by the governing body that sets forth its major policies concerning the future development of the community. The primary purposes of this plan are to generate goals for attaining a desirable development pattern, devise strategies and recommendations the county can follow to achieve its desired development pattern, and to meet the requirements of the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law.



## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

This document is comprised of nine sections reflecting the various elements in the Comprehensive Planning Law: Housing; Transportation; Utilities & Community Facilities; Agricultural, Natural, & Cultural Resources; Economic Development; Intergovernmental Cooperation; Land use, and Implementation. Though all of the individual chapters have their own goals, objectives, and policies, the elements are all interrelated and subsequently so are the goals, objectives, and policies. This plan was developed with the interrelationships of the elements in mind.

Since Towns in Pierce County administer their own comprehensive plans and have a strong tradition of local control, it is not appropriate for Pierce County to develop a countywide future land use map without including the local communities' individual land use maps. Rather, the future land use map for Pierce County is essentially a "quilt" composed of each community's future land use map. Since local comprehensive plans are subject to periodic review and amendment, it is neither practical nor constructive to create a complete a composite map showing the future land uses of all of the Pierce County municipalities under county zoning.

This document is not the end of the planning process. For Pierce County to succeed in achieving its vision for the future, planning must be a continual, ongoing exercise. As the county experiences change in the coming years, planning within the county must continue to evolve to reflect new trends, concepts, and attitudes of County residents.

## A MORE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A comprehensive plan is a vision of the future. It essentially identifies the desired conditions which a municipality, town, or county wishes to work toward. In most cases, the plan builds the rationale for and identifies the most appropriate uses of land within the jurisdiction considering a variety of factors including the attitudes of county residents and land owners.

Often comprehensive plans do not ultimately create the results they depict. These plans anticipate that the county, towns, and municipalities will make appropriate decisions, fund the necessary programs, or install the appropriate mechanisms to implement the plan. Often plans do not establish how to take actions, who should take them, or when a particular action should be taken.

The county does not want to adopt a plan that cannot, or will not, be implemented. It has chosen prepare a comprehensive plan with a structure that leads to successful implementation. In doing so, the county has decided to utilize the powers granted to local governments by the state. This document has a *comprehensive planning process* as an essential element. In addition, the plan also has a parallel activity: the *management process*. The planning process forms a policy framework for the physical and functional characteristics of the county, while the management process forms a parallel framework for the county's institutional strategic decision makers.

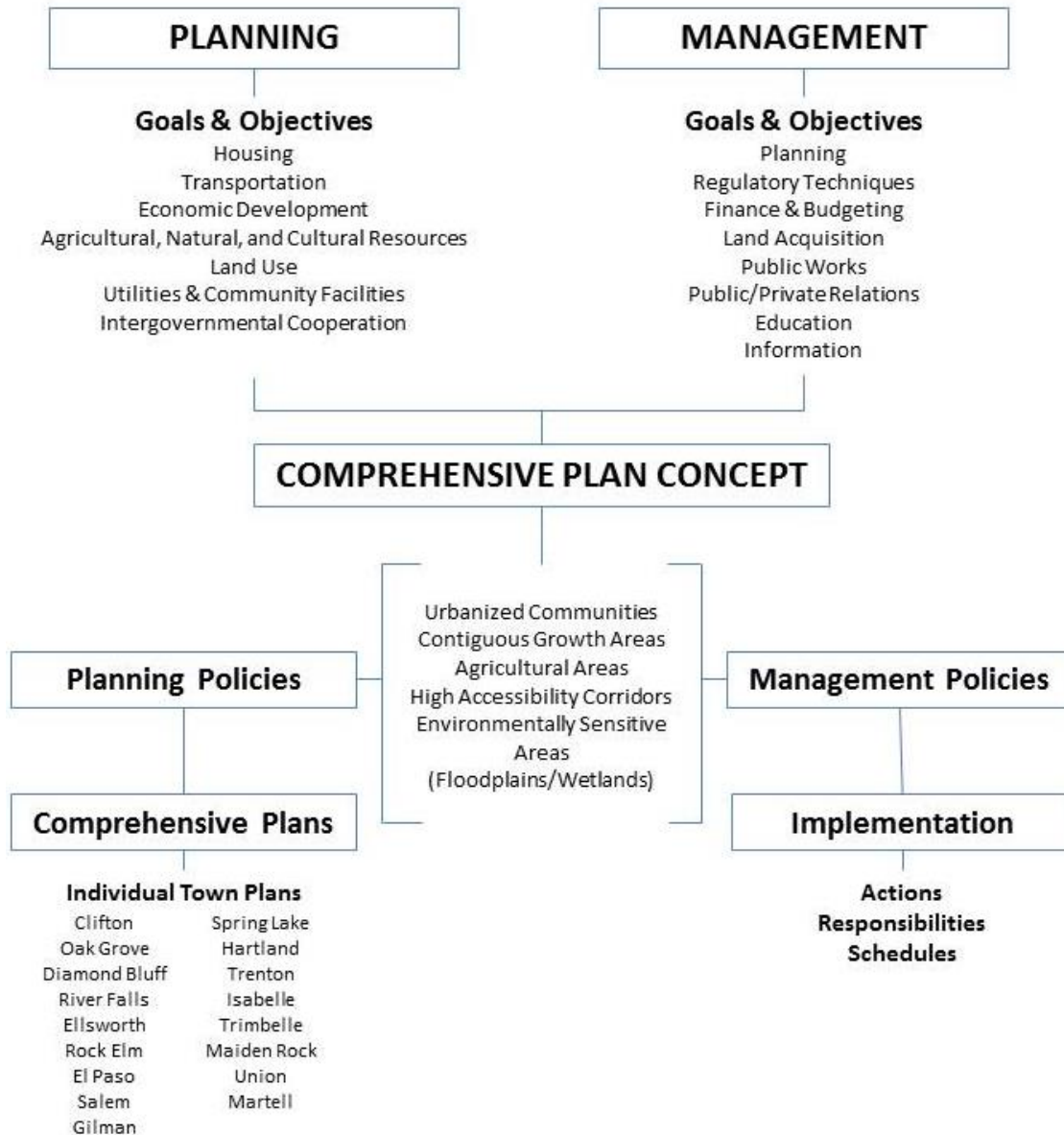


Figure 1. represents the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan model, in which the two parallel processes (planning on the left, management on the right) merge at the creation of the plan concept, with corresponding policies to achieve the concept. The plan concept divides the document into planning/management policies that allow the decision makers to focus on planning policies that will be used to implement planning goals and objectives.

The management side of the process is intended to be parallel to the planning process. In planning, goals and objectives guide the comprehensive plan – in management, goals and objectives guide the implementation plan. These two approaches are *not* independent. There must be substantial agreement and overlap between the plan and reasonable actions to implement that plan.

Essentially, the planning process delineates “where we should go” over the life of the plan, while the management process proposes “how we can get there.” The goals and objectives prepared for the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan show how the planning goals are oriented toward a physical end-state in the relationship between land-uses and the supporting public support systems. The management goals were prepared to give direction to fundamental governmental and private actions that will build that physical end-state relationship.



**Figure 1.****COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FRAMEWORK**



## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FRAMEWORK

The planning process is based on personal and collective decision-making, beginning with value and culminating with policies. The resulting policy framework unites and supports the individual elements of the comprehensive plan. The components of the policy framework are often described as follows.

**Value** – something perceived to be desirable by an individual or group; often evidenced by feeling and actions rather than words.

**Goal** – the stated end toward which effort is to be directed; the expression of values.

**Objective** – a specific target established, by which to achieve a goal.

**Policy** – a definite course of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions.

As part of the original planning process, the following value statements were distilled from positive and negative description of Pierce County residents.

- Diversity is an asset, as long as adequate transitions exist between different uses and activities to avoid problems of incompatibility.
- The trend of urbanization, which has moved outward from the Twin Cities Metro area along transportation corridors, can be a positive element of the future of the county.
- The ability to develop land to the perceived high potential is a “right” that is supported by many landowners and is sometimes challenged by neighbors and individuals concerned about perceived environmental impacts and changes the areas rural character.
- Public health is an important consideration requiring attention and public action to protect sources of water from contamination and depletion.
- Some resident believe there’s a conflict between the desire to maintain the existing character of Pierce County and the desire for economic development and employment opportunities.
- As long as it is economically feasible to farm and to live a farm life, many residents would prefer to see agricultural lands remain intact with urbanization, including residential development, limited on productive agricultural land.
- The quality of life within Pierce County is affected more by the quality of the natural environment than by the manmade environment.
- The farming sector prefers agricultural preservation, but wants to reserve the ability to develop if other options are not viable.



## PIERCE COUNTY VISION 2035

### Pierce County Vision

*IN THE YEAR 2035*, Pierce County will continue to offer an exceptional quality of life through thoughtfully planned and designed development, a transportation system emphasizing roadway system maintenance, vigorous business and job growth, and preservation of treasured natural resources.

Existing communities will be preserved and new investment and redevelopment will continue to ensure that these communities remain both functional and desirable. Most new homes in the cities and villages will be within walking or biking distance of parks, shops, and schools. Neighborhoods will contain a mix of housing types to reflect the needs of a diverse population. Scattered rural non-farm development will be moderated as efforts to preserve agricultural lands and the county's rural character are successful. Nevertheless, new rural housing will remain available to ensure that a full range of housing choices is available in the county.

Future investments in the transportation system will emphasize the maintenance and improvement of existing roadway facilities over expansion of the roadway system. Even though auto travel will become more costly, it will remain the preferred mode of travel for many residents. Thus, roadway improvements that correspond with careful, planned growth will continue to be necessary.

Economic development will occur mainly in business centers along major transportation corridors. Additional businesses will be promoted in cities and villages to facilitate a "jobs-housing balance" in those communities. River Falls will continue to maintain its vitality as the county's dominant civic, cultural, educational, and employment center. Pierce County's high quality of life will continue to be a principal factor in the retention and attraction of new business development.

The quality of Pierce County's many streams, rivers, natural areas, and environmental corridors will be preserved and improved. The county's farmlands will continue to produce food for both nearby and faraway markets. Preservation of these resources will remain an overriding consideration as the county continues to grow.



## Overview of Pierce County's Planning Goals

### Introduction

A more manageable process of growth and change results not only in an attractive and sustainable living environment for Pierce County residents, but will also result in savings in the cost of providing and maintaining public facilities and services, and an equitable distribution of these costs. To achieve these desired outcomes, Pierce County has developed the following “overall” planning and management concepts.

### Planning

The goals and objectives drafted for the planning portion of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan promotes three land use concepts:

1. Encourage growth in areas near villages and cities supported by adequate infrastructure.
2. Retain rural character and ensure the continuation of traditional rural activities.
3. Promote stewardship of land and water resources.

### Management

The goals and objectives for management are aimed at implementing the following management concept:

Encourage a development pattern that is compact and efficient while maintaining the rural and agricultural character of the county. This development pattern should have a close, functional relationship to infrastructure and transportation, individual town comprehensive plans, and a concern for environmental quality and natural processes. Additionally, it is recognized that certain development does not require municipal utility infrastructure and is not incompatible with the rural character of Pierce County.



## CONTEXT FOR DISCUSSION OF THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### Introduction

The implementation of Pierce County's Comprehensive Plan does not occur within a vacuum. The planning and management concepts contained within this document provide, and promote, opportunities for collaboration, participation, and partnership among the public, local governments (towns, cities, and villages), and the county. The discussion provided below is intended to reduce potential misinterpretation of the concepts within this document and provide the perspective with which this plan has been developed and updated. This information is intended to help define Pierce County's approach to land use management and to provide guidance as to how this plan frames the County's interaction with the units of government located within it.

Effective January 1, 2010 many land use decisions made by a Town, Village, City, or County must be consistent with its Comprehensive Plan. The following information is intended to help define Pierce County's approach to land use and to provide guidance as to how this plan frames interaction with the units of government located within it.

### Goals, Objectives, and Policy Language

Throughout the comprehensive plan the terms "encourage" and "discourage" are utilized frequently. The meaning will vary dependent upon context.

- The County will consider goal, objective, and policy statements that "discourage" a given condition or use – as not prohibiting the specific action – but as a statement that the condition or use is not the preferred outcome, except when relating to rezones (map amendments). In cases of rezones (map amendments), language discouraging the establishment of that district at that location shall be interpreted as not supporting the establishment of that district at that location – if the town in which the rezone is proposed does not have a comprehensive plan. In cases where a town does have a comprehensive plan, the appropriateness of a proposed rezone shall be determined based on its consistency with that town's plan. (*Management Policies for the Entire County*)
- The county will, when appropriate, seek to create processes and a fee structure that provides incentives to produce the activities or outcomes that the county wants to "encourage" and disincentives for the activities or outcomes that the County wants to "discourage." (*Management Policies for the Entire County*)

To elaborate, in cases where the county plan "discourages" an activity – that activity should not be viewed as prohibited, but recognized as something that Pierce County wants to discourage county-wide and for which a strategy to discourage that activity may be pursued. For example, the objective; "Discourage residential subdivision development on productive agriculture land" doesn't mean that



residential subdivision development is prohibited on productive agricultural land – but that Pierce County will, when appropriate, consider strategies intended to discourage the subdivision of productive agriculture land throughout the county through the establishment of a process and/or fee intended to make initiating that activity less attractive (i.e. fee could reflect full cost of service). Conversely, an activity that is to be “encouraged” might be subject to a simplified process with lesser fees.

### Goals, Objectives, and Policies Relating to Cities and Villages

Pierce County generally has no jurisdiction over land use decisions within villages and cities. In theory, if a village or city does not adopt a comprehensive plan, the document guiding land use decisions would be, by default, the County Plan. It is for this reason that “urban” goals, objectives, and policies are identified.

- The county acknowledges that the primary responsibility for achieving plan objectives within urbanized communities remains with the municipalities. The county further acknowledges that it shares responsibility with the municipalities for achieving the plan objectives within the one and one-half to three mile area of shared jurisdiction.

### Role of Town Plans in Pierce County Zoning Decisions

Most of the towns in Pierce County (16 of 17) have adopted comprehensive plans. The following text describes how town plans will provide guidance to land use decisions occurring within that towns borders.

- Ensure that towns subject to county zoning understand the role of town plans and ordinances in county land use processes, including implications of statutory authority and land use case law (i.e. responsibility for decisions regarding conditional use permits, lack of town plan authority over permitted uses, etc.). (*Intergovernmental Cooperation*)

Zoning decisions involving Towns that HAVE NOT adopted a comprehensive plan:

- The county acknowledges that the responsibility for accomplishing planning objectives set forth in plans developed by towns subject to county zoning lies jointly with the Town and Pierce County. The county further acknowledges that it will seek to further each Town’s planning goals and objectives when considering the establishment of conditionally permitted uses. **In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, the county will continue to solicit a non-binding town recommendation regarding the proposed use.** (*Management Policies for the Entire County*)
- The county will approve re-zonings or map amendments only when the proposed change is consistent with an adopted or amended town comprehensive plan. **In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, rezoning will be approved only when consistent with the Pierce County Plan (encourage vs. discouraged).** In such cases, Pierce County will solicit a non-binding town recommendation regarding the proposed rezone.



*(Management Policies for the Entire County)*

The County will consider goal, objective and policy statements that “discourage” a given condition or use – as not prohibiting the specific action – but as a statement that the condition or use is not the preferred outcome, except when relating to rezones (map amendments).

*(Management Policies for the Entire County)*

*The relationship between towns without a comprehensive plan and Pierce County will remain much the same as it has been in the past. The main difference being that the town will, after January 1, 2010, no longer have veto authority over rezones within their borders and a determination of the appropriateness of a proposed rezone will be based on consistency with the Pierce County Plan. The submission of a Town Recommendation regarding a proposed rezone or conditional use permit will continue to be required at the time of application. Town Recommendations will be advisory.*

Zoning decisions involving Towns that HAVE adopted a comprehensive plan:

- **The County acknowledges that the responsibility for accomplishing planning objectives set forth in plans developed by towns subject to county zoning lies jointly with the Town and Pierce County. The County further acknowledges that it will seek to further each Town’s planning goals and objectives when considering the establishment of conditionally permitted uses.** In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, the county will continue to solicit a non-binding town recommendation regarding the proposed use.
- **The county will approve re-zonings or map amendments only when the proposed change is consistent with an adopted or amended town comprehensive plan.** In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, rezoning will be approved only when consistent with the Pierce County Plan (encouraged vs. discouraged). In such cases, Pierce County will solicit a non-binding town recommendation regarding the proposed rezone.
- Pierce County will consider adherence to the goals, objectives of an adopted or amended comprehensive plan to be consistent with the “public interest” for decisions relating to that governmental unit or municipality.



### *Conditional Use Permits*

*A Town Recommendation regarding a proposed conditional use permit will continue to be required at the time of application. If a proposed conditionally permitted use is determined to be not consistent with a given Town's comprehensive plan, the code/plan provision with which it is incompatible must be specifically referenced. Pierce County will not approve conditionally permitted uses that are demonstrably inconsistent with an adopted town plan. It should be noted that consistency with a town plan does not guarantee Pierce County approval of a proposed use if the Land Management Committee determines that the proposed use at the proposed location will be detrimental or injurious to the public health or public safety. In cases where a Town's comprehensive plan does not provide guidance regarding a proposed use, the recommendation shall continue to be advisory.*

*It must be noted that the Land Management Committee is ultimately responsible for decisions regarding the issuance of a conditional use permit and said decisions are appealable by any aggrieved party. Pierce County, in creating a mechanism through which a town is able to further the goals and objectives of their comprehensive plan, did not relinquish its authority or responsibility in making discretionary decisions regarding the issuance of conditional use permits.*

### *Rezones*

*Applications for rezones will not be approved by Pierce County unless the request is consistent with that town's comprehensive plan. The submission of a Town Recommendation regarding a proposed rezone will continue to be required at the time of application. Reference to the pertinent section of the Town's plan supporting the proposed rezone or text amendment must be provided to demonstrate consistency with the Town's plan.*

*It should be noted that the permitted uses, uses which are allowable by right in a given district by the Pierce County Zoning Code (Chapter 240), are not impacted or restricted by a town's comprehensive plan.*



## Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources

### Introduction

Preservation of agricultural land and natural and cultural resources provides a multitude of benefits including recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat, and water quality preservation. These three resources are profoundly connected to the heritage, economics, and culture of the residents of Pierce County. Ensuring their continued vitality is a key component of the comprehensive plan.

Beyond the obvious quality of life benefits, it is important to understand and realize the vital function and benefits that preservation of agricultural land and natural and cultural resources provides, which in the long run saves everyone money. Wetlands, for example, perform a vital function in preserving the quality of groundwater, as well as surface water. Development adjacent to natural resource areas should be done in a well-planned fashion to preserve the natural function of these resource areas. Such development can be enhanced by melding development features with natural features.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law includes 14 goals for local comprehensive planning. The goals listed below specifically relate to the County's planning for agricultural, natural, and cultural resources.

- Protecting natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and environmental corridors.
- Protecting economically productive agricultural areas.
- Protection of agricultural land for agricultural purposes.
- Preserving cultural, historical, and archaeological sites.

### Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Vision

*IN THE YEAR 2035*, throughout Pierce County, natural areas, farmland, and open spaces enhance recreational opportunities for residents and provide habitat for wildlife. Woodlands, wetlands, agricultural lands, rivers, and streams remain the landscape features in the county.



## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

### AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL:

- Maintain the operational efficiency, viability and productivity of the County's agricultural areas for current and future generations.

### AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES OBJECTIVES:

- Support land use practices that reduce potential conflicts between agriculture and other land uses.
- Strive to reduce the conversion of productive farmland to non-agricultural development.
- Encourage towns to recognize their responsibility in ensuring the future viability of agriculture in their town, such as the identification of agriculture clusters and farmland preservation programs.
- Preserve natural resources, including productive farmland, woodlands, open water, wetlands, and other features in their natural condition, consistent with town plans.
- Promote the preservation of prime agricultural land and maintenance of the health and productivity of agricultural soils.

### AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES POLICIES:

- Encourage greater use of density transfer mechanism.
- Discourage residential subdivision development on agricultural land.
- Encourage uses such as agri-business/agri-tourism which retain the agricultural productivity and viability of the land while allowing for nontraditional uses.
- Encourage landowners to adopt crop production methods that promote soil conservation and to utilize Best Management Practices that preserve agricultural soils.

### NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS:

- Use the county's land resources in a manner sensitive to environmental limitations.
- Promote stewardship of the county's land and water resources.

### NATURAL RESOURCES OBJECTIVES:

- Protect natural drainage areas, flood plains, and wetlands to avoid costly storm water projects.
- Prevent the disruption of the natural environment by ensuring that land developments and other activities are sensitive to the character and limitations of the natural environment.
- Encourage the preservation of areas of significant forested lands, wetlands, wildlife habitat corridors and areas, bluffs, springs, groundwater recharge areas, and other lands of geological or physical significance for use and enjoyment by wildlife and humans, and for the balance they



contribute to the Pierce County ecology.

- Encourage land use practices that minimize environmental pollution.
- Discourage land use practices that spread invasive plant species.

NATURAL RESOURCES POLICIES:

- Encourage the preservation of open space and protection of natural resources before, during, and after development of land uses.
- Encourage preservation of woodlands, conservation areas, and open spaces close to developed areas to protect the natural environment so that the effects of urbanization and the loss of the character of the area can be minimized.
- Encourage the linking of open spaces and natural resource areas of significance to increase the usefulness and accessibility of individual open spaces, (i.e. discourage fragmentation).
- Plan for the reclamation of mining areas.

CULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL:

- Maintain, preserve, and enhance the cultural, historical and archeological resources of Pierce County.

CULTURAL RESOURCES OBJECTIVES:

- Increase awareness of the culture, history and archeology upon which Pierce County is built.
- Foster tourism that promotes the natural resource base and the unique cultural, historical and archeological heritage of the county.

CULTURAL RESOURCES POLICIES:

- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of cultural, historical and archeological sites and structures within urbanized communities and utilize cultural, historical and archeological resources in the revitalization of the communities.
- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of places of cultural, historical and archeological significance in historic or cultural preservation sites, consistent with town plans.
- Encourage the development of cultural, historical and archeological sites for passive recreation, education, and tourism.



## Economic Development

### Introduction

The primary purpose of economic development element is to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of the economic base and to provide quality employment opportunities in the county and region. There is an important distinction to be made between economic growth and economic development. Economic growth is concerned solely with job creation, tax base growth, and product output growth. True economic development, the aim of this element of the comprehensive plan, creates quality communities and work environments, increases business competitiveness, and allows for entrepreneurial spirit and innovation.

Economic development is about working together to maintain a strong economy by creating and retaining desirable jobs, which provide a good standard of living for individuals. This includes assisting existing businesses, encouraging business expansion, recruiting new businesses, building a culture of trust and entrepreneurship, and strategically planning important capital improvements and related infrastructure expenditures.

Economic development efforts to create jobs are important beyond generating additional income for the county residents. These efforts can help generate additional tax base for the provision of local services and may assist in establishing an environment for long-term economic vitality. Communities have also come to realize that it is equally important to retain and attract smart, talented, entrepreneurial people who can create these employment opportunities.

The Comprehensive Planning Law states the purpose of the Economic Development Element is to promote the stabilization, retention, and expansion of the economic base, and quality employment opportunities. With respect to the 14 state comprehensive planning goals, the following relate specifically to the county's goals, objectives, and policies for economic development.

- Promoting the redevelopment of lands within existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
- Encouraging land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, county, and state government utility costs.
- Encouraging coordination and cooperation among units of government.
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
- Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.



**Economic Development Vision**

*IN THE YEAR 2035*, Pierce County offers a variety of shopping, restaurant, and entertainment choices for its residents.

In addition to a variety of commercial uses and residential development, industrial businesses have established near high access corridors. These businesses offer quality employment opportunities and are an important asset to the county's tax base. Many residents continue to also find a great variety of employment opportunities in nearby communities that are easily accessible via regional highway corridors.

Overall, economic development in Pierce County is in harmony with the county's natural environment.

## *Goals, Objectives, and Policies*

**GOAL:**

- Develop a strong, diversified, base of industry, commerce, agriculture, and education that provides a broad range of job opportunities, a healthy tax base, and improved quality of services to county residents.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Encourage and increase opportunities for Pierce County residents to work within Pierce County.
- Encourage the preservation and function of existing business districts.
- Encourage the attraction, retention, and expansion of industries and businesses to provide a healthy tax and employment base.
- Encourage the development of more diversity in employment opportunities in proximity to the existing work force.
- Encourage the location of commercial and industrial development in accordance with sound land use principles (i.e, transportation, utility infrastructure).
- Encourage the development of regional aviation facilities that contribute to the economic viability of employment areas.
- Maintain and support agriculture as a strong component of the county's economy.
- Promote ongoing dialogue between county planning entities and economic development groups to ensure economic development projects are consistent with plan goals and objectives.
- Promote development of tourism/agri-tourism and recreation throughout the county.



- Encourage the creation of new ventures.
- Encourage competition, and further the development of communication and information technology infrastructure.

POLICIES:

- Encourage the development of employment concentrations in areas capable of being served by adequate infrastructure.
- Encourage the development of multi-use trail systems that link major residential areas to employment centers, public facilities, and recreation areas.
- Encourage the use of land that adjoins or is in proximity to significant transportation facilities to associate with and benefit from these facilities. In this way, airport facilities, railroad corridors, highways, and river shipping will lend the greatest leverage toward economic development.
- Encourage entrepreneurship (e.g. home occupations, home business, farm and home business).
- Encourage the promotion of appropriate recreational opportunities while maintaining the rural character of the area.
- Pursue establishment of conditional use permitting procedures that allow for site specific, multifaceted, entrepreneurial activities and allow for limited lodging and accommodations (e.g. vineyard with retail component and lodging/conference facilities).



## Land Use

### Introduction

Land Use is among the most important planning considerations. Moreover, it is often one of the more controversial elements in a comprehensive plan. The Land Use element is really a compilation of all the elements of this plan. Designating land uses and promulgating standards for development requires the consideration of Pierce County's utilities, roads, and other support services as well as implications for housing, economics, agriculture, and natural resources. Therefore, the goals, objectives, and policies of the land use element should be supported by, and complimentary to, all other elements of the plan.

Land Use in Pierce County is regulated by several ordinances, including the county's zoning ordinance. The county's ordinances are the primary mechanism through which the Land Management Department seeks to attain the goals and visions set forth by the Comprehensive Plan. The plan offers guidance regarding changes to zoning and other regulating ordinances and provides context to consider local growth decisions in conjunction with neighboring communities.

The wide range of land uses in Pierce County is a reflection of the demographic, geographic, and community diversity within the county. Sometimes, as a result of these contrasts, conflicts regarding the use of land may emerge. This is particularly the case as increasing numbers of people call Pierce County home and local communities experience a sometime not-so-gradual shift from primarily rural communities to more suburban or urban communities.

While this chapter will not eliminate conflicts resulting from change, it will identify specific goals, policies, or "tools" that local communities can utilize to alleviate or avoid potential conflicts resulting from change. Which Pierce County Comprehensive Plan tools each community chooses to utilize in implementing their local comprehensive plans is up to them, but it is essential a consistent and coordinated vision for the future of Pierce County is shared by all.

Of the 14 local planning goals provided in the Comprehensive Planning Law, Pierce County believes that the goals listed below specifically relate to planning for land use:

- Promoting the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
- Encouraging designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- Protecting natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, opens space, and ground water resources.



- Encouraging land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, county, state governmental, and utility costs.
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
- Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve unique rural communities.

#### Land Use Vision

*IN THE YEAR 2035*, Pierce County has successfully maintained its land base and continues to offer rural residential living options in relative close proximity to the Twin Cities. The natural beauty of the area has been maintained through the protection of environmentally sensitive corridors, parks, agricultural lands, and preserved open spaces throughout the county.



### *Pierce County Land Use Classifications*

**Agriculture** – Agricultural land includes land that produces a crop (including Christmas trees or ginseng), agricultural forest (forest lands contiguous with agricultural land), supports livestock, or is eligible for enrollment in specific federal agricultural programs.

**Residential** – Residential land includes any land with a residential home that does not fall into the agricultural land classification.

**Commercial** – Commercial land refers to any parcel that has a business on it, but does not include industrial properties. This may be a convenience store, car wash, bank, grocery store, tavern, etc., referring to any type of retail or business establishment.

**Manufacturing (also known as Industrial)** – Manufacturing land refers to business and industry that is engaged in processing, manufacturing, packaging treatment, or fabrication of materials and products.

**Forested** – Forested lands includes production forests and DNR-MFL.

**Ag-Forest** – Land that is producing or capable of producing commercial forest products if the land satisfies any of the following conditions:

- It is contiguous to a parcel that has been classified in whole as agricultural land, if the contiguous parcel is owned by the same person that owns the land that is producing or capable of producing commercial forest products. In the subdivision, “contiguous” includes separated only by a road.
- It is located on a parcel that contains land that is classified as agricultural land in the property tax assessment on January 1, 2004, and on January 1 of the year of assessment.
- It is located on a parcel at least 50% of which, by acreage, was converted to land that is classified as agricultural land in the property tax assessment on January 1, 2005, or thereafter.

**Undeveloped** – This land classification refers to areas that were formerly classified as swamp/waste. It includes bogs, marshes, lowlands, brush land, and uncultivated land zoned as shore land and shown to be wetland.

**Other** – Remaining land types that do not fall into the above categories, including federal, state, and county lands, school property, and cemeteries.



## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

### GOAL:

- Provide for a well-balanced mix of land uses within the county to take into consideration the other goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage land use patterns in conjunction with transportation options that reduce single occupant auto dependency.
- Encourage the protection of prime industrial and mineral extraction areas from encroachment by incompatible uses.
- Encourage the protection of other land uses from negative impacts of mineral extraction and heavy industry through appropriate siting and adequate screening and buffering.
- Preserve the county's natural, cultural, historic, and rural areas, including productive agricultural lands, by encouraging new residential growth to locate close or adjacent to existing areas of development.
- Encourage development that promotes open space through site design, has minimal impact on the environment, and fits within the character of the county as well as the specific location in which the development is proposed.
- Ensure all landowners have an equal opportunity for proposing land use change.
- Discourage the establishment of land uses that are incompatible with existing land uses.

### POLICIES:

- Encourage the planned growth of urban communities, including the expansion of municipal boundaries through annexation of lands only as shown on adopted municipal plans and in cooperation with Town comprehensive plans.
- Encourage the use of non-automotive modes of transportation.
- Encourage commercial development within existing municipalities. Major commercial activity will be discouraged outside existing municipalities and unincorporated areas unless approved by the affected municipalities and/or Towns, and included within their adopted plans.
- Encourage the preservation of open space and protection of natural resources before, during, and after development of land uses.
- Encourage preservation of woodlands, conservation areas, and open spaces close to developed areas to protect the natural environment and so that the effects of urbanization and the loss of the character of the area can be minimized.
- Encourage the location of public schools, parks, and libraries in locations that are central to



existing, recently developed, and planned areas so that automobile driving and the need for school bus facilities can be minimized.

- Encourage the concentration of non-agricultural employment, including the commercial and light industrial uses, within high accessibility corridors, at or near intersections of County and State Highways, and within close proximity to necessary support services.
- Land adjoining waterways actively used for transportation that is within high access corridors may be developed for industrial uses.
- Encourage industrial development in appropriate location within Heavy Transportation Corridors (e.g. railways, waterways, highways).
- Encourage the establishment or expansion of residential districts in close proximity to or adjacent to existing areas of residential development.

### **LAND USE – URBAN AREAS**

#### **GOAL:**

- Create a pattern of compact, contiguous urban development that enhances the quality of personal and community life.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Establish a pattern of development that supports the sense of community.
- Promote a vital central business district as the central focus of each community.
- Coordinate land use type and density with the level of accessibility provided by the supporting transportation and infrastructure systems.
- Encourage development consistent with good design principles in the process of development.

#### **POLICIES:**

- Encourage a compact development pattern that clusters neighborhoods, rather than a pattern that sprawls subdivisions.
- Build on the patterns of established urban communities, rather than creating new urbanized places isolated from existing development.
- Encourage the use of non-automotive modes of transportation.
- Encourage commercial development within existing municipalities. Major commercial activity will be discouraged outside existing municipalities and unincorporated areas unless approved by the affected municipalities and/or towns, and included within their adopted plans.
- Encourage the preservation of open space and protection of natural resources before, during, and after development of land uses within the contiguous growth area.
- Encourage preservation of woodlands, conservation areas, and open spaces close to developed areas to protect the natural environment and so that the effects of urbanization can be minimized.
- Encourage the establishment of growth areas served by central utility systems, with varying



suburban, countryside, and urban densities.

- Encourage the development of housing surrounding existing municipalities at suburban or countryside densities in a sequence that follows an orderly pattern of annexation, zoning, subdivision, and the extension of public facilities. In cases where properties are contiguous to existing urban densities, similar urban densities may be extend into the contiguous growth areas.

### **LAND USE – RURAL AREAS**

#### **GOAL:**

- Maintain a rural environment that provides for continuation and evolution of agricultural activities and a rural character and lifestyle.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Encourage the preservation of cultural, social, economic, environmental, and aesthetic amenities provided by agricultural land use for the benefit of Pierce County.
- Encourage the maintenance of the most productive agricultural lands for agricultural purposes.
- Discourage urbanization from penetrating prematurely into productive zones of agriculture and support services.
- Encourage the use of agriculture techniques that produce long-term advances in agriculture production and soil and water conservation.
- Encourage development within established areas that can provide the infrastructure required by such development.
- Encourage the establishment of a pattern of rural land use that is sensitive to the natural environmental context and that encourages compatibility between land uses.
- Support land use practices that reduce potential conflicts between agriculture and other land uses.

#### **POLICIES:**

- Incorporate land uses as shown in plans adopted by municipalities or towns.
- Encourage towns to define the physical and practical limit of rural settlements based on the capacity of facilities and the historic function of the community.



## Housing

### Introduction

Being the primary developed land use in Pierce County, housing directly affects almost all other elements of the comprehensive plan. Providing an adequate supply of safe, accessible, affordable, and well-designed housing for the people of Pierce County is paramount to achieving the vision of an exceptional quality of life for residents. Given the susceptibility of housing to changes in demographics, economy, and market pressures it can be one of the more challenging elements to impact through county comprehensive planning.

Providing a wide range of housing choices is necessary for each community to maintain a stable housing stock that supports the population base. Therefore, it is necessary for each community to provide as wide a selection of housing options as their utilities and other services can support. Housing options may include single-family residences, town homes, duplexes, apartments, and senior housing.

A supply of quality, diverse housing options promotes healthy communities and enhances the character of the area. It also establishes a connection between resident and their communities. Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law includes 14 goals for local comprehensive plans. Pierce County believes that the goals listed below from the Comprehensive Planning Law specifically relate to planning for local housing:

- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demands for residential uses.
- Encouraging communities to incorporate a variety of housing types.
- Promoting the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services.
- Encouraging the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential dwellings.
- Providing and adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of various income levels.
- Providing local housing choices for all stages of life.

### Housing Vision

*IN THE YEAR 2035*, Pierce County offers a variety of housing types to meet the lifestyle, demographic and economic needs and desires of its residents. Housing developments are designed in harmony with local farms and natural green spaces. Alternative housing choices (such as condominiums, apartments, townhouses, and so on) buffer nearby single family residential neighborhoods from business areas and offer a housing choice for residents who want to live in a development close enough to walk to stores, restaurants, services, and local employers. Additional senior housing development has also been established in Pierce County. County codes and ordinances promote attractive housing with abundant green spaces and trail access in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan.



## *Goals, Objectives, and Policies*

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### GOAL:

- Manage housing development to insure that a full range of housing opportunities exist for Pierce County residents.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage at appropriate locations an affordable variety of housing types commensurate with demands created by current needs and future growth.
- Encourage the improvement of deteriorating residential areas, and assure safe, healthy, and attractive communities through preventive maintenance and appropriate reinvestment.
- Utilize and/or explore various programs and development concepts that encourage creative methods to preserve county character and natural resources.

### POLICIES:

- Encourage the development of housing surrounding existing municipalities at suburban or countryside densities in a sequence that follows an orderly pattern of annexation, zoning, subdivision, and the extension of public facilities. In cases where properties are contiguous to existing urban densities, similar urban densities may be extended into the contiguous growth areas.
- Encourage towns, villages, and cities to plan for residential subdivision growth through comprehensive planning.
- Direct residential subdivision development to planned growth areas identified in town, city, and village comprehensive plans.



## Transportation

### Introduction

A diversified, well balanced transportation system can have a significant influence on land use, development, and quality of life for county residents. The various modes of transportation in the county include highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking, and water transportation.

Well-maintained and properly planned transportation systems aid in economic development, support a diverse array of land uses, provide links among community facilities, and facilitate the provision of various public and emergency services. The transportation infrastructure of a county must be developed in recognition of the evolving needs of its residents, local businesses, visitors, and through-traffic. Planning for the various modes of transportation is an important aspect of planning for the future of Pierce County.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law includes 14 goals for local comprehensive planning. Pierce County believes that those goals listed below specifically relate to planning for transportation.

- Encouraging designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- Encouraging coordination and cooperation among units of government.
- Providing an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens.

### Transportation Vision

IN THE YEAR 2035, Pierce County has a well-connected multimodal transportation system that provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.





## *Goals, Objectives, and Policies*

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### GOAL:

- Develop and support a safe and well-maintained transportation network which through its location, capacity and design, will effectively serve existing land uses and meet anticipated transportation demand generated by future development.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Coordinate transportation planning with land use development by providing a transportation framework with which the proposed land development patterns can be supported.
- Guide future development to roadways capable of accommodating resulting traffic.
- Encourage the development of opportunities for making walking and bicycling viable, convenient, and safe transportation choices within the county.
- Explore opportunities for multi-use trails/routes.
- Encourage towns to adopt uniform town road standards.
- Encourage the realization of the cost effectiveness of utilizing the existing road network to accommodate most future development.

### POLICIES:

- Encourage the use of non-automotive modes of transportation.
- Encourage the development of employment concentrations to areas that will support transit options.
- Encourage the development of multi-use trail system that links major residential areas to employment centers, public facilities, and recreation areas.
- When appropriate, encourage the use of utility rights-of-way and any abandoned railroad corridors as part of an open space trail system.
- Encourage the development of corridors, including those along high-capacity roadways, railroads, and rivers, for uses that benefit by those transportation resources.
- Encourage the concentration of non-agricultural employment within the high accessibility corridors and within close proximity to support services.



## Utilities & Community Facilities

### Introduction

Often referred to as “public works,” utilities and community facilities consist of the physical infrastructure that allows a community to function and grow. Utilities include sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water systems, and electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, and solid waste disposal systems. Community facilities include municipal offices, parks, schools, police stations, fire stations, and libraries, among other things.

The type and quality of service that a county provides are two of the most important characteristics that motivate people and businesses to choose one area over another. Healthcare, childcare, and schools are examples of services that are often important to the resident of a community. Utilities, power supply, and power transmission capabilities are examples of services that are often most important to businesses and industries. When desirable services are provided in a quality and cost-effective manner, the area's long-term prosperity is fostered.

As communities grow and mature, so does their need for services. Some basic services, such as law enforcement, municipal justice, public health and safety, education, roads, and public improvements are provided in all communities to one extent or another regardless of the size or nature of the community. But, over time, as an area grows and changes, so do the services it provides. Existing services often become more comprehensive, complex, and expensive as new services are added (e.g. public sewage treatment, solid waste disposal, recycling, public drinking water, and public recreation).

Regular maintenance, updates and evaluation plays is essential for Pierce County to maintain a high level of quality services and facilities for residents. Continuous evaluation of existing facilities to review their cost effectiveness with their potential benefits, as well as periodically considering the elimination of unnecessary services or the provision of new services will ensure the county stays consistent with the long-term goals, objectives, and policies identified throughout this element.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law includes 14 goals for local comprehensive planning. The following goals specifically relate to planning for utilities and community facilities in the county's Comprehensive Plan.

- Promoting the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
- Providing infrastructure and public service and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

### Utilities & Community Facilities Vision

IN THE YEAR 2035, Pierce County coordinates with municipalities and towns to ensure that residents have convenient access to quality services and facilities.



## *Goals, Objectives, and Policies*

### GOAL:

- Provide public facilities and services in a healthful, economical manner.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Maintain a level of public utilities and facilities that ensures not only the health, safety, and welfare of the county's population, but also maintains the highest community standards obtainable within adopted budget constraints.
- Target the provision of public facilities as a prerequisite to urban development.
- Provide an equitable level of community and human services throughout the county.
- Ensure an appropriate amount and distribution of land for parks and open space throughout the county, placing special emphasis on preserving and enhancing the natural and scenic environment.
- Encourage the adequate provision of community facilities, which add to the attractiveness of the county to employers and employees.
- Continually recognize, identify, and when appropriate, provide for the recreational needs and priorities of residents of the county.
- Promote quality schools and access to educational opportunities for everyone.

### POLICIES:

- Encourage the establishment of growth areas served by central utility systems, with varying suburban, countryside, and urban densities.
- Encourage the location of public schools, parks, and libraries in locations that are central to existing and planned developed areas so that automobile driving and the need for schools bus facilities can be minimized.
- Encourage the development of multi-use trail systems that links major residential areas to employment centers, public facilities, and recreation areas.
- Coordinate planning efforts with the incorporated municipalities and towns in the provision of facilities and utilities so as to reduce undesirable environmental and fiscal impacts.
- Continually evaluate opportunities to increase coordination and effectiveness between law enforcement officials, local fire departments and emergency service providers, towns, and local departments on meeting the needs of county residents.
- Promote effective solid waste disposal and recycling service that protect the public health, natural environment, and general appearance of land use within the county.



## Intergovernmental Cooperation

### Introduction

26 local governments operate within Pierce County's borders, including 17 towns, 6 villages, 2 cities and the county itself. Pierce County also shares borders with 6 other counties (3 MN, 3 WI) and the numerous towns of those bordering counties. As the principal governmental entity, Pierce County plays a critical role in helping to foster cooperation among local governments as well as assisting in resolving conflicts that may arise.

Planning issues such as housing, natural resource protection, economic development, and land use rarely confine themselves to arbitrary jurisdictional boundaries; therefore, the decisions, plans, and policies of one community can impact neighboring jurisdictions. The most successful and cost effective governmental bodies work cooperatively with other units of government and the private sector in order to efficiently meet the needs and demands of the citizens they serve.

Intergovernmental cooperation can be as simple as sharing ideas, expertise, and information, or involve more complex formal agreements and sharing of resources such as equipment, buildings, staff, and funding. Benefits of these cooperative ventures include reduction of costs, expanded services, more efficient government, and reduced conflicts among government entities. The challenges inhibiting intergovernmental cooperation include reaching and maintaining agreements, balancing power, and addressing local self-preservation and control concerns.

To accomplish its comprehensive planning goals, Pierce County will need to cooperate and coordinate effectively with its neighbors, counterparts and partners. Continuous consideration of opportunities to support existing relationships, and identify potential new avenues to enhance intergovernmental cooperation amongst Pierce County's partners is essential to achieving the highest level of governmental quality and efficiency for the benefit of county residents.

#### Intergovernmental Cooperation Vision

*BY THE YEAR 2035*, intergovernmental cooperation efforts have enabled Pierce County to establish partnerships with municipalities, towns, state agencies, and school districts to provide coordinated cost-effective services. Through cooperation with municipalities and towns, the county has preserved its rural lifestyle while providing a unique blend of industrial, commercial, and residential development.



## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

### GOALS:

- Encourage a team approach to comprehensive planning involving state, regional, and county agencies, and municipalities, and towns for the most effective, representative decision-making process.
- Work with other units of government to seek efficiencies and economies of scale in providing services, while recognizing the autonomy of each.

### OBJECTIVES:

- The county should encourage land-use, boundary, and administrative agreements between municipalities and between the county, towns, and municipalities, in an effort to eliminate defensive municipal annexation or private developers taking advantage of municipal or county approval processes.
- County agencies, and town and municipal authorities should open direct channels of communication that promote the two-way exchange of ideas and meaningful dialogue on issues of importance to either the county or the towns and municipalities.
- The county should encourage a variety of approaches to coordinate local planning and development practices and to help resolve conflicts between communities, including encouraging the use of intergovernmental agreements, improved notification procedures, and cross-adoption or acceptance of plans and by sponsoring intergovernmental task forces on specific planning and land use issues.
- Encourage each agency within the county that reviews or approves development proposals to strengthen the public hearing process by requiring, prior to the decision-making process, conspicuous notices that provide the relevant information, such as maps about proposed developments, potential impacts, and the ability to participate to residents and surrounding government agencies.
- The county should play a prominent role in managing the land-uses around airports, including the investigation of an Airport Zone.
- The county should support the efforts of the Pierce County EDC in working with local municipalities, chambers of commerce, regional industrial associations, and state agencies to encourage the retention and expansion of existing businesses and industries in Pierce County.

### POLICIES:

- The County acknowledges that the primary responsibility for achieving plan objectives within urbanized communities remains with the municipalities. The county further acknowledges that it shares responsibility with the municipalities for achieving the plan objectives within the one and one-half to three mile area of shared jurisdiction.



- The county will, when appropriate, act to assist in municipal planning and development practices and assist in resolving conflicts between communities toward the benefit of the county as a whole and toward its adopted planning and management goals and objectives.
- The county will encourage the development, revitalization, and redevelopment of urbanized communities.
- The county will encourage municipalities and towns to adopt land use regulations that allow for the widest possible mixture of housing types, with particular attention paid to providing housing opportunities that meet the needs of the elderly, the low and moderate income households, and the physically challenged.
- The county will encourage each municipality to adopt land use controls that support the central business district of each community, if present.
- The county acknowledges that the responsibility for accomplishing planning objectives set forth in plans developed by towns subject to county zoning lies jointly with the Town and Pierce County. The county further acknowledges that it will seek to further each Town's planning goals and objectives when considering the establishment of conditionally permitted uses. In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, the county will continue to solicit a town recommendation regarding the proposed use.
- The county will approve re-zonings or map amendments only when the proposed change is consistent with an adopted or amended town comprehensive plan. In cases where a town has not completed a comprehensive plan, rezoning will be approved only when consistent with the Pierce County Plan. In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, the county will solicit a town recommendation regarding the proposed rezone.
- The county will encourage consistent procedures for municipal management of growth and change.
- The county will encourage municipalities to adopt land use regulations that include standards for landscaping, impervious surface areas, and maximum lot coverage with the intent of protecting wildlife habitat from detrimental effects of development.
- The county will work with municipalities and towns, when appropriate, to establish boundary agreements and other mutual planning actions that discourage the premature or inappropriate annexation of lands.
- The county will discourage the annexation of land not governed by adopted municipal comprehensive plans.
- The county will work with municipalities and towns to prepare and adopt specific area plans and land use controls for the high-accessibility corridor areas that enhance the opportunity for economic development.
- Ensure that towns subject to county zoning understand the role of town plans and ordinances in county land use processes, including implications of statutory authority and land use case law (e.g. responsibility for decisions regarding conditional use permits, lack of town plan authority over permitted uses, etc.)



## Management Goals, Objectives, & Policies

### Introduction

The Wisconsin state statutes mandating county comprehensive plans place a significant degree of emphasis on implementation. For a comprehensive plan to be successful and the community's vision of the future to come to fruition, action needs to be taken towards implementing the policies set forth in the various elements of the plan. Recognizing the significant impact the implementation element has on the successful execution of a comprehensive plan, Pierce County developed a series of "management" goals, objectives, and policies that serve to support and guide the implementation strategies developed by the plan.

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

Growth can be characterized as the fluctuating "dimensional" aspects of a community such as population, economic productivity, and development. Alternatively, change relates more to the intangible attributes of a community, often described as its "character." Growth can influence change, and change can occur whether growth is absent, positive, or negative. Implementing a plan almost always requires that a proactive position be taken on the management of "growth" and "change." Implementation strategies have to be adaptable to future growth and change the county may experience over the duration of the plan.

Whereas the forthcoming "Implementation" element of the comprehensive plan consists of the specific "line-item" implementation goals, the purpose of this element is to develop management provisions that guide and support implementation of the plan and position the county to proactively manage future growth and change.



## Planning

### GOAL:

- Establish comprehensive, county-wide policy planning that supports municipal, town, and other agency planning efforts, and supports effective decision-making.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage local municipalities and towns to adopt comprehensive plans and development policies that reflect local characteristics and standards, and mesh with the adopted county comprehensive plan.
- County planning should anticipate change and provide decision-makers with insight into alternatives and consequences.
- The county should make its comprehensive plan well known, up-to-date, and useful so it becomes part of the fabric of decision-making.
- Consistency with the county comprehensive plan should be made a prerequisite of development within the county's jurisdiction.
- Encourage energy efficiency in site planning and building design.

### POLICIES:

- The county acknowledges that the responsibility for accomplishing planning goals and objectives set forth in plans developed by towns subject to county zoning lies jointly with the Town and Pierce County. The county further acknowledges that it will seek to further each Town's planning goals and objectives when considering the establishment of conditionally permitted uses. In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, the county will continue to solicit a non-binding town recommendation regarding the proposed use.
- The county will approve re-zonings or map amendments only when the proposed change is consistent with an adopted or amended town comprehensive plan. In cases where a town has not completed a comprehensive plan, rezoning will be approved only when consistent with the Pierce County Plan. In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, the county will solicit a non-binding town recommendation regarding the proposed rezone.
- The county will consider goal, objective, and policy statements that "discourage" a given condition or use – as not prohibiting the specific action – but as a statement that the condition or use is not the preferred outcome, except when relating to rezones (map amendments). In cases of rezones, language discouraging the establishment of a use (or type of use) at a given location shall be interpreted as not supporting the establishment of that district at that location – if the town in which the rezone is proposed does not have a comprehensive plan. In cases where a town does have a comprehensive plan, the appropriateness of a proposed rezone shall be determined based on its consistency with that town's plan.



- The county acknowledges that the primary responsibility for achieving plan objectives within urbanized communities remains with the municipalities. The county further acknowledges that it shares responsibility with the municipalities for achieving the plan objectives within the one and one-half to three mile area of shared jurisdiction.
- The county will encourage municipalities to adopt land use regulations that allow for the widest possible mixture of housing types, with particular attention paid to providing housing opportunities that meet the needs of the elderly, the low and moderate income households, and the handicapped.
- The county will encourage each municipality to adopt land use controls that support the central business district of each community, if present.
- The county will encourage municipalities to consider land use regulations that include standards for landscaping, impervious surface areas, and maximum lot coverage with the intent of protecting human and wildlife habitat from any detrimental effects of development.
- The county will encourage the use of clustered development of dwellings in an arrangement that encourages the permanent protection of open space and/or agricultural lands.
- The county will work with towns and property owners to establish, when appropriate, land use controls that preserve and enhance the agricultural industry.
- The county will encourage the establishment of town land use regulations and land use transitions designed to reduce potential conflicts arising from the proximity of agriculture to urban areas and other incompatible land uses.
- The county will work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to carefully examine proposals for primary highways and major arterials with respect to the impacts on conversion of agriculture land to non-agriculture use.
- The county will work with municipalities and towns, when appropriate, to prepare and adopt specific area plans and land use controls for the high-accessibility corridor areas that enhance the opportunity for economic development.
- The county will encourage municipalities and towns to prepare and adopt specific area plans and land use controls for sites conducive to economic development located along major water corridors, including the Mississippi River, for the purpose of resolving conflicts between the competitive interests of industrial uses and recreation and historic/cultural uses.
- The county will encourage municipalities and towns to adopt land use controls and promote the development of structured economic development parks that protect employment areas from incompatibility and land use conflicts, both internally to the park and externally to surrounding land uses.
- The county will encourage the Pierce County Economic Development Corporation to focus potential employers to areas in proximity to concentration of population within the county, and within reasonable distance to transportation routes, so that Pierce County resident have the opportunity to minimize long, energy-absorbing commuting.



## *Regulatory Techniques*

### GOAL:

- Encourage the development of regulations and enforcement techniques necessary to protect public health, safety, public and private property, the natural environment, water resources, and the aesthetics and character of the county, through the establishment of regulations such as zoning, subdivision, floodplain, building, and other ordinances or development standards.

### OBJECTIVES:

- The potential for improving Pierce County's living, working, and natural environments should be the standard used to determine the need and effectiveness of regulations.
- All regulations should be consistent with the plan and work to implement county goals and objectives.
- Only those regulations that are enforceable under realistic expectations should be considered.
- Environmental design criteria should be considered in development controls to protect natural, scenic, historic, and environmental areas and minimize adverse impacts.
- All new developments should be encouraged to preserve significant natural features such as vegetation, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, woodlands, and scenic vistas.
- The county will strive to make its land use regulations, development and performance standards, approval process, and expectations regarding plan compliance as clear and streamlined as possible.
- Efforts will be made to attain community goals while respecting private property rights.

### POLICIES:

- The county acknowledges that the responsibility for accomplishing planning goals and objectives set forth in plans developed by towns subject to county zoning lies jointly with the Town and Pierce County. The county further acknowledges that it will seek to further each Town's planning goals and objectives when considering the establishment of conditionally permitted uses. In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, the county will continue to solicit a non-binding town recommendation regarding the proposed use.
- Pierce County will consider adherence to the goals, objectives, and policies of an adopted or amended comprehensive plan to be consistent with the public interest for conditional use permitting decision relating to that governmental unit or municipality.
- The county will approve re-zoning or map amendments only when the proposed change is consistent with an adopted or amended town comprehensive plan. In cases where a town has not completed a comprehensive plan, rezoning will be approved only when consistent with the Pierce County Plan. In cases where a town has not adopted a comprehensive plan, the county will solicit a non-binding town recommendation regarding the proposed rezone.



- The county will consider goal, objective, and policy statements that “discourage” a given condition or use – as not prohibiting the specific action – but as a statement that the condition or use is not the preferred outcome, except when relating to rezones (map amendments). In cases of rezones, language discouraging the establishment of a use (or type of use) at a given location shall be interpreted as not supporting the establishment of that district at that location – if the town in which the rezone is proposed does not have a comprehensive plan. In cases where a town does have a comprehensive plan, the appropriateness of a proposed rezone shall be determined based on its consistency with that town’s plan.
- The county will strive to create processes and a fee structure that provides incentives to produce the activities or outcomes that the county wants to “encourage” and disincentives for activities or outcomes that the county wants to “discourage.”
- The county will continue to utilize land use controls, including site plan review procedures that regulate site development in a way that encourages compatibility between uses and an efficient development process.
- The county will continue to permit the use of density transfers, which allow for the development of dwelling at the same overall gross density, to encourage the retention of the greatest area of open space.
- The county will consider the adoption of transferable development rights (TDR’s) procedures, which allow developers to purchase development rights from willing property owners. The use of TDR’s must be limited only to those developments that implement state public policies. In order to encourage the preservation of the best agricultural lands. TDR’s may limit the transfer of density to only those properties with lower productivity than the sending site.
- The county will encourage town land use regulation and land use transitions designed to reduce potential conflicts arising from the proximity of agriculture to urban areas and other incompatible land uses.
- The county will require adherence to standards that prevent erosion, sedimentation, and adverse visual impact resulting from the modification of shorelines of rivers, lakes, and streams.
- The county will utilize land use regulations such as zoning, subdivision, flood plain, stormwater, and wetland ordinances, to carefully regulate development in all areas, with particular reference to safeguarding environmentally sensitive areas and limiting development in these areas.
- The county will pay particular attention to the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and groundwater resources in its review of development proposals.
- The county will participate in groundwater protection planning efforts of local communities, as appropriate.



## *Finance & Budgeting*

### GOAL:

- Continue financial monitoring, fiscal analysis, revenue projections, and mid-range budgeting to ensure financial health of the county and the equitable distribution of public costs between current and future residents and businesses.

### OBJECTIVES:

- The county should minimize the cost of infrastructure and public facility expansion through integrated planning and capital improvement programming.
- The county should encourage intergovernmental approaches to address the cross-jurisdictional impacts of major new developments.

### POLICY:

- The county will review and adopt only those management activities or programs that are adequately staffed and funded.
- The county will seek to identify and evaluate cross-jurisdictional and multipurpose use opportunities when planning community facility and infrastructure improvement projects.

## *Land Acquisition*

### GOAL:

- Consider prudent acquisition or public control of property needed for rights-of-way, facility sites, parks, and open space.

### OBJECTIVES:

- The county should consider acquiring property, rights-of-way, or easements in advance of identifiable needs in order to reduce costs and reduce the need to exercise eminent domain.
- County acquisition plans should maximize joint development potential (e.g., school/park sites; fire/police/community centers) to accommodate county and regional needs.
- The county or other responsible agencies should consider acquiring environmentally critical lands wherever the natural environment cannot be protected through regulation.

### POLICY:

- Land acquisitions will be made when in the best long-term interest of the county and a specific need is identified.



## Public Works

### GOAL:

- Establish standards in construction, management, and maintenance of public facilities that encourage growth, when and where growth can be supported, in a manner consistent with the plan.

### OBJECTIVES:

- The county should utilize the capital improvement program to coordinate public facilities planning in the land-use development approval process to reduce costs, and ensure timely public facilities, and an equitable distribution of costs among system users.
- The design and construction of county facilities should strive to set a standard of excellence that inspires attractive private development. Wherever possible, facilities should be energy efficient and designed for multiple uses and multiple purposes and avoid over or under capacity by building in increment directly related to demands projected for the planning period.
- The county should endorse and support local facilities' planning boundaries and plans that further the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan.

### POLICIES:

- The county will remain responsible for important county facilities within municipalities, especially county roads.
- The county will maintain compatible county road function and character. Since roads provide additional function other than carrying traffic, roadway design and improvement within and along the rights-of-way will help to establish a well-ordered, attractive character.
- The county will establish right-of-way widths and easements based on projected county roadway needs.
- The county will work with municipalities and towns to maintain a compatible road function and road character within the rural communities. Roadway design and improvement within and along the rights-of-way will help to establish the character indigenous to this area.
- The county will work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and private developers to provide a well-planned circulation system, which minimizes the exposure of residential areas to through traffic.
- The county will, in the event of a catastrophic event, utilize property owned by Pierce County, and if necessary seek approval to utilize property owned by other municipalities to create cemetery space when cemetery space within Pierce County is exhausted and the need for additional burial sites is present.



## *Public/Private Relations*

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### GOAL:

- Encourage a partnership of active, open private-sector participation in public decision-making and public support of private enterprise.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Public notices, official communications, Web sites, and public documents that relate to development review should educate the community regarding rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for involvement within planning and development processes.
- The county and each of the municipal and town authorities should promote public review and discussion throughout the process of the development and implementation of comprehensive planning efforts.
- Development and enforcement of public policies regarding development should be based on community welfare, be well understood by the community, and be equitable and consistent.

### POLICIES:

- The county will encourage each municipality to adopt land use controls that support the central business district of each community, if present.
- The county will, when appropriate, work with municipalities and towns to attract private employers and encourage creation of new and emerging ventures, which will allow the majority of the county's workforce to work within Pierce County.

## *Education*

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### GOAL:

- Encourage the public awareness of and adherence to the principles of good planning, development, and maintenance practices.

### OBJECTIVES:

- County agencies should work together to assess potential threats to environmental conditions within Pierce County, and identify potential impacts.
- The county should seek to educate the public and the development sector regarding the location, importance, and methods of protecting floodplains, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, prime agriculture land, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- The county should seek to educate towns, municipalities, and other county agencies of the



intent and content of the comprehensive plan.

- The county should seek to raise the standard of development by providing information to the public and development sectors about good planning and design standards for subdivision layout, site planning, landscaping energy efficiency, building and sign appearance, highway access, and stormwater management.

POLICIES:

- The county will participate in groundwater protection planning efforts of local communities, when appropriate.
- The county will encourage the Pierce County Economic Development Corporation to make the benefits of economic development incentives available to firms that locate and build in accordance with municipal, town, and county comprehensive plans.
- Encourage greater use of the density transfer mechanism.



## Information

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GOAL:

- Continue to maintain and manage information regarding property conditions and the environment of the county, accessible by county and municipal agencies and the public.

OBJECTIVES:

- The county should maintain up-to-date and easily accessible records of information regarding land-use conditions, environmental conditions, jurisdictional boundaries, public facilities capacity and local and regional land-use plans and ordinances.
- The county should monitor trends that may affect the need for public facilities or services.
- The county should act to coordinate data collection and data sharing among municipalities, towns, and county agencies to provide the most efficient and least expensive source of commonly used data.

POLICY:

- The county will continue to update and implement the Land Records Modernization Plan.



## COUNTYWIDE POLICIES

### Introduction

Some of the policies governing both the planning and management of “growth and change” within the county are not specific to individual management areas listed in the “Management Goals, Objectives, and Policies” element. To refrain from repeating the broad county-wide policies that intersect each subsection of the “Management Goals, Objectives, and Policies,” those overarching policies have been grouped together here.

### *Countywide Planning Policies*

- Encourage that residential development be accommodated within the urbanized communities, contiguous growth areas, rural communities, and high accessibility corridors so that pressures for the conversion of agricultural land to residential uses is limited.
- Support the construction of dwelling units that meet the needs of every economic segment of the market in appropriate locations throughout the county. Especially within urbanized communities and contiguous growth areas of the county by providing for a range of densities and building types.
- Protect flood plains and natural drainage ways from development or development practices that reduce the capacity to store water or increase the potential flooding of other property.
- Support the location of public facilities that maximize the practicality of non-automotive modes of transportation, including walking and the use of bicycles and buses.
- Encourage commercial development within existing central business districts. Discourage unplanned large scale commercial activity outside existing municipalities.
- Encourage the growth of the tourism industry by reinforcing the viability of the county’s historic, open space, and recreation resources.
- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of places of county-wide cultural or historic significance in historic or cultural preservation districts or sites, whether within municipal boundaries or in unincorporated lands.
- Encourage energy efficiency and the use of alternative/renewable energy systems.





## *Countywide Management Policies*

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- The county planning staff will work with municipalities and towns, when appropriate, to adopt joint or compatible comprehensive plans.
- The county will, when appropriate, assist in the mediation of problems and disputes between municipalities and towns regarding boundaries and land use development.
- The county will encourage land use regulations that allow for the widest possible mixture of housing types, with particular attention paid to providing housing opportunities that meet the needs of the elderly, the low and moderate income households, and the handicapped.
- The county will seek to minimize direct residential access to county roads and require the use of shared access where practical.
- The county will direct, and encourage municipalities and towns to also direct, special attention to the siting and development of new uses in proximity to historic or cultural sites, to increase the attractiveness of those areas for recreation and tourism purposes.
- The county will provide, when appropriate, support to municipalities and towns in their application to, or communications with, other agencies or governments when said applications or communications further overall county goals.



## IMPLEMENTATION

### Introduction

The comprehensive plan is the primary instrument the county will utilize to plan for, and guide, the growth and development of Pierce County over the next twenty years. To be effective, this plan should be actively used as a tool to guide decisions concerning the included elements such as land use, planning, management, public health and services, transportation, housing, and economic development.

The plan has been prepared to present a vision for the county in terms of population growth, land development, and infrastructure development. This vision simply identifies an intention – a statement of what the county would like to achieve. However, this statement says very little about how it can be achieved. This element is intended to provide a link between the vision, goals, objectives, policies, and reality through the various proposed implementation actions that can be used to translate the plan into action.

Having the appropriate tools to implement the action steps in this comprehensive plan is critical. There are several regulatory tools and administrative mechanisms/techniques that can be utilized to implement the policies. This chapter summarizes many of the action steps the county could take to implement the policies. This chapter also identifies actions that can be cooperatively taken by the county and individual communities, and by the communities themselves, to implement the policies in the county comprehensive plan.

It has been said that a plan is only as good as its implementation. Ultimately, in the case of Pierce County, local governmental bodies (elected and appointed) will make decisions that determine whether or not the plan can be realized. All of this affects how the plan relates to the future development of Pierce County. Over the twenty-year life of the plan, hundreds of decisions will be made that will impact its success. Therefore, it is important that each of these decision-making bodies understand the basic tenets of the plan and make decisions and recommendations with it in mind.

### Plan Adoption

The first official action toward plan implementation is the adoption of the plan document as the general statement of public policy on land development within the county. Upon recommendation of adoption by the Pierce County Land Management Committee, the County Board must adopt the plan by ordinance. This action formalizes the plan document as the current basic frame of reference for general development patterns. The plan, thereby, becomes a tool for communicating the county's policies and for coordinating various individual decisions into a consistent set of actions to harmoniously shape the area's growth in the desired manner.



## Amendments

The comprehensive plan is considered to be a flexible guide to decision making rather than an inflexible blueprint for development. Decisions regarding the location of different land uses are based on prevailing knowledge of the characteristics and expressed priorities of Pierce County leaders and its residents, as well as anticipated growth and development patterns. As this knowledge or comprehension of these and other factors expands and makes existing proposals undesirable, the plan may require amendments.

Amendments should be made only after a realistic evaluation of existing conditions and the potential impact of such a change is made. Amendments should not be made merely to accommodate the daily pressures of development and/or government. It is important to recognize that planning is a process that should occur on a continuing basis if the county is to take advantage of new opportunities as conditions change.

An effective planning program should be continually reviewed and updated to reflect the processes of actual development and the changing attitudes and priorities of the County's residents and landowners. Resource information should be gathered and studied to determine trends and reevaluate projections, forecasts, and the plan. In five years (ten years at a maximum), the comprehensive plan should be again reviewed to make any necessary policy and recommendation changes in relation to the direction and character of community development at that time.

## 2016-2035 IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

What Action To Be Taken	Who Takes Action	When Action Completed
<b>Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources</b>		
Work with towns on Comp Plans to ensure that towns recognize their role in ensuring continuance of ag, and protection of cultural and natural resources.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Support the establishment of Agricultural Enterprise Areas within the County.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Consider impacts to known cultural resources when reviewing development plans and/or permits.	Land Management Staff	On-going
<b>Economic Development</b>		
Monitor adopted mechanisms for permitting entrepreneurial activities that are site dependent to ensure desired flexibility.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Encourage placement of business/utility infrastructure (i.e., information technology).	Land Management Staff/Elected Officials	On-going



Assist in the identification of state, federal, and non-profit resources that could be used to help recruit and support new and existing tourism and other business ventures, as appropriate.	Land Management Staff/PCDC /Tourism Groups	On-going
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**Land Use**

Work with towns under county zoning on comp plans to ensure that they understand how their comp plans will give direction to land use decision in their town.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Review non-structural lot uses/standards.	Land Management Staff	2020
Evaluate County zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure they support the goals, objectives, and policies outlined in the County Comprehensive Plan, and remain compliant with state statutes.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Identify and pursue strategies to implement goals, objectives, and policies identified in the Comp Plan.	Land Management Staff/Committee	On-going

**Housing**

Seek to educate towns and municipalities about density and siting tools.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Facilitate relationships between Towns and the private sector when appropriate and requested.	Land Management Staff	On-going

**Transportation**

Educate and encourage developers of residential and commercial projects to recognize the need for, and advantages of, a multi-modal trail system.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Pursue the establishment of multi-modal trails in conjunction with County highway projects	Land Management Staff	On-going
Continue to support federal, state, and regional transportation agencies to maintain a safe and efficient countywide roadway system.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Work with towns and the DOT to ensure safe and efficient truck routes during CUP's as appropriate.	Land Management Staff	On-going

**Community Facilities**

Participate in the Development of County owned recreation/park property consistent with Park Property Plan and Outdoor Recreation Plan as appropriate.	Land Management Staff/Committee, Parks Staff/Committee	On-going
Seek to leverage existing Park Development Fund and identify potential new revenue streams.	Land Management Staff	On-going

**Planning**

Review codes and policies to ensure they reflect the adopted comprehensive plan.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Review/amend Pierce County Comprehensive Plan as appropriate.	Land Management Staff	2021



**Regulatory Techniques**

Evaluate existing regulatory procedures to improve effectiveness and efficiency.	Land Management Staff	On-going
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**Finance and Budgeting**

Investigate the potential for interdepartmental efficiencies to reduce overall costs.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Evaluate land management fee schedule to ensure adequate recapture of costs of providing services.	Land Management Staff	2017-2018

**Intergovernmental Relations**

Investigate the potential for intergovernmental efficiencies to reduce overall costs to County, Towns, and municipalities.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Assist efforts by towns in the update of their comprehensive plans when appropriate and requested.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Continue to explore opportunities to enhance awareness and understanding of Pierce County planning & zoning department policies and procedures.	Land Management Staff	On-going

**Public/Private**

Enhance function of County web site to increase transparency and access and ensure consistency with the LRM fund.	Land Management Staff	On-going
Make Towns aware of potential for County web hosting.	Land Management Staff	On-going

**Information**

Maintain/update electronic information databases for County, WDOT, Municipal, and Town Plans, Etc.	Land Management Staff	On-going
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## APPENDICES

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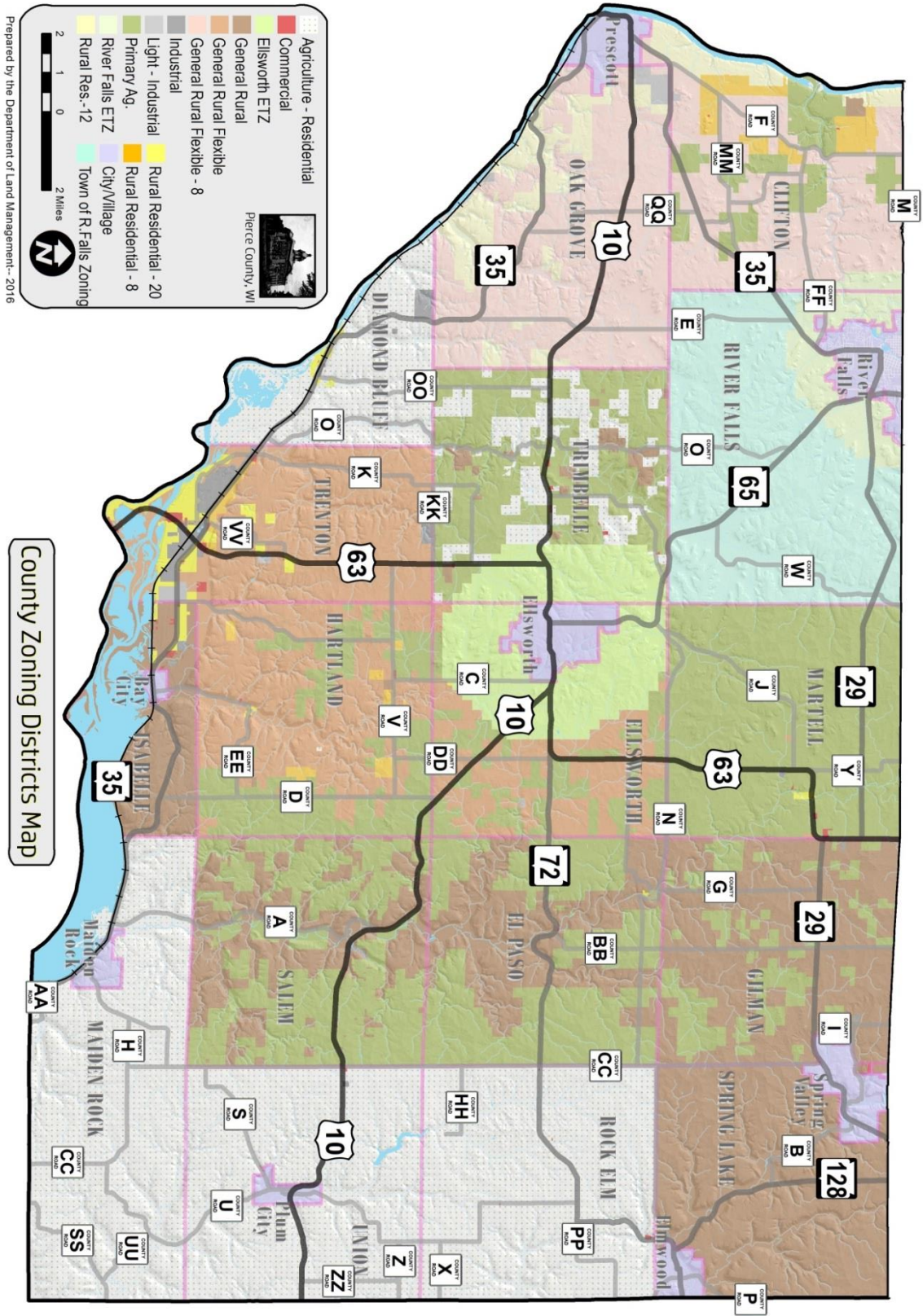
- i. **Maps**
- ii. **Pierce County Public Participation Plan**
- iii. **Updated Trends/Survey Data**
- iv. **Resolution**
- v. **Adopting Ordinance**



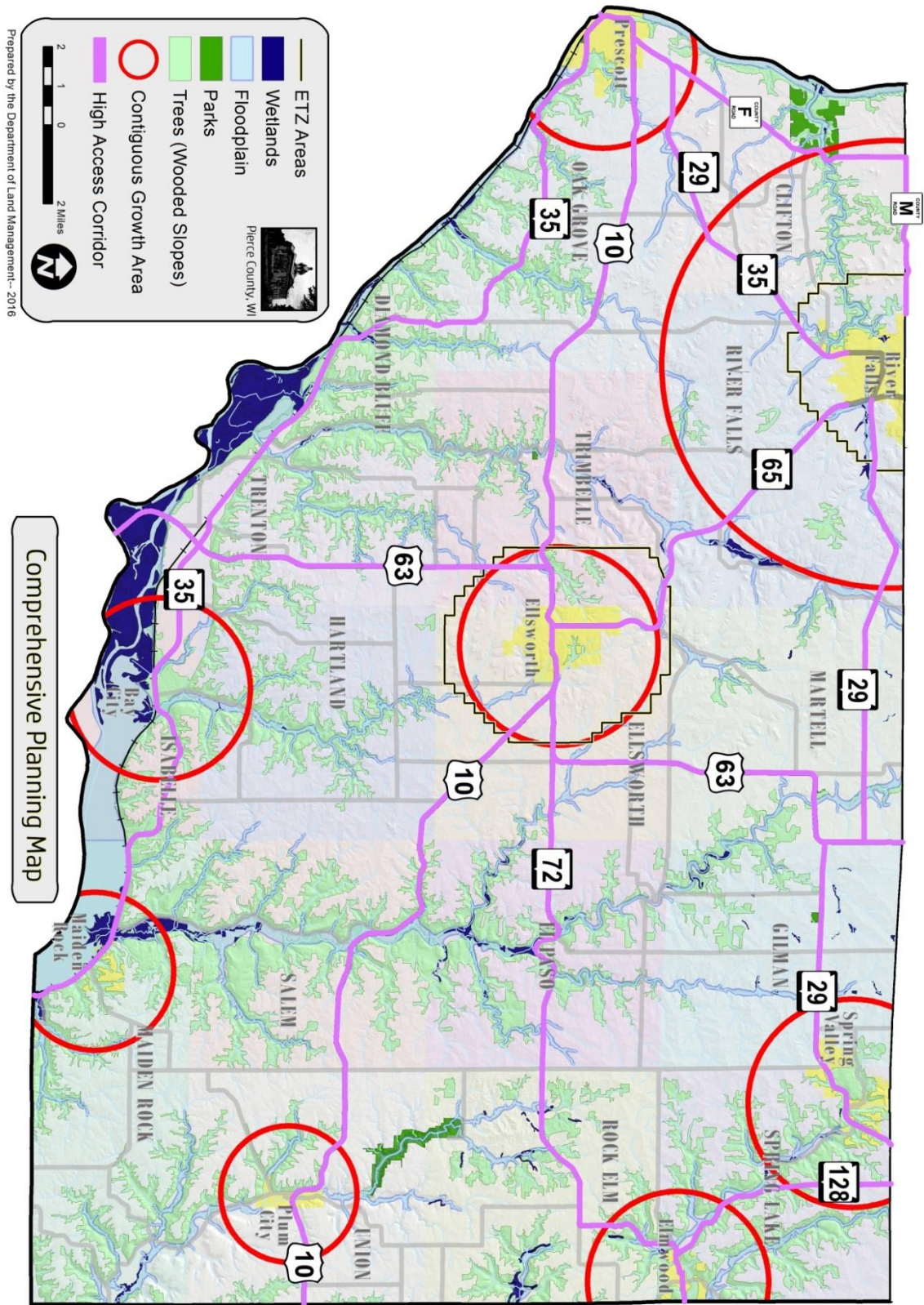
## APPENDIX I: MAPS

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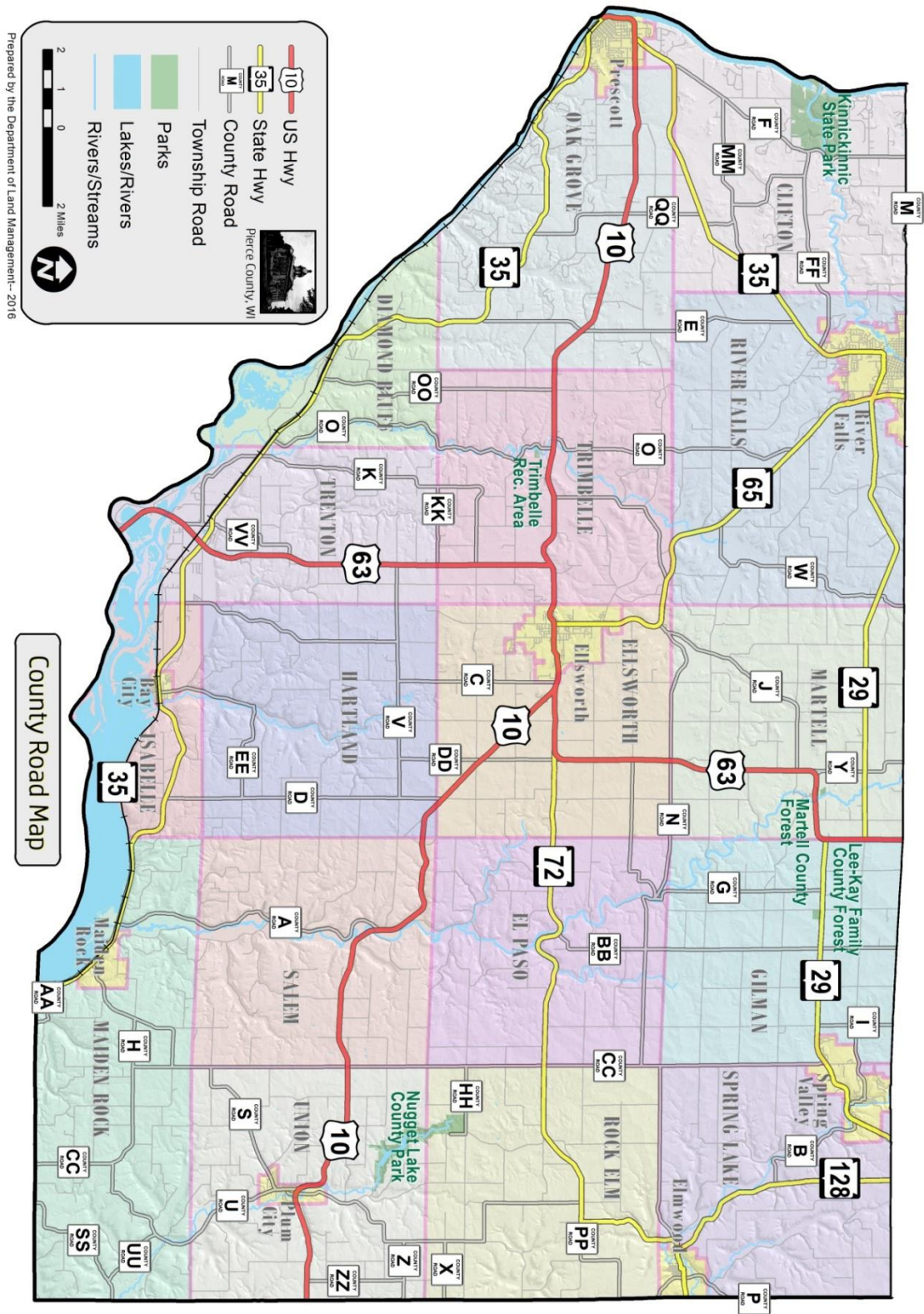




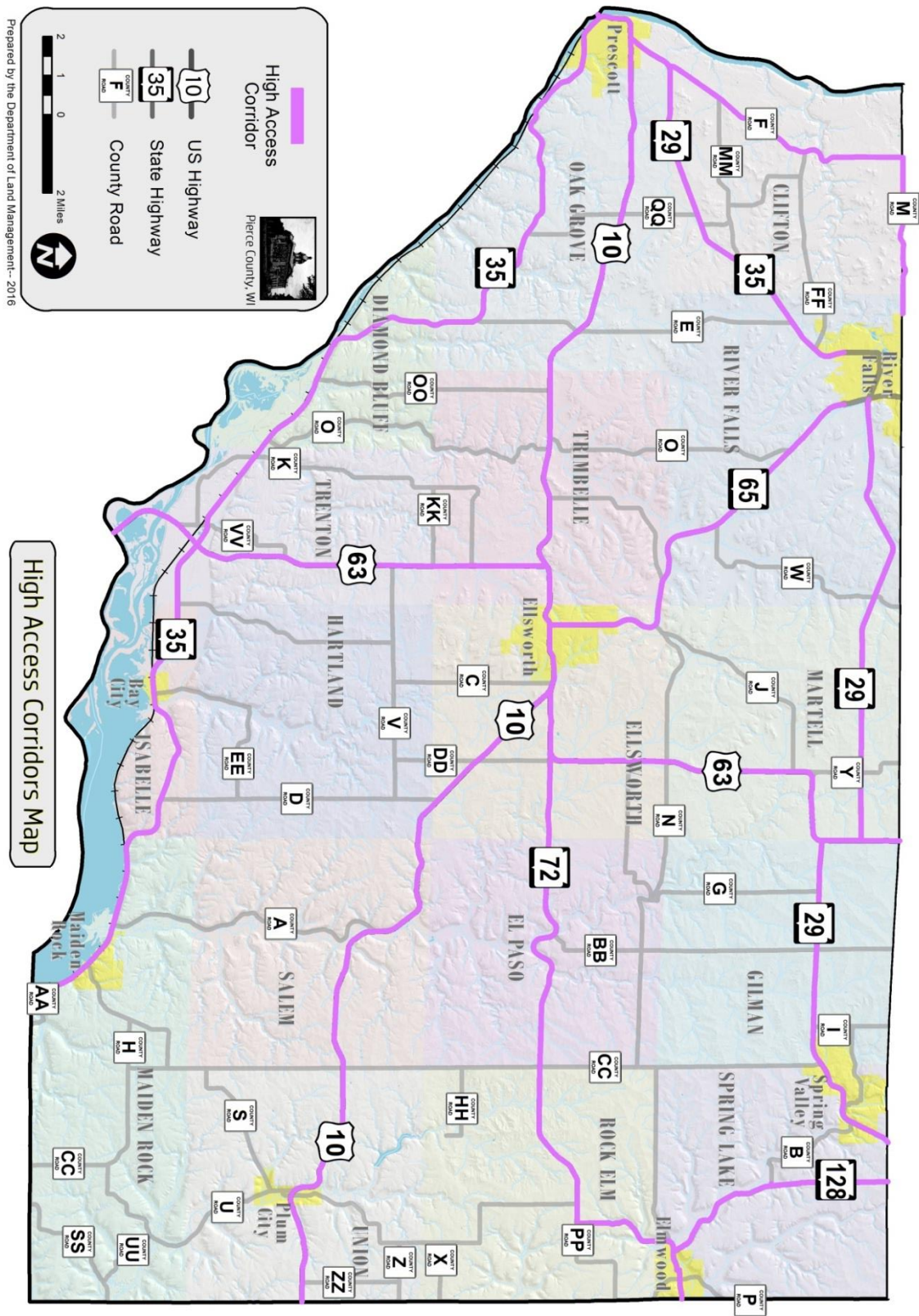




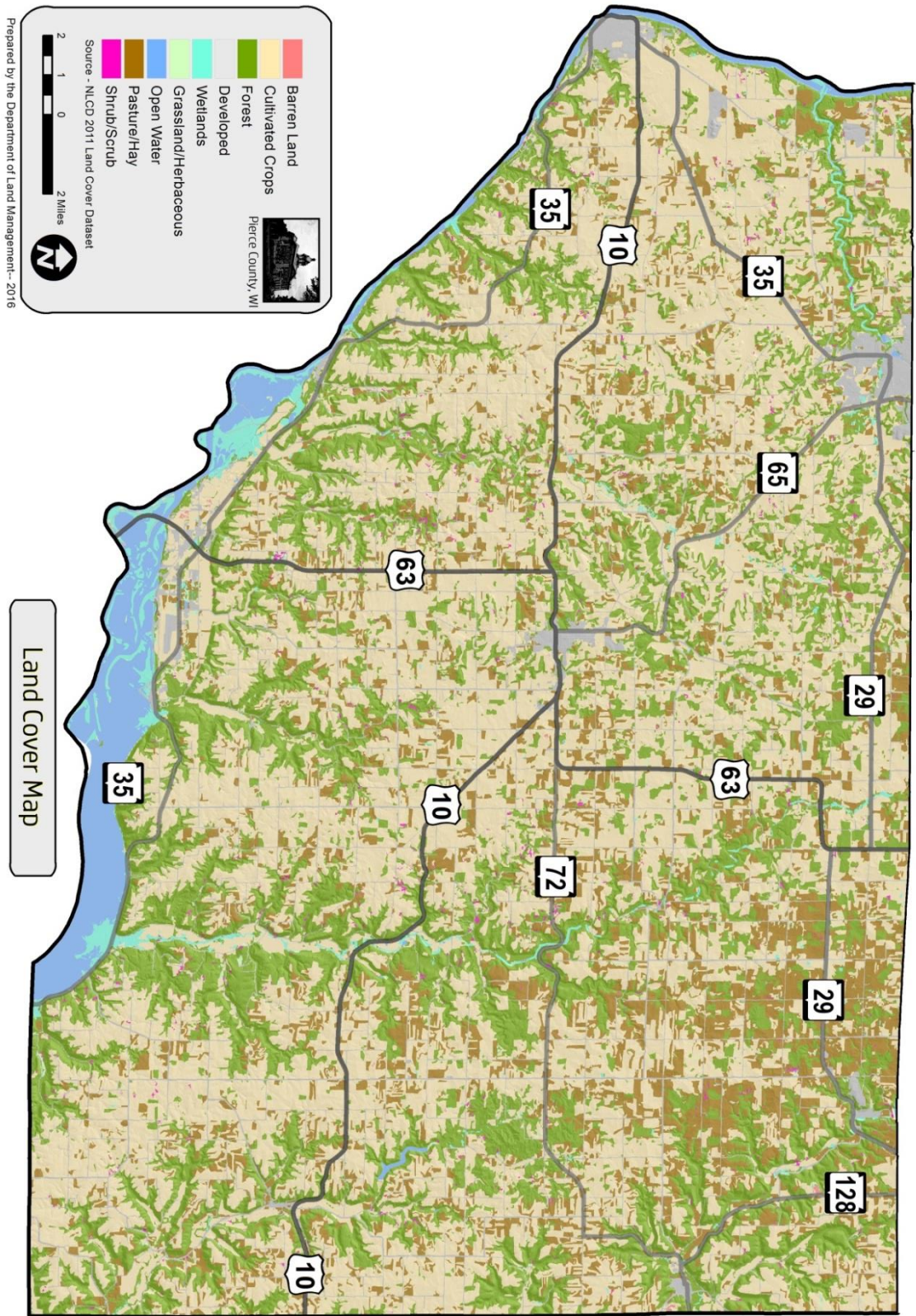




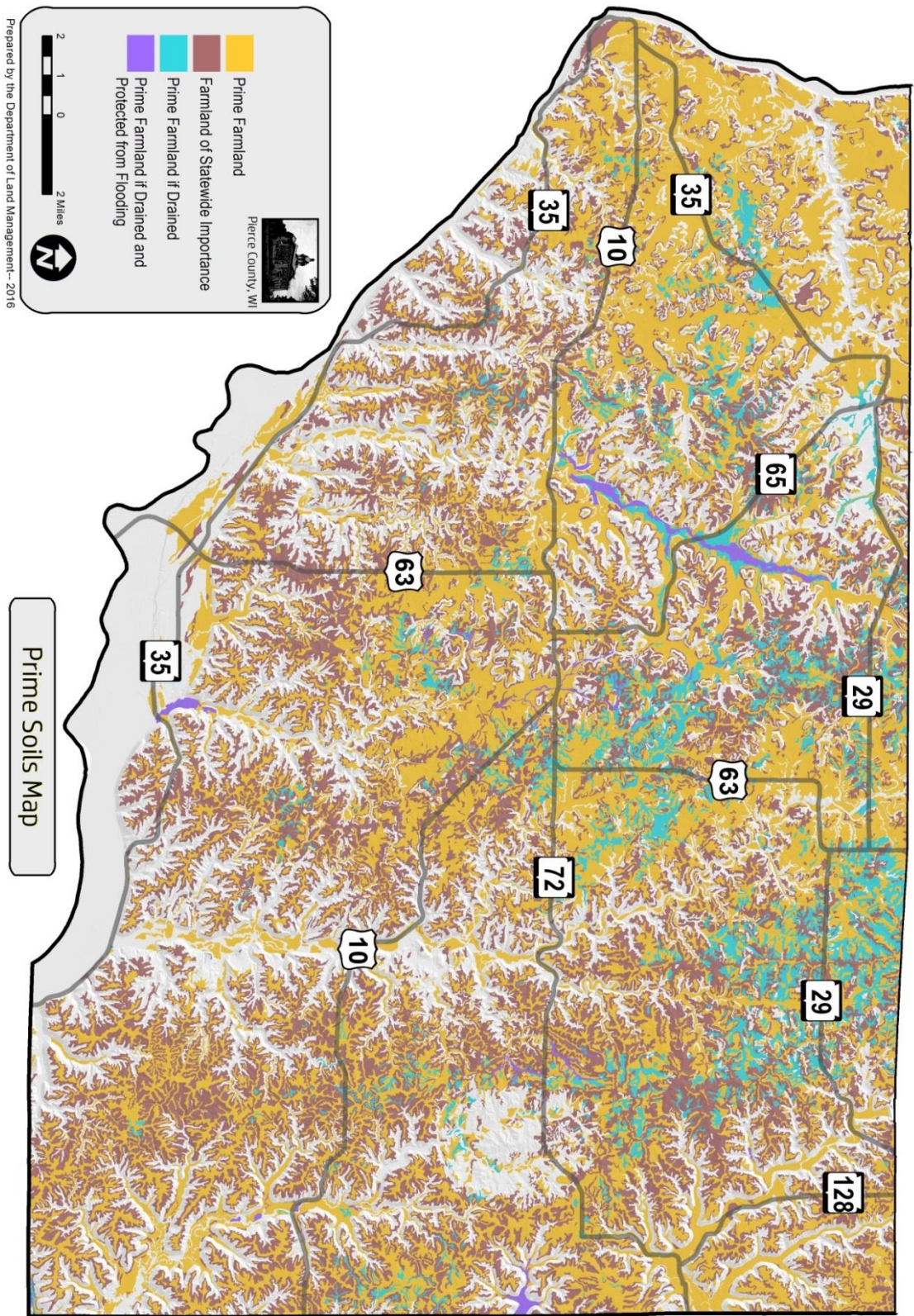




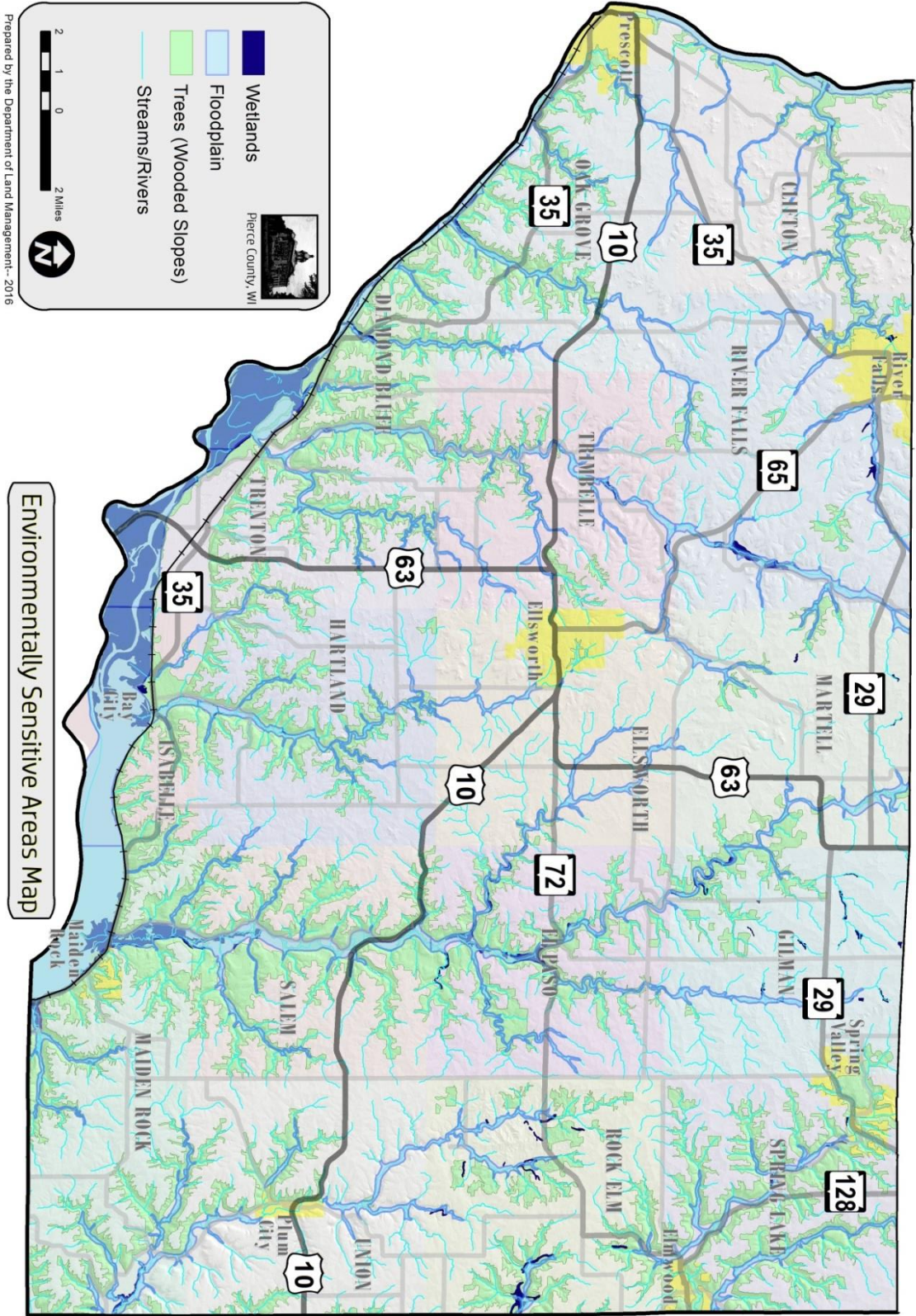














**Land Management Committee Meeting, April 1, 2015****Agenda Item 6****Public Participation Plan:**

- Throughout the comprehensive plan update and revision process meeting agendas and relevant materials will be distributed to the Chair and Clerk of each Town. This will ensure that each Town will be able to review materials and articulate any comments or concerns.
- Two open house meetings will be held at a central location to provide a forum for residents to review proposed changes and submit comments. The time and date of these meetings will be staggered to allow ample opportunity for residents with varying schedules to attend.
- Utilize the existing Pierce County website to provide an opportunity for gathering public input and sharing data and materials.
  - The creation of a dedicated page for the 2015 update and revision process will allow staff to share data and materials with the public.
  - Through the use of a shared email address (e.g. [comp.plan2015@co.pierce.wi.us](mailto:comp.plan2015@co.pierce.wi.us)) residents will be able to submit comments and concerns regarding current issues and implementation of the existing plan.
- An online survey accessed by a link on the County web site will be utilized to solicit public input. The methodology, timing, and content of the survey instrument will be discussed at a later date.



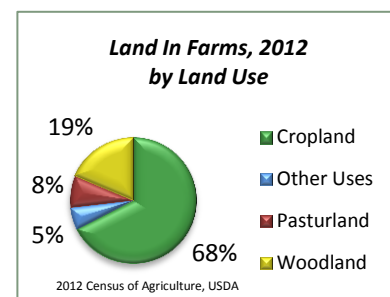
## TRENDS/DATA

## Agriculture

United States Geological Survey (USGS) National Land Cover Data indicated a 0.1% loss of lands in pasture, hay, and cultivated crops between 2006 and 2011. The decrease, equivalent to 240 acres, included agricultural lands lost due to creation or expansion of farm facilities and land diverted to non-agricultural development. There was a total of 229,186 acres of land in pasture, hay, and cultivated crops in 2011.

The prices paid for agricultural land within Pierce County increased substantially. In the five year period from 2009 to 2014 the sale of agricultural lands rose 28% from \$3,195/acre to \$4,463/acre (WI Center for Dairy Profitability). Statewide, agricultural land values increased 22% during the same timeframe. The value per acre of agricultural land sold to continue in agricultural use increased 22% versus an 18% increase for agricultural land being diverted to other uses from 2009 to 2013, according to USDA data.

Topsoil loss per acre rose 13% in the five to seven years preceding 2015 from 2.6 tons/acre to 3.0 tons/acre. Sheet and rill erosion accounted for and estimated 500,000 tons of annual soil loss in Pierce County, an increase of 70,000 tons per year.



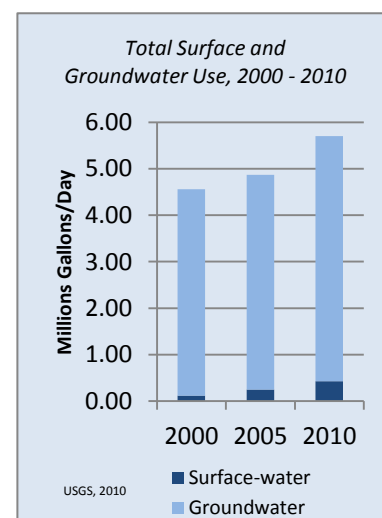
Commodity	WI Rank (Value of Sales)
Horses, Ponies, Mules, and Don- keys	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Grains, Oilseeds, Dry Beans, and Dry Peas	11 <sup>th</sup>
Christmas Trees and Short Rota- tion Woody Crops	20 <sup>th</sup>

2012 Census of Agriculture, USDA

## Natural Resources

Evaluation of the Wisconsin DNR's Endangered and Threatened Species list shows little change over the past decade. The notable addition to this list is the inclusion of multiple bat species; however this change is not due to change in local habitat or human interaction, but an infectious disease that has affected bat species across the nation.

United States Geological Survey estimated water use data indicated a 12% increase in total groundwater usage between 2005 and 2010, and a 42% increase in total surface water usage during the same period. Increased water usage of both surface and freshwater has been observed throughout the U.S.





### Place of Work

According to 2013 WI Department of Workforce Development data, nearly two-thirds (64.7%) of Pierce County's labor force commutes to work outside Pierce County, an increase of 4.7% since the 2000 Census. Minnesota was the highest ranking destination for workers leaving the county, drawing 45% of Pierce County's labor force. Saint Croix County was second. Employers in Pierce County attract 2,512 workers who commute to jobs in Pierce County.

People Who Work in Pierce Co., WI, Live in:		People Who Live in Pierce Co., WI, Work in:	
<u>Residence</u>	<u>Estimated # of Workers</u>	<u>Residence</u>	<u>Estimated # of Workers</u>
Pierce Co., WI	7,935	Pierce Co., WI	7,935
St. Croix CO., WI	1,200	St. Croix CO., WI	3,552
Dunn Co., WI	333	Washington Co., MN	2,399
Pepin Co., WI	246	Dakota Co., MN	2,139
Goodhue Co., MN	189	Goodhue Co., MN	2,044
Washington Co., MN	175	Ramsey Co., MN	1,851
Dakota Co., MN	135	Hennepin Co., MN	1,346
Ramsey Co., MN	127	Dunn Co., WI	297
Hennepin Co., MN	56	Pepin Co., WI	99
Chippewa Co., WI	51	Anoka Co., MN	97

U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, ACS 2007-2011

### Population Projections

Pierce County has experienced relatively stagnant population growth since 2010 as indicated by 2014 Census Bureau estimates. Estimated total population declined 0.1% from 41,019 to 40,958. Population projection figures estimate that the county will grow 5.8% within the current decade, resulting in the addition of 2,556 people to the county by 2020.

#### U.S. Census Bureau Population Projections

	Census 2010	Projection 2020	Projection 2025	Projection 2030	Projection 2035	Projection 2040
Pierce County*	41,019	43,575	45,005	46,125	46,475	46,825

U.S. Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census



## Transportation

US Census Bureau data indicated the average commute time for workers 16 years and older has lengthened. The average commute time in the five year period leading up to 2013 was 27.3 minutes per commuter; increasing 2.2 minutes since the 2000 census. The estimated number of workers traveling to work in Pierce County decreased 3% during the same time frame.

The total vehicle miles traveled in Pierce County increased 20 percent over the five year period from 2009 to 2013. Statewide, WI DOT data showed that vehicle miles traveled in the state hit a peak in 2004, and have since flattened out; a trend echoed nationally.

2013 five-year American Community Survey data detailing the means of transportation for commuting workers indicated over 78% of workers commute alone, up 2.5% from the 2000 census. Carpooling commuters decreased 2.1%, while public transportation, walking, bicycling, and other means saw negligible changes over the same period of time.

### Vehicle Miles Traveled, Pierce Co., WI

Year	Miles
2009	306,100,000
2010	326,416,580
2011	351,423,095
2012	349,278,720
2013	381,735,980

WI DOT, 2013

COMMUTING TO WORK	2011-2013	2008-2010
Workers 16 years and over	22,010	22,708
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	78.70%	76.10%
Car, truck, or van -- carpoolled	8.80%	10.80%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.20%	0.50%
Walked	5.90%	6.20%
Other means	1.60%	0.90%
Worked at home	4.80%	5.40%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	27.3	27.4

American Community Survey 2013



## Housing

2010 Census Bureau Data indicated there was an 18% increase in the number of housing units in the first part of the decade. A Comparison of 2010 Census data with projected figures (based on 2000 Census Data) shows the actual number of households in 2010 has surpassed anticipated numbers. It should be noted that household projection data were compiled in 2010 during the downturn in the economy and the housing foreclosure crisis of the second half of the decade and therefore may not accurately reflect circumstances following recovery from the recession.

### Housing Trends – Number of Housing Units

	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-00	% Change 2000-10
<b>Towns</b>							
Clifton	331	378	592	759	14.2%	56.6%	28.2%
Diamond Bluff	160	188	203	250	17.5%	8.0%	23.2%
Ellsworth	458	340	391	396	-25.8%	15.0%	1.3%
El Paso	207	210	239	273	1.4%	13.8%	14.2%
Gilman	304	276	289	364	-9.2%	4.7%	26.0%
Hartland	283	286	307	335	1.1%	7.3%	9.1%
Isabelle	66	81	109	130	22.7%	34.6%	19.3%
Maiden Rock	231	249	256	273	7.8%	2.8%	6.6%
Martell	300	306	391	435	2.0%	27.8%	11.3%
Oak Grove	262	347	506	701	32.4%	45.8%	38.5%
River Falls	742	644	821	833	-13.2%	27.5%	1.5%
Rock Elm	203	194	193	218	-4.4%	-0.5%	13.0%
Salem	184	176	186	218	-4.3%	5.7%	17.2%
Spring Lake	198	193	197	199	-2.5%	2.1%	1.0%
Trenton	607	610	671	738	0.5%	10.0%	10.0%
Trimbelle	439	484	544	672	10.3%	12.4%	23.5%
Union	228	209	215	250	-8.3%	2.9%	16.3%
<b>Pierce County*</b>	10,354	11,536	13,493	15,928	11.4%	17.0%	18.0%

\*Includes city and village data - Source: U.S. Department of Commerce - Bureau of the Census

### Household Projections 2010 - 2040

	Census 2010	2015 Projection	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection	2035 Projection	2040 Projection
<b>Pierce County*</b>	15,002	15,658	16,561	17,293	17,869	18,238	18,481

\*Includes city and village data - Source: Demographic Services Center, Wisconsin Department of Administration



Housing tenure data indicated an overall increase of housing units yet owner/renter ratios have remained fairly static at about 7:3. While Pierce County as a whole has not seen a dramatic change in occupied status, some towns have seen noticeable changes. The Town of Ellsworth experienced a decrease of 40 renter-occupied units when compared with earlier census data. The Town of River Falls has moved in the opposite direction, adding 100 renter-occupied units, resulting in nearly a quarter of the Town's population residing in rental units.

2013 American Community Survey housing occupancy rate estimates indicated a 4.1% decrease in the number of vacant homes in the three-year period following 2010. Over 95% of the housing stock in Pierce County was occupied as of 2013.

### *Housing Tenure 2013*

	Occupied Housing Units		Owner-occupied Units		Renter-occupied Units	
	No.		No.	%	No.	%
<b>Towns</b>						
Clifton	717		677	94.4%	40	5.6%
Diamond Bluff	196		171	87.2%	25	12.8%
Ellsworth	390		388	99.5%	2	0.5%
El Paso	249		234	94.0%	15	6.0%
Gilman	374		316	84.5%	58	15.5%
Hartland	344		292	84.9%	52	15.1%
Isabelle	107		90	84.1%	17	15.9%
Maiden Rock	243		220	90.5%	23	9.5%
Martell	454		419	92.3%	35	7.7%
Oak Grove	736		674	91.6%	62	8.4%
River Falls	907		687	75.7%	220	24.3%
Rock Elm	202		170	84.2%	32	15.8%
Salem	189		156	82.5%	33	17.5%
Spring Lake	249		226	90.8%	23	9.2%
Trenton	717		665	92.7%	52	7.3%
Trimbelle	646		579	89.6%	67	10.4%
Union	236		200	84.7%	36	15.3%
<b>Pierce County*</b>	15,069		11,106	73.7%	3,963	26.3%

\*Includes city and village data - Source: U.S. Department of Commerce - Census Bureau - 2010

Housing Tenure	Pierce County, Wisconsin	
	2011 – 2013 Estimate	2008 – 2010 Estimate
<b>Occupied Housing Units</b>	15,142	14,659
Owner-Occupied	70.0%	77.3%
Renter-Occupied	30.0%	22.7%

2011-2013 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

Housing Occupancy	Pierce County, Wisconsin	
	2011 – 2013 Estimate	2008 – 2010 Estimate
Total Housing Units	16,165	16,067
Occupied Housing Units	95.3%	91.2%
Vacant Housing Units	4.7%	8.8%

2011-2013 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

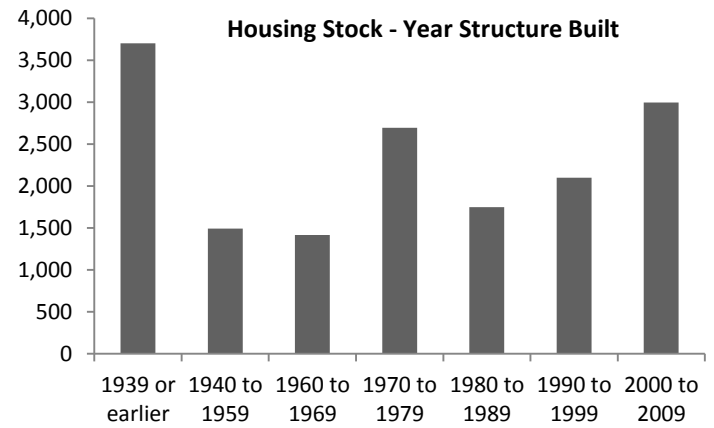


Pierce County housing stock data examining structures by construction year revealed a noticeable increase in the number of homes constructed from 2000 to 2009, coinciding with the nationwide housing boom experienced in the early 2000's. 2013 American Community Survey data illustrates an apparent decrease in new homes being constructed after 2010.

### Housing Stock – Year Structure Built

Year Structure Built	Pierce County, Wisconsin	
	2011 – 2013 Estimate	2008 – 2010 Estimate
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	16,165	16,067
Built in 2010 or Later	0.2%	(x)
Built 2000 - 2009	17.9%	17.7%
Built 1990 – 1999	13.4%	13.5%
Built 1980 – 1989	11.0%	10.4%
Built 1970 – 1979	15.9%	18.2%
Built 1960 – 1969	9.4%	7.7%
Built 1950 – 1959	5.3%	4.2%
Built 1940 – 1949	3.8%	4.9%
Built 1939 or Earlier	23.2%	23.3%

2011-2013 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates



U.S. Department of Commerce - Census Bureau - 2010

Single-family homes continued to be the dominant housing unit type in Pierce County, increasing 4.1% since the 2000 census. Single-family homes comprise nearly 80% of all housing units.

### Housing Units by Type 2013

	Single Family	Two Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home
<b>Pierce County*</b>	12,719	422	2,290	729

\*Includes city and village data - Source: U.S. Department of Commerce - Bureau of the Census

Pierce County housing values continued their rapid rise that began in the 1990's. New home construction in the last two decades has substantially increased median home prices throughout Pierce County

### Housing Trends – Median Values of Owner-Occupied Units

	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1990-00	% Change 2000-10
<b>Pierce County*</b>	65,500	123,100	200,200	87.9%	62.6%

\*Includes city and village data - Source: U.S. Department of Commerce-Bureau of the Census



Nearly half of the householder population moved into a new residence from 2000 to 2009. The Towns of Martell, Oak Grove, and Clifton experienced the highest turnover during the period. Data for the first part of the current decade (2010) appears to support a continuation of a “mobile” population.

### *Year Householder Moved Into Unit, 2013*

	1969 or earlier		1970 to 1979		1980 to 1989		1990 to 1999		2000 to 2009		2010 or later	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Towns</b>												
Clifton	30	4.2%	51	7.1%	83	11.6%	158	22.0%	360	50.2%	35	4.9%
Diamond Bluff	9	4.6%	16	8.2%	28	14.3%	45	23.0%	82	41.8%	16	8.2%
Ellsworth	37	9.5%	44	11.3%	59	15.1%	86	22.1%	139	35.6%	25	6.4%
El Paso	23	9.2%	26	10.4%	36	14.5%	56	22.5%	93	37.3%	15	6.0%
Gilman	28	7.5%	28	7.5%	54	14.4%	63	16.8%	166	44.4%	35	9.4%
Hartland	38	11.0%	30	8.7%	43	12.5%	50	14.5%	155	45.1%	28	8.1%
Isabelle	4	3.7%	6	5.6%	13	12.1%	28	26.2%	40	37.4%	16	15.0%
Maiden Rock	10	4.1%	32	13.2%	36	14.8%	62	25.5%	95	39.1%	8	3.3%
Martell	30	6.6%	29	6.4%	47	10.4%	95	20.9%	225	49.6%	28	6.2%
Oak Grove	35	4.8%	32	4.3%	73	9.9%	179	24.3%	358	48.6%	59	8.0%
River Falls	35	3.9%	56	6.2%	127	14.0%	234	25.8%	350	38.6%	105	11.6%
Rock Elm	22	10.9%	18	8.9%	36	17.8%	33	16.3%	68	33.7%	25	12.4%
Salem	13	6.9%	27	14.3%	26	13.8%	56	29.6%	48	25.4%	19	10.1%
Spring Lake	30	12.0%	21	8.4%	24	9.6%	51	20.5%	109	43.8%	14	5.6%
Trenton	36	5.0%	68	9.5%	77	10.7%	160	22.3%	321	44.8%	55	7.7%
Trimbelle	51	7.9%	58	9.0%	102	15.8%	132	20.4%	248	38.4%	55	8.5%
Union	20	8.5%	23	9.7%	36	15.3%	37	15.7%	97	41.1%	23	9.7%
<b>Pierce County*</b>	4.9%		5.8%		10.8%		17.5%		44.1%		16.9%	

\*Includes city and village data - Source: U.S. Department of Commerce - Bureau of the Census

The values for median home price provide some insight into the increased portion of homeowner’s monthly costs. The average median home price in Pierce County increased nearly \$70,000 in the last fifteen years (1995-2010).

### *Housing Unit Values – Owner-Occupied 2013*

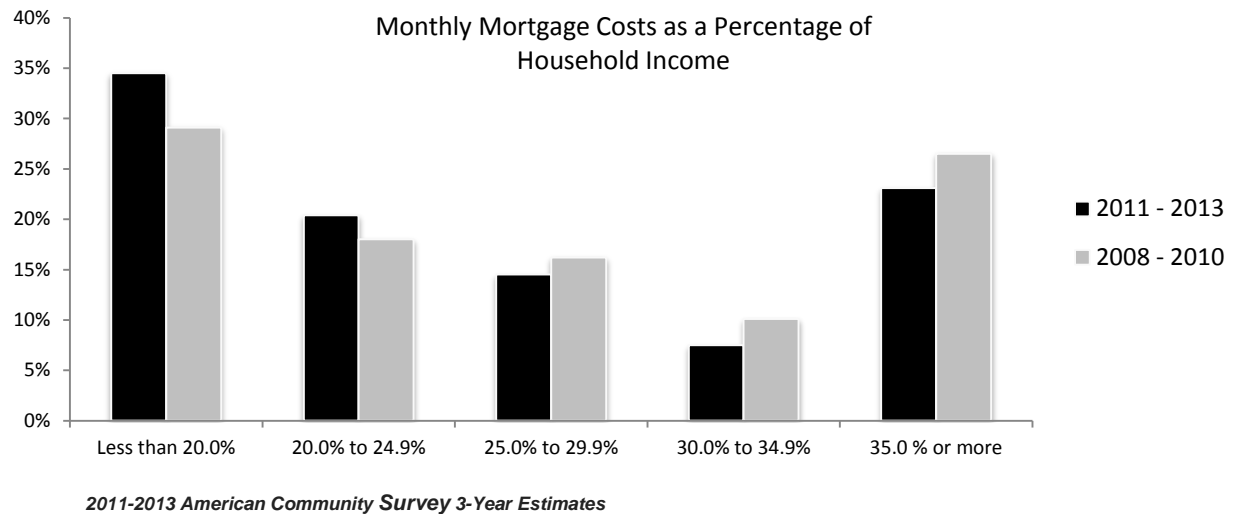
	Less than \$50,000	\$50,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 to \$199,999	\$200,000 to \$299,999	\$300,000 to \$499,999	\$500,000 to \$999,999	\$1,000,000 or more	Median
<b>Pierce County*</b>	4.2%	8.0%	16.1%	25.4%	27.3%	13.6%	4.4%	0.9%	\$191,300

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce - Bureau of the Census 2010



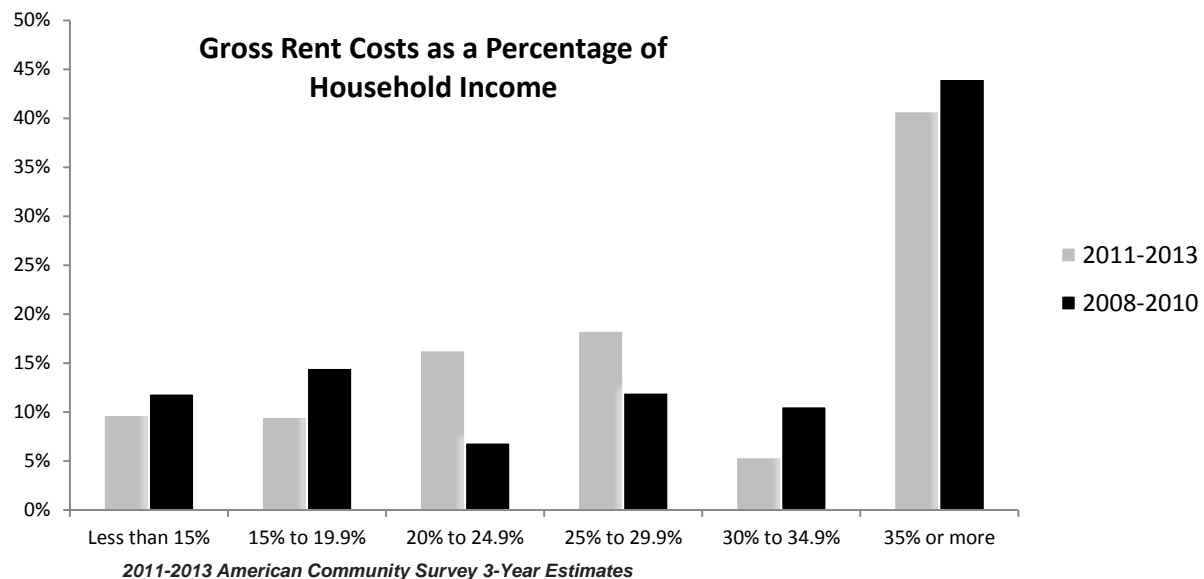
A trend that seemed to correlate with increased median home costs was monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income. 33.5% of county homeowners exceeded the “affordability” ( $\geq 30\%$  of household income) threshold in 2013; nearly double that of 2009 figures.

### *Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income 2013*



The percentage of tenants who passed the “affordability” ( $\geq 30\%$  of household income) threshold increased to 46.1%, nearly doubling the figures established by the 2000 Census.

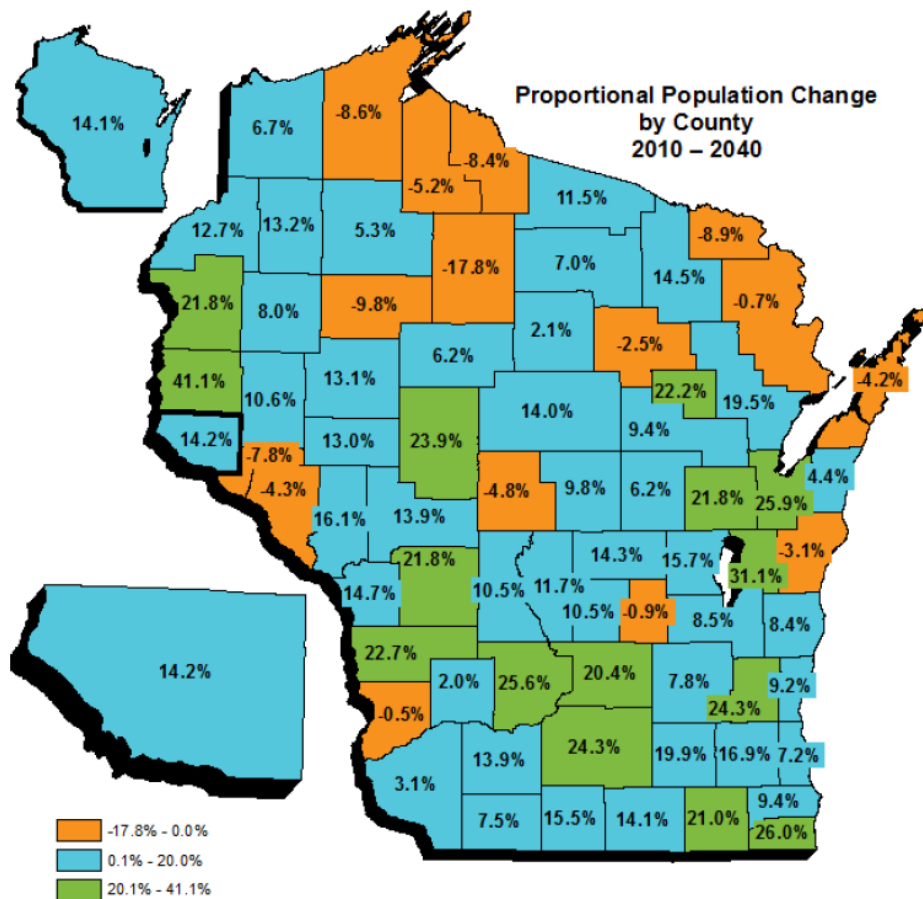
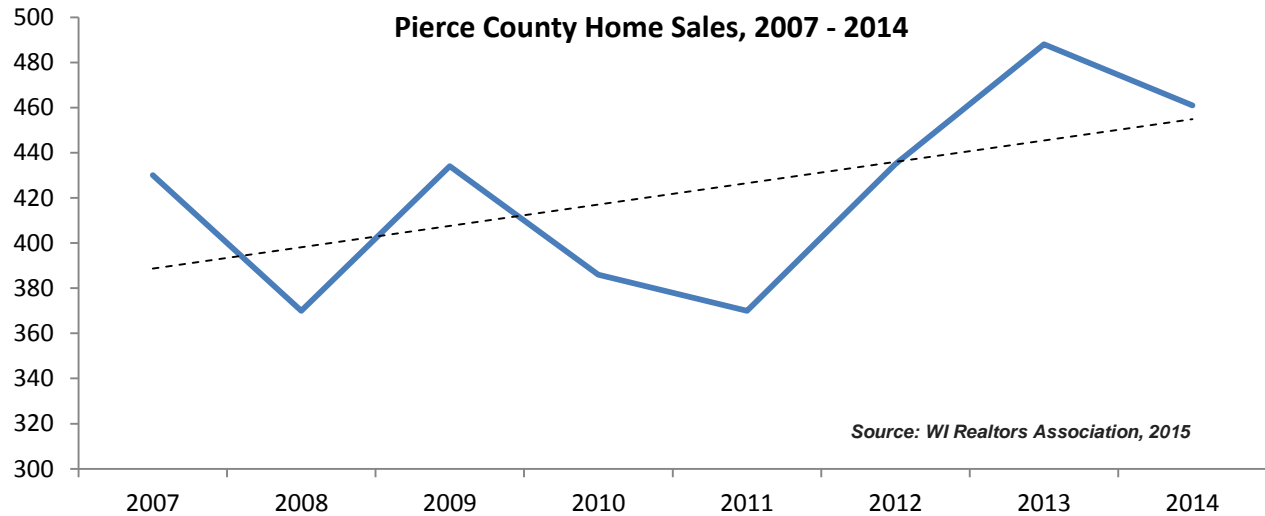
### *Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income 2013*





WI Realtors Association home sales characteristics indicated year-by-year home sales were relatively volatile following the economic downturn (beginning in 2007), but the general trend is an overall increase in home sales from 2007 through 2014.

### Home Sales Characteristics



Source: WI Dept. of Administration Demographic Services, December 2013



## Land Use

Most towns experienced gains of 1% or less in agricultural lands from 2010 to 2014 according to Pierce County property assessment data. The towns of Oak Grove and Rock Elm experienced the highest increases during the period, gaining 2% and 3% respectively. The town of Ellsworth was the sole outlier, with a 1% loss of agriculturally assessed lands over the 5 year span. Residential and commercial land uses remained relatively static, with Oak Grove posting the only loss in residential lands at -1%.

As a whole, there were minimal changes to land use in Pierce County during the same period. Agricultural lands increased 0.5% and forest lands decreased 0.3%. Undeveloped land uses experienced a slight gain, increasing 0.2%.

### *Land Use Intensity (Pierce County Property Valuation Statistics)*

	Total Acres 2002	Percent of Land Area 2002	Total Acres 2005	Percent of Land Area 2005	Total Acres 2010	Percent of Land Area 2010	Total Acres 2014	Percent of Land Area 2014	% Change 2002 - 2014	% Change 2010 - 2014
<b>Town of Clifton</b>										
Residential	2,721	14%	2,946	15%	3268	17%	3,215	17%	3%	0%
Commercial	369	2%	369	2%	345	2%	270	1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%	0%
Agricultural	13,341	70%	13,249	69%	12,693	66%	12,724	67%	-4%	1%
<b>Town of Diamond Bluff</b>										
Residential	319	3%	285	3%	325	3%	332	3%	0%	0%
Commercial	22	<1%	20	<1%	20	<1%	28	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	0	0%	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%	0%
Agricultural	4,181	42%	4,296	43%	4,292	43%	4,278	44%	1%	1%
<b>Town of Ellsworth</b>										
Residential	836	4%	884	4%	963	5%	979	5%	1%	0%
Commercial	133	<1%	137	<1%	160	1%	165	1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	7	<1%	7	<1%	7	<1%	7	<1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	14,000	71%	14,116	72%	14,387	74%	14,206	73%	3%	-1%
<b>Town of El Paso</b>										
Residential	674	3%	704	3%	665	3%	679	3%	0%	0%
Commercial	11	<1%	11	<1%	12	<1%	16	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%	0%
Agricultural	16,018	78%	15,905	78%	15,433	77%	15,453	78%	-1%	0%
<b>Town of Gilman</b>										
Residential	831	4%	961	5%	1,081	5%	1,056	5%	1%	0%
Commercial	16	<1%	25	<1%	26	<1%	26	<1%	0%	0%



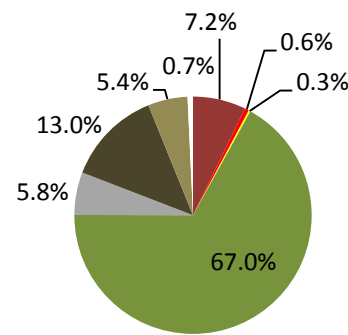
Manufacturing	54	<1%	53	<1%	53	<1%	53	<1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	15,178	73%	14,020	67%	14,158	69%	14,243	69%	-4%	0%
<b>Town of Hartland</b>										
Residential	908	4%	902	4%	917	4%	884	4%	0%	0%
Commercial	18	<1%	15	<1%	8	<1%	8	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%	0%
Agricultural	15,755	72%	15,718	74%	15,748	75%	15,844	75%	3%	0%
<b>Town of Isabelle</b>										
Residential	472	10%	794	11%	493	11%	517	11%	1%	0%
Commercial	67	1%	49	1%	47	1%	64	1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	0	0%	0	0%	41	1%	41	1%	1%	0%
Agricultural	2,121	45%	2,110	46%	2,073	45%	2,150	46%	0%	1%
<b>Town of Maiden Rock</b>										
Residential	841	6%	903	4%	933	4%	937	4%	-2%	0%
Commercial	1	<1%	1	<1%	1	<1%	1	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	5	<1%	5	<1%	5	<1%	5	<1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	15,006	65%	14,651	66%	14,346	67%	14,325	68%	2%	1%
<b>Town of Martell</b>										
Residential	1,248	6%	1,240	6%	1,239	6%	1,218	6%	0%	0%
Commercial	8	<1%	8	<1%	12	<1%	26	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	14	<1%	14	<1%	14	<1%	0	<1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	15,685	74%	15,757	74%	14,760	70%	14,696	70%	-4%	0%
<b>Town of Oak Grove</b>										
Residential	3,572	15%	4,127	18%	4,415	19%	4,106	18%	4%	-1%
Commercial	33	<1%	36	<1%	47	<1%	59	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	39	<1%	39	<1%	39	<1%	39	<1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	15,847	67%	15,435	67%	14,181	61%	14,667	63%	-6%	2%
<b>Town of River Falls</b>										
Residential	3,038	12%	3,151	12%	3,187	13%	3,170	13%	1%	0%
Commercial	226	<1%	93	<1%	101	<1%	93	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	9	<1%	9	<1%	9	<1%	9	<1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	15,774	60%	15,720	61%	15,891	62%	15,738	64%	2%	1%
<b>Town of Rock Elm</b>										
Residential	258	1%	271	1%	328	2%	335	2%	1%	0%
Commercial	14	<1%	14	<1%	20	<1%	31	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0%	0%
Agricultural	14,509	69%	14,739	71%	14,105	70%	14,421	73%	1%	3%
<b>Town of Salem</b>										
Residential	242	1%	319	2%	350	2%	366	2%	1%	0%
Commercial	2	<1%	2	<1%	2	<1%	2	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	158	<1%	158	<1%	158	1%	157	1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	12,259	61%	12,416	62%	12,423	63%	12,437	63%	2%	0%



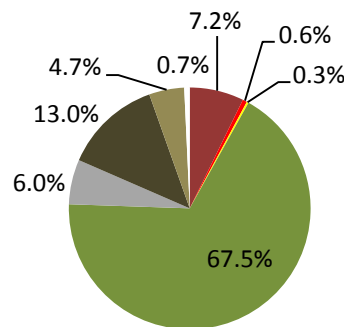
Town of Spring Lake										
Residential	431	2%	466	3%	514	3%	512	3%	1%	0%
Commercial	15	<1%	15	<1%	15	<1%	14	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	33	<1%	33	<1%	33	<1%	33	<1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	13,265	74%	13,238	74%	13,222	75%	13,234	74%	1%	0%
Town of Trenton										
Residential	1,099	7%	1,137	7%	1,194	8%	1,206	8%	1%	0%
Commercial	170	1%	174	1%	175	1%	168	1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	275	2%	275	2%	287	2%	275	2%	0%	0%
Agricultural	9,042	59%	9,274	59%	8,788	58%	8,776	58%	-1%	0%
Town of Trimble										
Residential	1,626	7%	1,987	9%	2,025	9%	1,984	9%	2%	0%
Commercial	72	<1%	67	<1%	74	<1%	75	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	1	<1%	1	<1%	1	<1%	1	<1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	16,396	73%	16,185	72%	15,356	69%	15,360	69%	-4%	0%
Town of Union										
Residential	283	1%	319	2%	479	2%	457	2%	1%	0%
Commercial	8	<1%	5	<1%	8	<1%	8	<1%	0%	0%
Manufacturing	16	<1%	16	<1%	9	<1%	22	<1%	0%	0%
Agricultural	15,395	75%	15,347	76%	15,272	76%	15,221	75%	1%	0%

Pierce County Property Valuation Statistical Reports, 2010 &amp; 2014

Pierce County Land Use Intensity: 2010 - 2014

**2010**

- Residential
- Commercial
- Manufacturing
- Agricultural
- Undeveloped
- Ag Forest

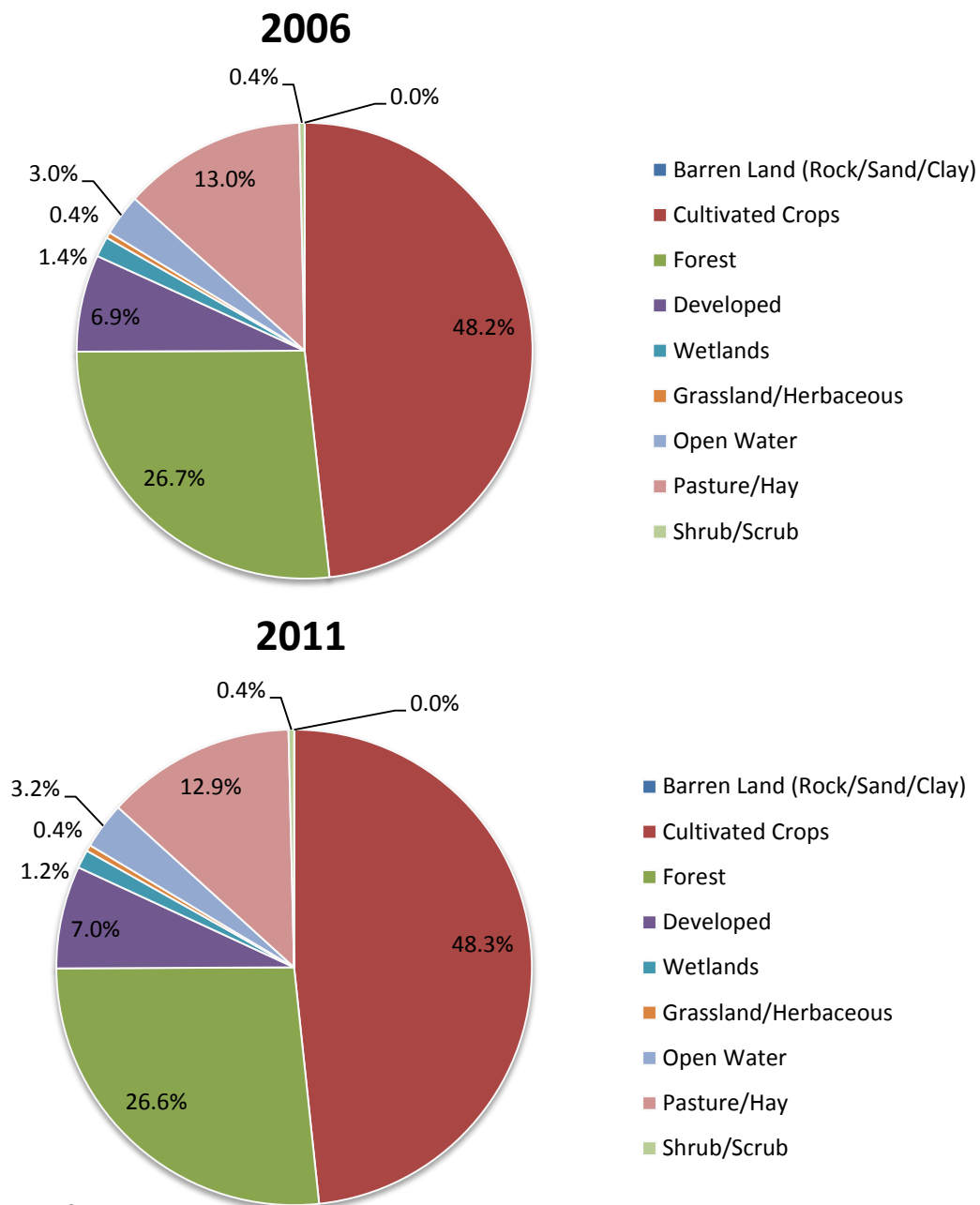
**2014**

- Residential
- Commercial
- Manufacturing
- Agricultural
- Undeveloped
- Ag Forest



2006 and 2011 National Land Cover Dataset figures illustrate the changes in land cover experienced over between 2006 and 2011. The data asserts that there was very little conversion of lands from one cover class to another between 2006 and 2011. Cultivated crops continued to be the dominant land cover in Pierce County, comprising nearly half of all land in the county. At nearly 27 percent, forested lands occupied the second highest percentage of land cover in the county.

### Land Cover



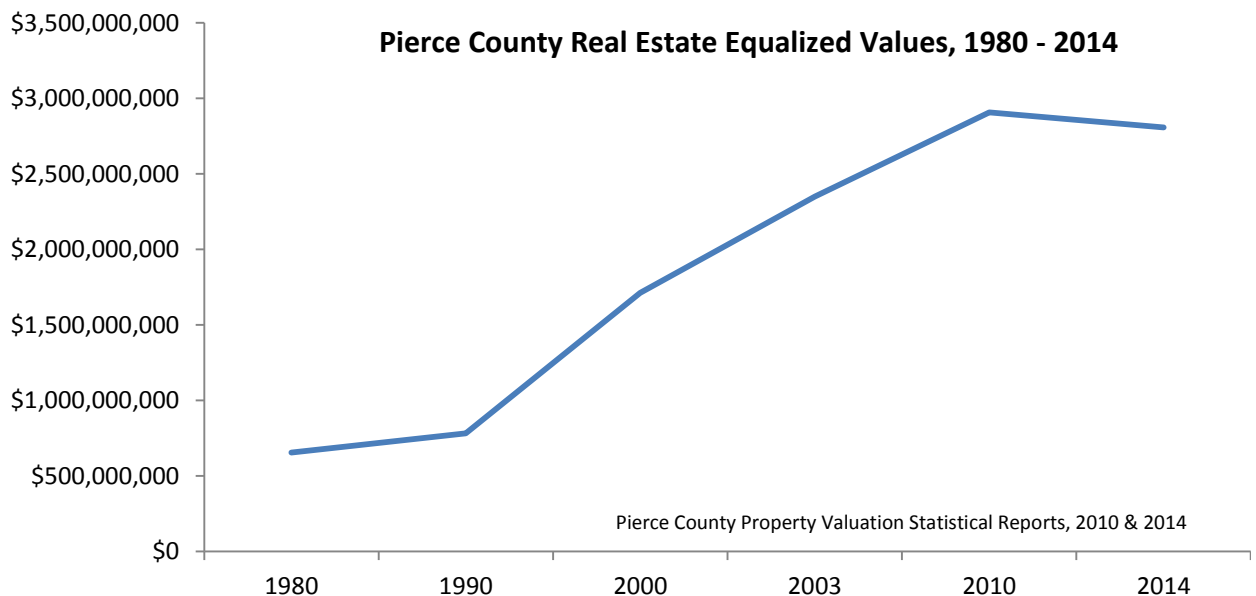


Equalized real estate values are the estimated values of all taxable real and personal property, which is based on its use. These values are used to fairly apportion tax levies among government units in the county. Equalized real estate values more than quadrupled in Pierce County as a whole since 1980. In the five years spanning from 2010 through 2014, equalized real estate values decreased for all but two towns (Isabelle, Union), a total reduction of 3.5% for the county. The towns of Oak Grove, El Paso, Martell, Rock Elm, and Spring Lake saw equalized values decrease more than 15% in the same period.

### *Real Estate Equalized Values*

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2014</u>
Clifton	\$45,657,200	\$56,183,300	\$141,504,400	\$218,998,200	\$258,756,300	\$243,811,600
Diamond Bluff	\$9,310,600	\$12,043,700	\$27,509,100	\$39,064,080	\$52,886,800	\$43,920,100
Ellsworth	\$31,688,100	\$25,796,700	\$52,330,300	\$78,433,300	\$87,265,300	\$84,303,700
El Paso	\$20,150,700	\$17,151,800	\$34,460,600	\$44,459,900	\$61,904,500	\$53,674,300
Gilman	\$22,576,500	\$19,196,800	\$41,361,300	\$62,894,800	\$79,129,600	\$73,930,100
Hartland	\$26,094,900	\$20,968,800	\$41,948,000	\$43,237,200	\$65,911,700	\$64,640,300
Isabelle	\$5,044,500	\$6,068,500	\$15,096,400	\$18,970,800	\$27,997,400	\$30,690,600
Maiden Rock	\$19,256,400	\$16,309,300	\$37,514,200	\$49,312,300	\$66,748,500	\$58,534,500
Martell	\$23,415,100	\$223,100,500	\$60,132,300	\$85,654,700	\$105,113,600	\$86,951,000
Oak Grove	\$36,271,200	\$42,151,800	\$130,438,600	\$197,624,500	\$263,412,400	\$231,436,500
River Falls	\$54,451,900	\$62,167,400	\$147,065,500	\$192,612,900	\$218,332,700	\$212,435,700
Rock Elm	\$18,643,500	\$14,158,600	\$25,663,900	\$30,140,000	\$40,285,900	\$32,629,600
Salem	\$19,647,700	\$14,707,000	\$29,514,700	\$38,184,200	\$47,581,800	\$41,802,400
Spring Lake	\$15,760,300	\$13,269,700	\$27,346,400	\$33,612,300	\$45,869,400	\$38,776,700
Trenton	\$37,789,300	\$44,167,600	\$94,519,700	\$130,565,000	\$155,018,700	\$153,661,100
Trimbelle	\$32,332,400	\$35,096,300	\$74,564,600	\$97,322,800	\$133,283,300	\$120,471,600
Union	\$22,674,900	\$16,355,300	\$26,712,200	\$32,602,500	\$41,060,900	\$51,320,800
Pierce County	\$655,197,100	\$783,354,600	\$1,712,952,700	\$2,350,360,800	\$2,907,417,200	\$2,807,114,900

Pierce County Property Valuation Statistical Reports, 2010 & 2014

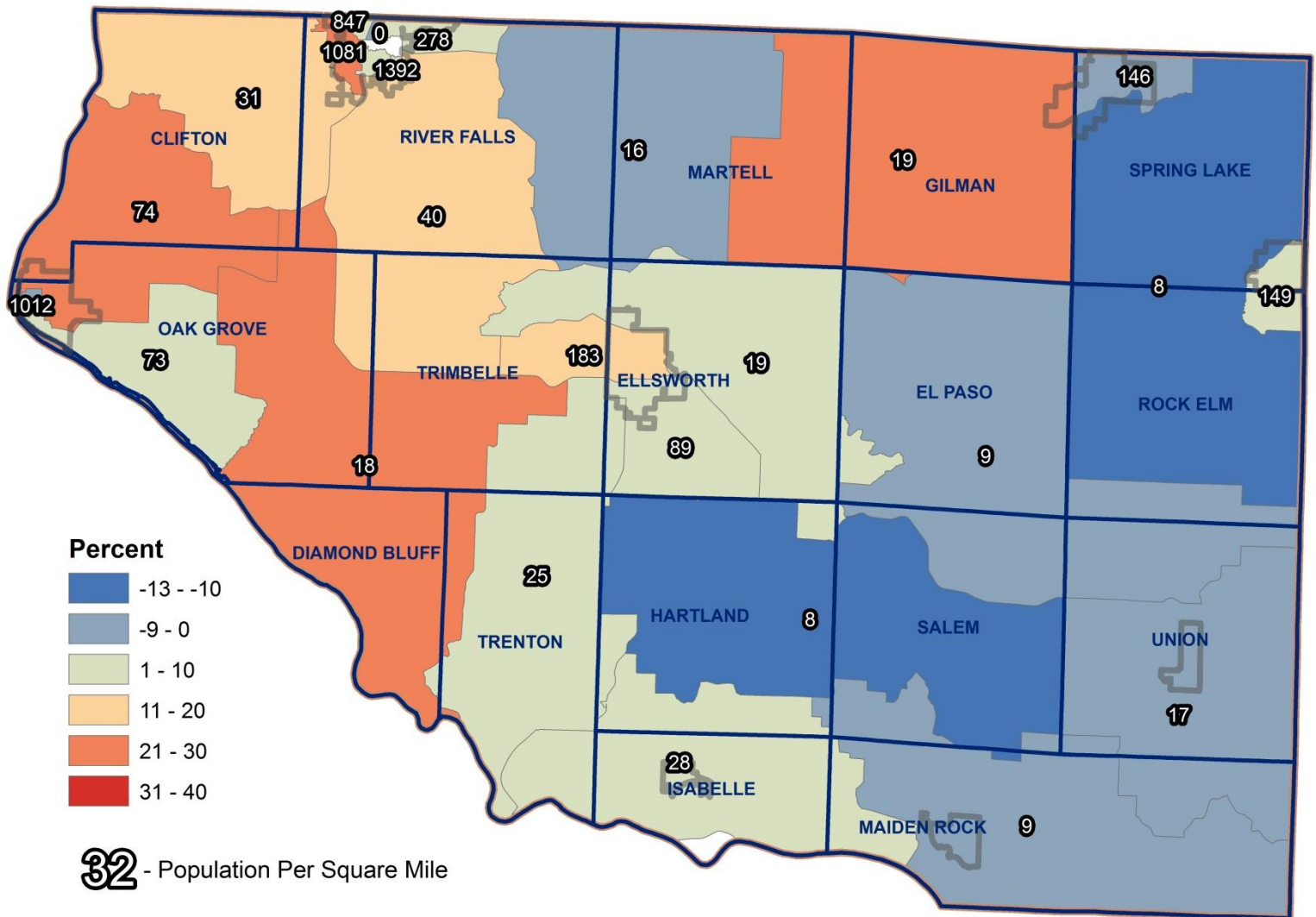




Data comparing the total population per square mile in 2012 with 2000 estimates illustrates the change that has taken place in the new millennium. Over the 12 year period, the eastern portion of the county predominantly experienced a slight decline in population density per square mile, while the western portion of the county experienced moderate to high increases. The census block groups intersecting with the City of River falls experienced the greatest percentage increase in population density. Population densities per square mile currently range from approximately 8 persons per square mile to over 1300.

### *Population Density and Change*

## Percent Change in Census Block Group Population Density per Square Mile from 2000 to 2012



Source: 2012 ACS, 2000 US Census Bureau



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### Land Use Permit Applications

## 2009

	New Home Const. Value	New Dwelling	Addition to Dwelling	New Accessory Building	Addition to Accessory Building	Business	Misc.	Total
Towns								
Clifton	\$300,000	1	2	11	1	0	4	19
Diamond Bluff	\$0	0	2	3	0	0	2	7
Ellsworth	\$200,000	2	0	4	1	1	3	11
El Paso	\$0	0	2	8	1	0	1	12
Gilman	\$82,800	3	1	5	2	1	0	12
Hartland	\$309,000	2	2	6	2	1	1	14
Isabelle	\$0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Maiden Rock	\$251,300	4	2	6	1	1	1	15
Martell	\$170,000	2	7	6	2	1	1	19
Oak Grove	\$440,000	2	8	14	2	2	0	28
Rock Elm	\$95,000	2	5	2	1	1	1	12
Salem	\$110,000	1	1	3	2	0	2	9
Spring Lake	\$29,000	1	1	4	1	0	1	8
Trenton	\$115,000	1	7	11	2	4	2	27
Trimbelle	\$45,000	1	2	7	1	1	2	14
Union	\$0	0	2	7	0	0	2	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,147,100</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>220</b>

Source: Pierce County

## 2010

	New Home Const. Value	New Dwelling	Addition to Dwelling	New Accessory Building	Addition to Accessory Building	Business	Misc.	Total
Towns								
Clifton	\$430,000	2	10	10	1	1	5	29
Diamond Bluff	\$270,000	2	3	0	1	1	1	8
Ellsworth	\$393,000	2	3	8	1	0	2	16
El Paso	\$320,000	2	2	3	1	0	1	9
Gilman	\$107,000	2	3	10	1	0	1	17
Hartland	\$861,700	5	2	11	3	0	2	23
Isabelle	\$0	0	1	3	0	0	0	4
Maiden Rock	\$457,500	3	4	3	0	0	6	16
Martell	\$110,000	1	5	2	1	2	3	14
Oak Grove	\$492,600	2	8	16	2	0	5	33
Rock Elm	\$344,000	3	1	2	0	1	1	8
Salem	\$48,000	1	0	2	1	0	0	4
Spring Lake	\$75,000	1	2	2	1	0	1	7
Trenton	\$471,000	3	6	8	1	1	5	24
Trimbelle	\$0	0	1	6	2	0	4	13
Union	\$13,000	1	3	5	0	0	6	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,392,800</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>240</b>

Source: Pierce County



# 2011

New Home Const. Value	New Dwelling	Addition to Dwelling	New Accessory Building	Addition to Accessory Building	<i>APPENDIX III: DATA REVIEW</i> Business	Misc.	Total
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Towns								
Clifton	\$1,361,900	4	5	13	1	1	2	26
Diamond Bluff	\$50,000	3	2	3	1	0	3	12
Ellsworth	\$595,000	2	1	8	1	0	1	13
El Paso	\$50,000	1	4	10	1	0	2	18
Gilman	\$397,900	3	4	3	0	1	1	12
Hartland	\$42,275	1	1	10	0	0	2	14
Isabelle	\$321,000	2	0	2	0	0	0	4
Maiden Rock	\$355,000	3	3	5	2	0	2	15
Martell	\$100,000	1	1	7	0	1	2	12
Oak Grove	\$600,000	1	5	12	0	2	4	24
Rock Elm	\$3,800	1	3	6	1	0	3	14
Salem	\$0	0	1	0	0	0	2	3
Spring Lake	\$90,000	1	0	4	0	1	1	7
Trenton	\$420,000	2	3	9	1	0	2	17
Trimbelle	\$372,000	2	2	11	5	0	5	25
Union	\$70,000	1	5	3	0	0	4	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,828,875</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>229</b>

Source: Pierce County

# 2012

New Home Const. Value	New Dwelling	Addition to Dwelling	New Accessory Building	Addition to Accessory Building	Business	Misc.	Total
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Towns								
Clifton	\$611,000	4	5	16	3	0	1	29
Diamond Bluff	\$30,000	1	0	2	1	0	1	5
Ellsworth	\$380,000	2	3	4	0	0	2	11
El Paso	\$826,000	4	2	6	2	0	1	15
Gilman	\$375,000	2	1	9	1	1	0	14
Hartland	\$15,000	1	4	7	0	0	0	12
Isabelle	\$0	0	2	4	0	0	0	6
Maiden Rock	\$0	0	2	6	0	0	4	12
Martell	\$0	0	7	7	4	0	0	18
Oak Grove	\$524,000	2	7	14	1	1	3	28
Rock Elm	\$350,000	1	1	9	0	0	1	12
Salem	\$380,000	3	0	4	1	0	0	8
Spring Lake	\$60,000	2	2	5	0	0	1	10
Trenton	\$275,000	2	4	17	0	2	2	27
Trimbelle	\$334,900	4	1	10	3	1	3	22
Union	\$215,000	2	4	4	0	0	0	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,375,900</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>239</b>

Source: Pierce County



**2013**New Home  
Const. ValueNew  
DwellingAddition to  
DwellingNew  
Accessory  
BuildingAddition to  
Accessory  
Building

APPENDIX III: DATA REVIEW

Business

Misc.

Total

Towns								
Clifton	\$1,959,000	6	7	8	2	2	5	30
Diamond Bluff	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Ellsworth	\$544,000	3	0	5	1	0	3	12
El Paso	\$590,000	2	2	7	1	0	4	16
Gilman	\$1,173,000	7	3	8	4	2	2	26
Hartland	\$1,113,000	7	4	4	1	0	1	17
Isabelle	\$0	0	1	3	1	1	0	6
Maiden Rock	\$532,950	4	0	5	1	0	2	12
Martell	\$240,000	1	6	5	2	0	1	15
Oak Grove	\$775,000	3	7	20	0	0	1	31
River Falls	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Rock Elm	\$102,000	1	2	6	0	0	1	10
Salem	\$205,000	1	0	3	3	0	0	7
Spring Lake	\$1,700	1	2	7	0	0	0	10
Trenton	\$390,000	2	2	9	1	1	5	20
Trimbelle	\$0	0	3	5	1	0	2	11
Union	\$0	0	1	8	0	1	1	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,625,650</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>237</b>

Source: Pierce County

**2014**New Home  
Const. ValueNew  
DwellingAddition to  
DwellingNew  
Accessory  
BuildingAddition to  
Accessory  
Building

Business

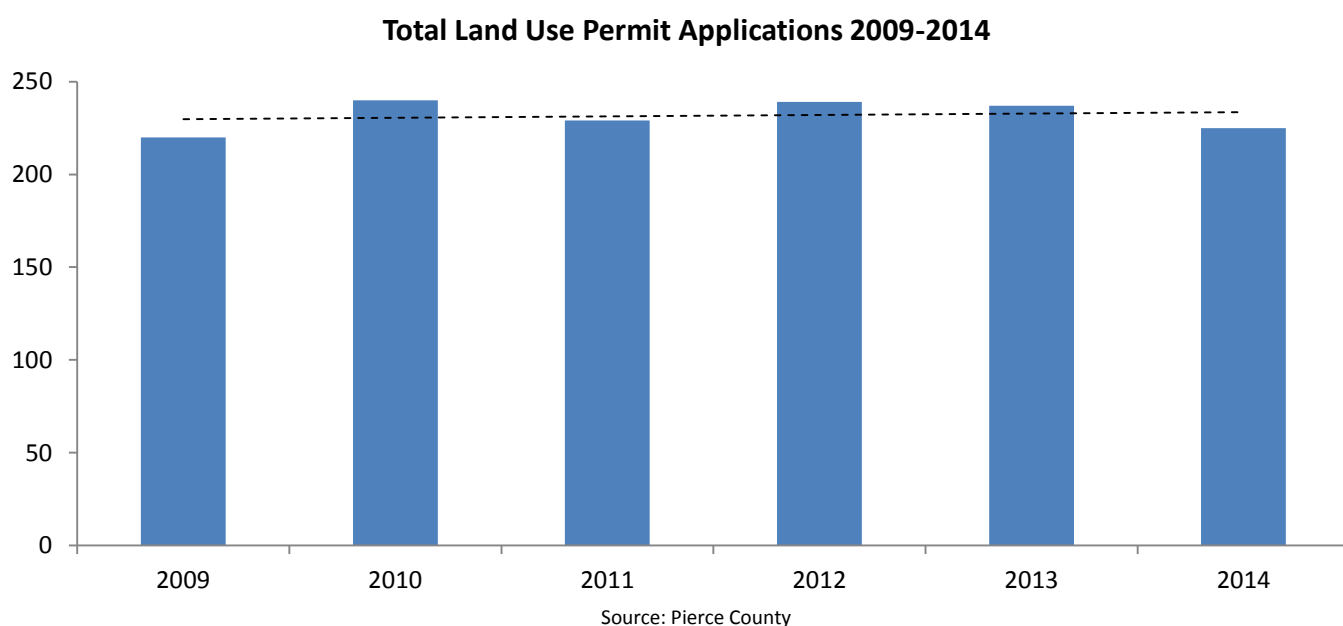
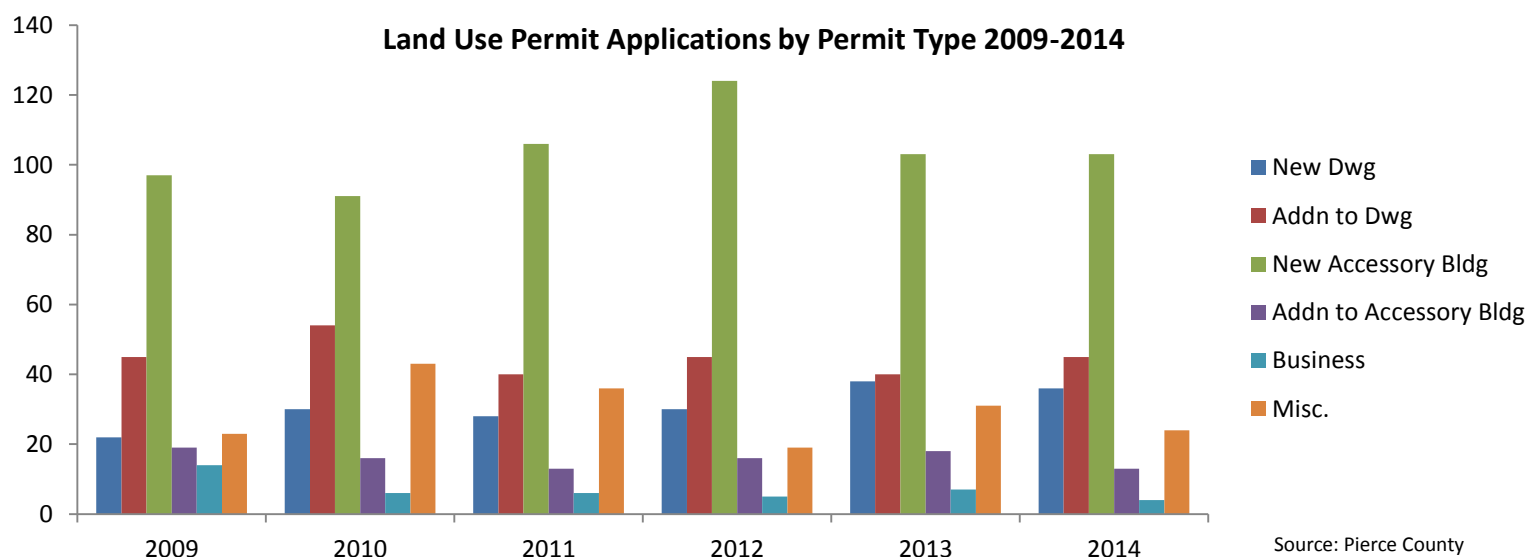
Misc.

Total

Towns								
Clifton	\$2,740,830	7	11	11	1	0	2	32
Diamond Bluff	\$609,726	2	2	3	1	0	2	10
Ellsworth	\$0	0	1	4	0	0	0	5
El Paso	\$659,736	6	2	10	1	2	5	26
Gilman	\$500,000	1	3	7	1	0	2	14
Hartland	\$150,000	1	5	3	0	0	0	9
Isabelle	\$0	0	1	5	0	1	0	7
Maiden Rock	\$750,000	1	3	4	2	0	1	11
Martell	\$90,000	1	3	6	1	0	1	12
Oak Grove	\$1,173,000	5	4	18	1	0	2	30
River Falls	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Rock Elm	\$203,000	2	0	7	0	0	0	9
Salem	\$0	0	1	4	1	0	1	7
Spring Lake	\$615,000	2	2	2	0	0	0	6
Trenton	\$985,000	4	3	10	3	1	3	24
Trimbelle	\$100,000	1	2	4	0	0	0	7
Union	\$310,900	3	2	5	1	0	4	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,887,192</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>225</b>

Source: Pierce County





Pierce County Land Management department data reveal overall land use permit applications from 2009 through 2014 remained relatively static. An average of 231 land use permit applications was received annually from 2009 to 2014. New accessory dwellings remained the most common land use permit application, with additions to dwellings being the second most common



**RESOLUTION 17-01**

**Regarding the Preparation of a Comprehensive Plan  
for Pierce County, Wisconsin**

WHEREAS, the Pierce County Land Management Committee (LMC) has prepared an updated Comprehensive Plan for Pierce County, and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan was updated taking into consideration the most recent demographic and economic data, and includes said data and maps as appendices; and

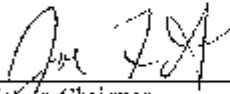
WHEREAS, the LMC has conducted a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the LMC has reviewed and approved the Comprehensive Plan, and recommends adoption by the County Board;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Comprehensive Plan will be used as the basis for updating the zoning and subdivision ordinances, and as a guide for approving or disapproving actions affecting growth and development within Pierce County.

Adopted at a meeting of the LMC this 5<sup>th</sup> day of July 2017.

Respectfully submitted by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Feltzer, Chairman



**ORDINANCE NO. 17-04**  
**Amend Chapter 232 of the Pierce County Code – Comprehensive Plan**

PIERCE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DOES HEREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1: That Chapter 232 of the Pierce County Code is hereby revised as follows:**

**§ 232-1. Purpose.**

The purpose of this chapter is for Pierce County to lawfully adopt an updated Comprehensive Plan, to aid the Land Management Committee and the County Board in the performance of their duties in respect to planning future development and use of County facilities and services.

**§ 232-2. Pierce County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (PCCPSC) recommendation.**

~~With professional assistance, the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan has been prepared and has been adopted by resolution of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (PCCPSC) by the affirmative vote of not less than a majority of all the members of the PCCPSC at a meeting thereof held January 23, 2009, whereupon a copy of said plan was recommended to the County Board for adoption.~~

The updated Pierce County Comprehensive Plan has been prepared and adopted by resolution by the Pierce County Land Management Committee by the affirmative vote of not less than a majority of all of the members of the Land Management Committee at a meeting thereof held July 5, 2017 whereupon a copy of said plan was recommended to the County Board for adoption.

**§ 232-3. Adoption of County Comprehensive Plan.**

- A. The County Board of Pierce County, Wisconsin, does, by the enactment of this chapter, formally adopt the updated document entitled "Pierce County Comprehensive Plan", a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference, including all maps, descriptive matter and other matters contained therein.
- B. The extent to which, and the schedule according to which, the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan may be implemented shall be determined from time to time, in the future, by further action of the County Board.
- C. Copies of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan shall be prepared and made available for use in the development of the facilities and services of Pierce County.



**SECTION 2: That this Ordinance shall become effective upon its adoption and publication as required by law.**

Dated this 22 day of August, 2017.

ATTESTED TO BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jamie Feuerhelm, County Clerk

Adopted:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeffrey A. Holst, Chair  
Pierce County Board of Supervisors

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bradley D. Lawrence, Corp. Counsel  
BCL