

# City of Neillsville 2021-2041 Comprehensive Plan Adopted XXXXXX, 2021





# City of Neillsville 2021-2041 Comprehensive Plan



**prepared by the City of Neillsville Plan Commission &  
Economic Development Commission**

**with assistance from West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**







## Placeholder for Plan Commission Resolution



Placeholder for Council Ordinance





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# 1. INTRODUCTION

# Introduction

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Planning Authority and Scope

Planning is an orderly, open approach to determining local needs, setting goals and priorities, and developing a guide for action. In 1999, the State Legislature created a new framework for community planning in the State of Wisconsin—1999 Wisconsin Act 9.

Beginning on January 1, 2010, any program or action of a local government which regulates land use (e.g., zoning, subdivision regulations, agricultural preservation programs) must be consistent with that government's comprehensive plan 1. According to Wisconsin Statutes, the comprehensive plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the community which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, or the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.

1999 Wisconsin Act 9, often referred to as the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning and Smart Growth Law, provides additional guidance regarding what must be included in each community plan and how the plan should be developed. Each plan must address nine key elements:

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

#### **AB608, Wisconsin Act 233** **Clarification on the Consistency Requirement**

This bill was signed into law in April 2004. This law reduced the number of programs or actions with which a comprehensive plan must be consistent. Under the new legislation, the only actions that must be consistent with a comprehensive plan are official mapping, local subdivision regulation, and zoning ordinances, including zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands. The bill also reiterates that a regional planning commission's comprehensive plan is only advisory to a political subdivision (a city, village, town or county) and a political subdivision's comprehensive plan.

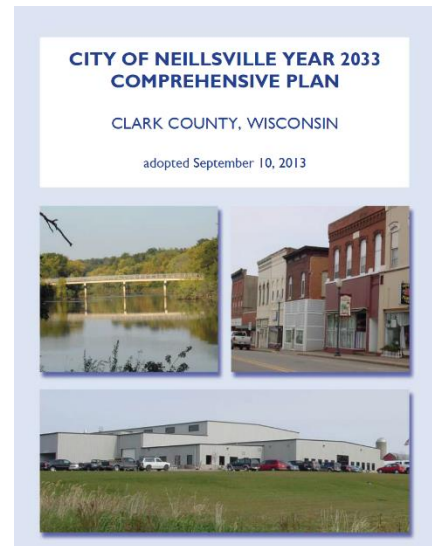
The *City of Neillsville Year 2021 - 2041 Comprehensive Plan Update* fully addresses the requirements of all nine elements within Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001. Given that this Plan update was not funded with a State grant specifically earmarked for comprehensive planning, the fourteen State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Goals identified in Wisconsin Statutes §16.965 are considered advisory.

# Introduction

## 1.2 City of Neillsville 2013-2033 Comprehensive Plan (adopted 2013)

This document is an update of the *City of Neillsville Year 2033 Comprehensive Plan* (2013 Plan) which was adopted on September 10, 2013 (Ordinance No. 104-2). The 2033 Plan was an update to the City's 2025 Plan, which used a robust process consisting of seven regional workshops coordinated by the Clark County Planning and Zoning Department and funded through the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Grant Program. Participants within the City's regional group included the Towns of Pine Valley, Weston, and Grant, and the Village of Granton. The 2033 Plan Update, conducted in 2013, was not as robust as the process used to create the 2025 Plan as City officials considered many of the issues, trends, goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations had not changed or still applied.

The issues, goals, objectives, and policies from the 2013 Plan were reviewed and updated as part of this document. The maps, data, and a review of existing programs and plans were also updated, with much of this information incorporated into the appendix.



## 1.3 The City of Neillsville Plan Update Process & Public Involvement

In the Winter of 2021, the City of Neillsville contracted with West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to assist with the update of the *City of Neillsville Year 2033 Comprehensive Plan*. Given that this is a plan update, the process is similar to that used in 2013. This update process was interactive with some restructuring of the plan to clearly address the element requirements within the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law. In accordance with the State comprehensive planning law, most plan elements include goals, objectives, policies, and programs, which are generally defined as:

**Goals** – Broad, general, and long-term expressions of the community's aspirations for towards which the planned effort is directed. Goals tend to be ends rather than means.

**Objectives** – More specific targets derived from goals and necessary to achieve those goals. While still general in nature, objectives are more precise, concrete, and measurable than goals. Objectives should also be achievable within the 20-year planning horizon.

**Policies & Recommendations** – Policies is a term applied broadly in the comprehensive planning law. For purposes of this plan, *policies* are largely decision-making guidance or suggested rules, while *recommendations* are action-oriented strategies. Both policies and recommendations are courses of action to achieve the goals and objectives they are derived from. As described in Section 12, some recommendations are identified as short-term priorities for which action within the next five years is suggested; some elements (e.g., Sections 5 & 6) have more detailed implementation recommendations or schedules.

**Programs** – A system of projects, services or other resources which can help the community achieve its plan goals, objectives, and policies. Programs are not always administered by the community and may include other service providers, agencies, and their plans. Existing plans and programs that may be relevant to the City are summarized in Appendix E.

The plan update was under the guidance of the City of Neillsville Plan Commission and the City of Neillsville Economic Development Commission, which conducted four joint planning meetings between March and June 2021 with the WCWRPC as facilitator. The Clark County Economic Development

# Introduction

Corporation and Tourism Bureau was an active participant during these meetings and an important resource for assisting the City in plan implementation.

The City of Neillsville has complied with all public participation requirements as detailed in Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001, including the adoption of a written public participation plan (see Appendix A). The City implemented the public participation plan as part of this plan update which included opportunities for public input such as:

- all meetings were properly noticed and open to the public;
- draft copies of the Plan update were available for public review prior to the public hearing;
- a properly noticed public hearing was conducted by the Plan Commission on the draft plan; and,
- the City invited, considered, and responded to written comments on the draft plan.

The above public participation activities were completed by the City prior to the adoption of the amended plan. The Plan Commission and City Council held a joint public hearing inviting public comment on the draft plan on Month XX, 2021. The Neillsville Plan Commission recommended adoption of the updated plan by resolution on Month XX, 2021. The Neillsville City Council adopted the plan update on Month XX, 2021.



## 2. ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

# Issues & Opportunities

## 2. Issues and Opportunities

### 2.1 Regional Perspective

The City of Neillsville is located in south central Clark County at the intersection of State Highway 73 and U.S. Highway 10. The City had a population of 2,463 persons according to the 2010 census, which was a 9.8% population decrease from the 2000 census, though City officials have expressed some concern with the accuracy of the 2010 estimate. Residential development is primarily characterized by single family homes. The City is bordered by the Town of Pine Valley on all sides. The City is also the county seat for Clark County.

Clark County, Wisconsin is located in West Central Wisconsin. Geographically, Clark County is very large (1,215 square miles) and is host to 46 local units of government that include eight (8) cities, five (5) villages and 33 towns. With a 2010 census population of 34,690 and a total land area of 1,215 square miles, population density in Clark County is low with an average density of 28.6 persons per square mile. Clark County is predominantly a rural county which revolves around the agriculture, manufacturing and recreation industries.

The current economic foundation of Clark County and the City of Neillsville is based in agriculture, particularly the dairy industry, and in outdoor recreation. Dairy processing and agri-business are very important to residents as an employment opportunity and as a way of life. Clark County maintains a strong manufacturing



base as well. The

City of Neillsville is also the Clark County seat, which influences its economic base and the City's role as a governmental services and employment destination. As the most populated municipality in Clark County, the City is also a service, retail, and commerce destination for the surrounding area and for County Forest users.

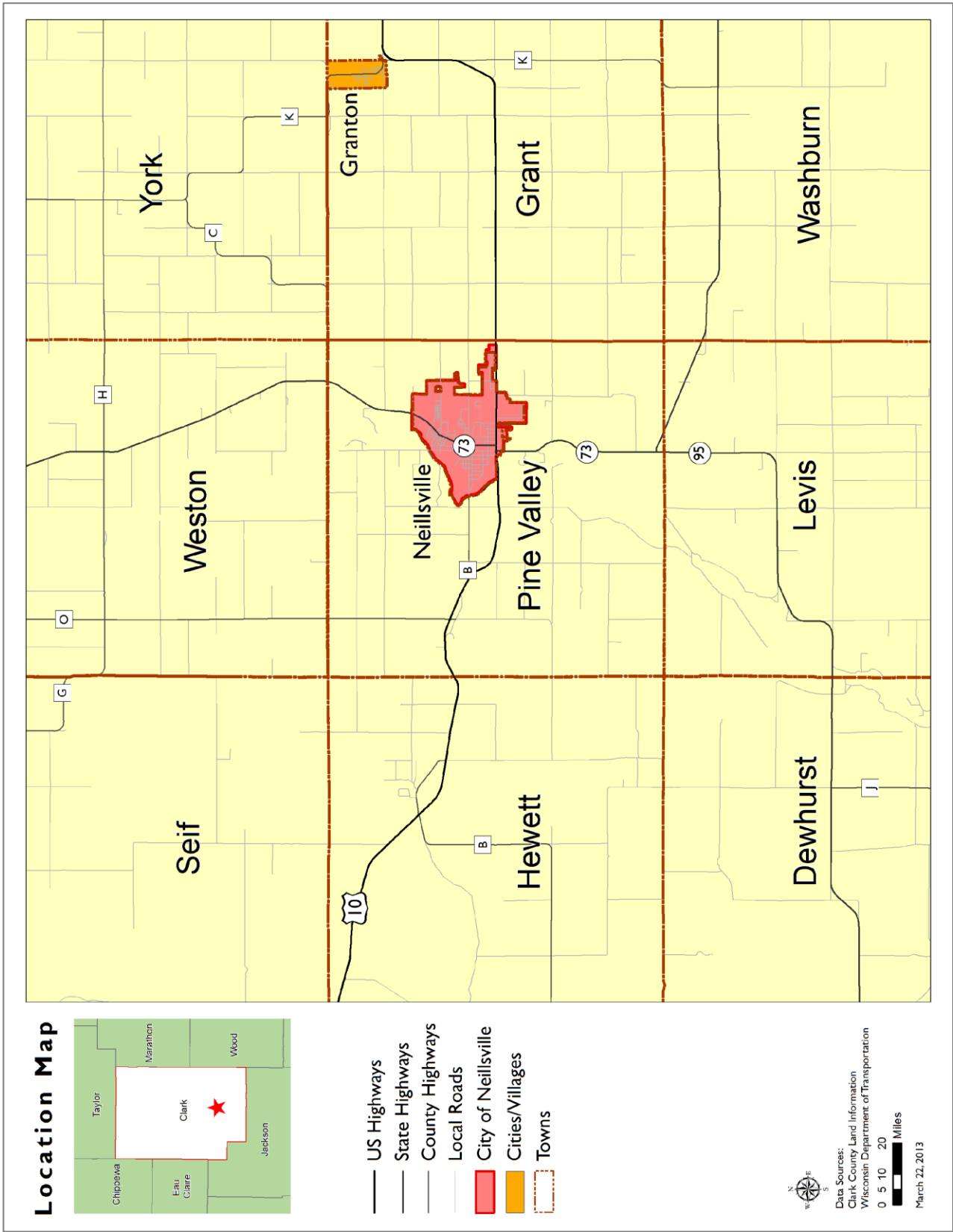


The cornerstone to Clark County's recreation industry is the 133,000-acre Clark County Forest. The county-owned forest provides residents and visitors a variety of recreational opportunities including hunting, camping, ATV riding, snowmobiling, hiking, skiing and horseback riding. The Clark County Forest is managed as a sustainable resource and generates opportunities for the forest products industry as well. In addition, considerable private holdings of forest land exist throughout the county. Private forest land generates additional recreational and economic opportunities for land owners as well as providing valuable wildlife habitat.

The county's major water feature is the scenic Black River, which flows north to south through the entire length of the county before it empties into Lake Arbutus. The Black River also forms the western border of the City of Neillsville.

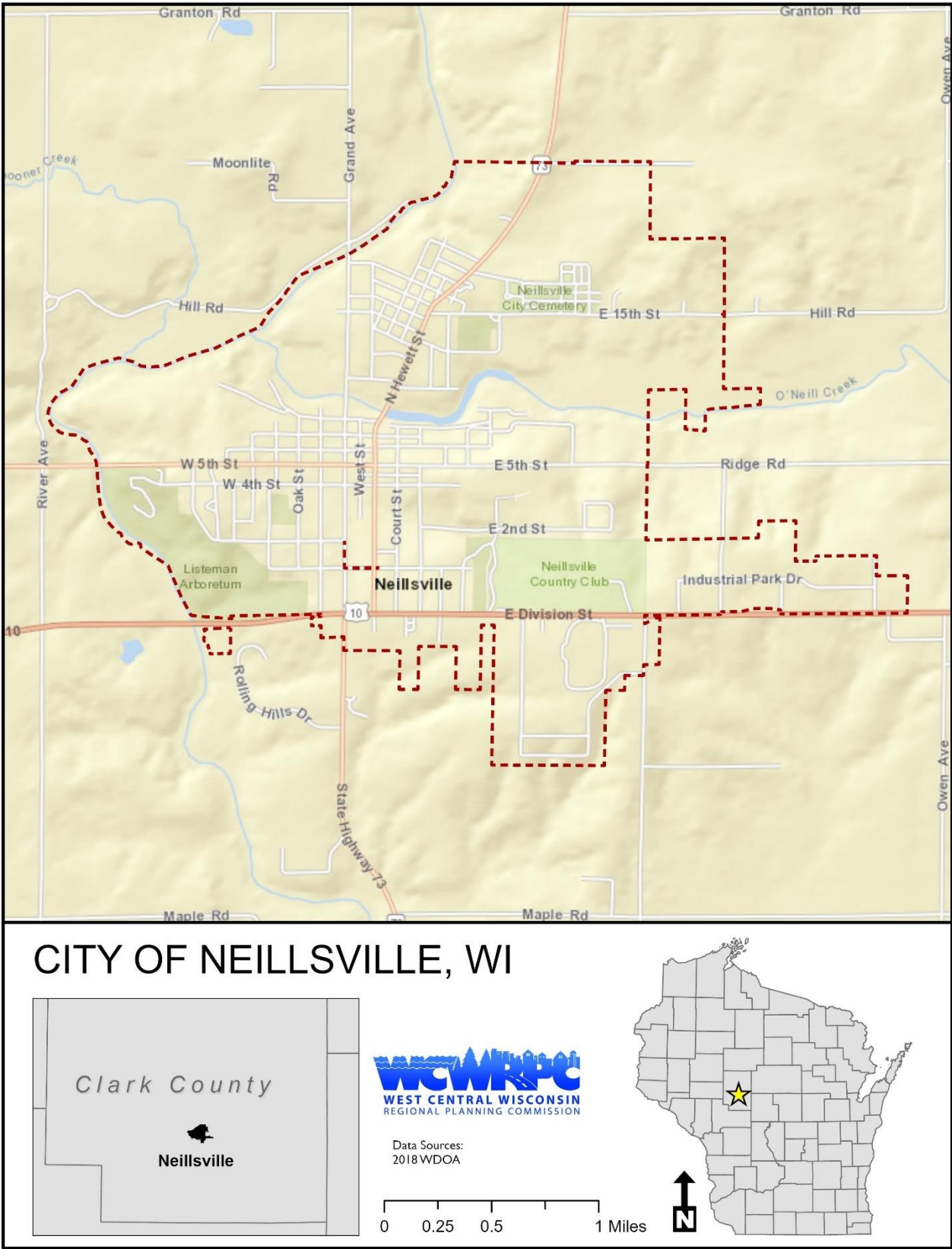
# Issues & Opportunities

Map 1 Regional Perspective



# Issues & Opportunities

Map 2 Context and Location





# Issues & Opportunities

## 2.2 2012 Public Opinion Survey

As part of the 2013 Plan update, the City Plan Commission developed a four-page survey which was distributed with December 2012 tax mailings to all property owners. The survey was advertised in the Clark County Press and copies were also distributed some of the larger rental properties. A total of 285 surveys were returned, which is about 24 percent of all households in the City.

Older residents were more likely to respond to the survey:

1. 50% of respondents were age 65+ (about. 21% of all residents are age 65+)
2. 50% were retired
3. 85% had no children under 18 in the household
4. 60% lived in Neillsville for 25+ years

The results of the survey are provided in **Appendix F**, with some selected findings highlighted here:

1. Over half of the respondents live in Neillsville to be near family and friends and for the small town atmosphere.
2. The largest percentages of newer residents (<10 years) live in Neillsville to be near family and friends or for cost of their home.
3. All services were rated Very Good and Good, with perhaps some more work to do on high speed internet, senior housing, senior services, and road/street maintenance.
4. Additional walking/biking trails and routes are needed, while more ATV routes are not needed.
5. The newspaper is the preferred informational source.
6. Protection of ground and surface water is the most important natural & cultural resource priority.
7. Downtown revitalization and increasing manufacturing base are very important; it is essential or very important that the City promote these types of economic development.
8. There may be a demand for more affordable, quality apartments, as well as duplexes and senior apartments.
9. The appearance of homes is very important to respondents.
10. A slim majority of respondents feel landowners should not be allowed to develop land any way they want. However, of the 41.3% of respondents who agreed that landowners should be allowed to develop their land any way they want, 89.3% agreed or strongly agreed that it is important to protect quality of life and property values from impacts on neighboring properties.

It is important to note that this was an opinion survey reflecting only the views of the respondents. No statistical analysis with margins of error, non-response bias testing, or sampling was performed.

At its 3/4/21 meeting, the Plan Update Committee (the City's Plan Commission & Economic Development Commission) discussed the survey results and felt that they were still largely relevant today with a couple changes noted: (i) the City now has more ATV routes and (ii) a growing number of residents may be relying on the internet/social media and WCCN radio for information. The 2021 Plan update did not include a new or updated public opinion survey.

# Issues & Opportunities

## 2.3 City of Neillsville Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities were identified by the Plan Update Committee after review and consideration of the issues and opportunities found in the 2013 Plan. The list is organized by general categories, but may be address in multiple section. The list provides insight into some of the most important topics that the 2021 Plan addresses, but is not exclusive of all such issues and opportunities facing the community.

### Population & Housing

- Decreasing population trends and the aging population; attract more families and workforce
- Availability of affordable single-family and multi-family lots
- Encourage more rental and owner home construction, including a mix of housing types
- Provide more senior living opportunities

### Economic Development

- Partner with local businesses to meet economic development goals
- Recruitment of commercial business and industry, including services that would support local businesses and the Courthouse (e.g., attorneys)
- Retention and expansion of industry, including growing the industrial park
- Encourage more development within the Tax Increment Financing Districts
- More employment opportunities and amenities are needed to enhance quality of life and attract and/or retain workers, young people, and young families
- Downtown revitalization and getting more business owners involved, especially addressing vacant storefronts and capitalizing on the character of the historic district
- MMC-N and other health care providers are an asset that should be marketed
- Identify the jobs that local businesses need, then work with the Technical College to strengthen local educational and training programs that align with these workforce needs; build on efforts of the School District

### Community Marketing & Branding

- The community lacks a cohesive community brand and marketing strategy
- Demonstrate that Neillsville is a great place to visit and live by capitalizing on and marketing the outdoor recreation and attractions of the area, such as forest and parks, ATV and horse trails, hunting, Bruce Mound, Jail Museum, Reed School, and the High Ground
- Recognize and utilize the historical significance of the City to attract business and industry
- Aesthetics are important to making the community attractive and welcoming to new residents and investment
- Need to better market housing opportunities (e.g., lots, programs/incentives, quality of life)



# Issues & Opportunities

- Continue to enhance sense of community and create a welcoming environment, not limited to aesthetic improvements
- The new City Hall's location (as well as the new MMC-N campus) will have excellent visibility to travelers on U.S. Highway 10

## Land Use & Community Design

- Continue to develop and enhance recreational opportunities including the bike trail
- Ensure adequate lots to meet housing and economic goals
- Identify and package new growth opportunities, including exploring the potential for a new TIF district

## Intergovernmental

- Strengthen relationship with Town of Pine Valley and planning for development in the Town near the City's border
- Realize public utility and service efficiencies through intergovernmental cooperation with the United Communities of Clark County group

## Implementation

- Are available economic development resources, grant funding, and local resources being used and maximized?
- Encourage greater community engagement and transparency of government
- Perceptions are often that Neillsville government has an adversarial environment

## 2.4 Existing Plans, Programs, and Regulations

Section 1.2 briefly discussed the City's existing Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2013. Under Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001, many of the plan elements require a description of the existing plans and programs related to each element.

The City's Code of Ordinances is available online with a link at <https://neillsville-wi.com/ordinances/> and include City regulations on subjects such as:

- public safety, finance, and government
- streets and sidewalks
- public utilities, including municipal sewer and water
- various offenses and public nuisances
- building code, minimum housing code, and fair housing code
- parks and recreation
- zoning code, including floodplain zoning and shoreland-wetland zoning
- subdivision and platting regulations

The primary existing plans and programs adopted by the City of Neillsville or other organizations within the community that are most pertinent to this Plan are discussed within the different Plan elements. Appendix E highlights potential programs and resources which are available to help address the issues

# Issues & Opportunities

and opportunities identified within this section. A few additional, multi-disciplinary programs are noted here as possible resources to assist with City planning and implementation efforts.

## Clark County and Clark County UW-Extension

Clark County government has various offices and programs which are available to the City's residents, officials, and government offices. For instance, the Cooperative Extension provides a variety of practical education program tailor to local needs, including agricultural, family living, nutrition, 4-H, and youth development, and can tap into additional resources through the University of Wisconsin system. Clark County UW-Extension also has a Community, Natural Resource, and Economic Development (CNRED) educator who provides additional support and coordination.

## League of Wisconsin Municipalities

The League of Wisconsin Municipalities is a voluntary nonprofit and nonpartisan association of cities and villages that acts as an information clearinghouse, lobbying organization and legal resource for Wisconsin municipalities.

## Wisconsin Department of Administration

The Wisconsin Department of Administration maintains a comprehensive planning website with element guides and other useful resource links. The Department also manages the State's Demographics Services Center with official population and housing estimates and projections.

## West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)

WCWRPC conducts areawide planning and provides technical assistance to local governments, including planning support, data analysis, mapping, small business revolving loan fund management, grantsmanship, and project administration. As noted previously, WCWRPC completed an *Inventory of Plans, Programs, and Land Use Policies in West Central Wisconsin* in October 2008 which references and describes the most prominent and applicable programs pertinent to comprehensive planning efforts at that time. WCWRPC also produced a *Plan Implementation Guide for West Central Wisconsin* in June 2010 which includes example best practices from throughout the region on a variety of issues and opportunities commonplace within west-central Wisconsin.

# Issues & Opportunities

## 2.5 City of Neillsville 2041 Vision Statement

The following vision statement is a statement of overall goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the City of Neillsville to guide the future development and redevelopment of the community over a 20-year planning period. This vision statement is further expressed and defined through the goals and objectives found later in each subsequent plan element.

*Neillsville is a growing, welcoming community with a quality of life that is desirable for residents of all ages. A balanced mix of quality, affordable housing is available in neighborhood settings that are safe and connected to amenities and community destinations.*

*We will continue to focus on sustaining and growing a vibrant downtown that will continue to be our small business district. Our downtown is the heart of our community as a gathering place that celebrates and preserves our shared history. The local economy is robust and diversified, with a growing business park, excellent health services, great educational opportunities, and a skilled workforce. The City will continue to be an inviting destination that attracts visitors, new residents, and business investment due to our diverse housing opportunities, our excellent quality of life, and the many outdoor recreation choices, historical sites, cultural activities, and other things to do within the City and nearby.*

*This vision will be achieved by: providing quality, cost-effective public services; collaboration with local businesses, educational institutions, community organizations, and other units of government; proactively sharing a community message that Neillsville is a great place to live, work, and play; and our continued commitment to open government, an active citizenry, and mutual respect that fosters trust, communication, and sense of community.*



## 3. POPULATION & HOUSING

# Population & Housing

## 3. Population and Housing

This element identifies specific policies and programs that promote the development and redevelopment of housing for residents and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and maintain or rehabilitate the existing housing stock. The element assesses the age, structural value, and occupancy characteristics of the existing housing stock and includes a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, and programs to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand. While comprehensive plans must describe programs that are available to provide an adequate supply that meets existing and projected demand, it is not assumed that the City is solely responsible for managing and providing these programs. In fact, housing tools and programs are available from a variety of public and non-profit sources as will be discussed in sub-section 3.4 and Appendix E.

### 3.1 Population Estimates, Characteristics, and Projections

To properly plan for Neillsville's future requires an understanding of the community's population, demographic trends, and housing base. Population trends influence all other plan elements, such as the demand for community services, economic development policy, and land use. Housing trends are directly related to demands of the population. Appendix B provides a variety of population and demographic data for the City of Neillsville while Appendix C provides a variety of housing data for the City.

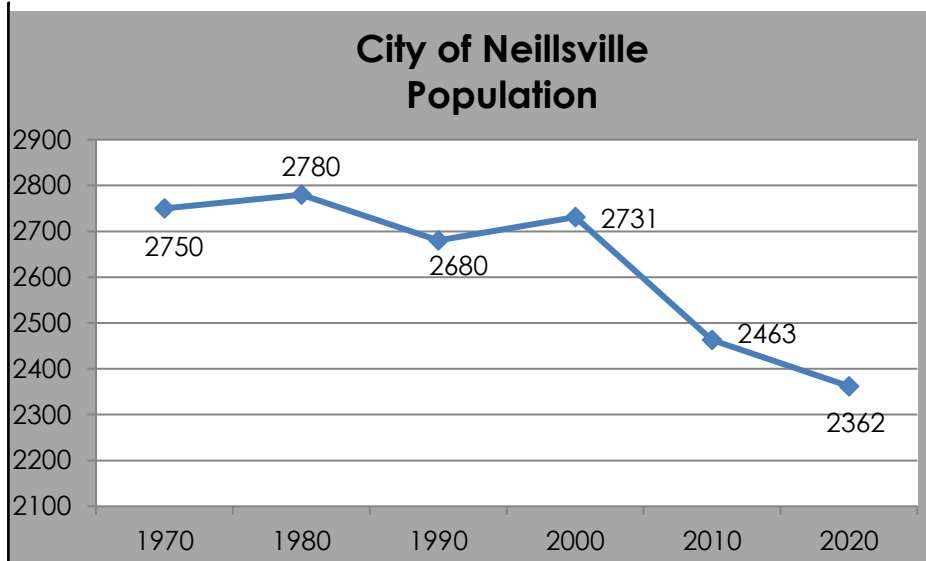
#### Population Estimates

As of January 1, 2020, the City of Neillsville had 2,362 residents according to the official state of Wisconsin population estimates. As shown in Figure 1, this is a continued decrease from the 2010 U.S. Census population.

According to the 2010 census, the City of Neillsville had a 2010 population of 2,463 people, a 9.8% decrease from the 2000 population count of 2,731. City officials were unable to identify a specific

reason for the 9.8% population decrease from 2000 to 2010, except, perhaps, closures at Sunburst and in manufacturing. This drop has driven estimates and projections for the City's population since 2010.

**Figure 1 Population Change, City of Neillsville, 2000 - 2019**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1970 – 2010; Wisconsin DOA Estimate for 2020

Since 1950, the population of Neillsville had been continually increasing until the 1990 census count which indicated a population decline and again, most recently, between 2000 and 2010. It is notable that all of the incorporated municipalities not located along the Highway 29 corridor decreased in population between 2000 and 2010. Even so, the City of Neillsville remains the largest community in Clark County.



# Population & Housing

## Population Characteristics

Between 2000 and 2019, the median age in the City increased from 43.6 years to 49.9 years. The City's median age is significantly higher than Clark County's median age of 37.4 years. In 2019, approximately 24.8 percent of the City's population was 65 years or older, while 18.8 percent was under the age of 20. In terms of race, the majority of the population of the City of Neillsville is predominantly White. In 2019, Neillsville's White alone population was 94.6 percent.

A shifting age structure is a national trend that is evident in Wisconsin and also Clark County. This is largely due to the baby-boomer generation, which is a large segment of the overall population, nearing retirement age. As this age group gets older the demand for services such as health care will increase, and well as employment opportunities in certain industries and the demand for certain housing types. It will become increasingly important for municipalities to recognize these trends and also to plan for the new demands that will need to be met.

Table 1 shows the population distribution by age in Neillsville from 2000 to 2019. Looking at the cohorts, the group with the highest population in 2010 was the 20-44 age group. Between 2000 and 2010, the City of Neillsville experienced the largest increase (96 persons) in the number of residents that were ages 45 to 64. The 65+ age group experienced a decrease of 94 persons. The population change in the 65+ age group is significant and should be noted. The possible reasons for this significant change could be attributed to more deaths in this age group than people entering the age group from the 2000 Census. In addition, it could be a result of people in this age cohort that reach a diminished physical and/or mental condition and are no longer able to live in the City due to a lack of housing options and/or resources in the City. It is vital to have a community that has resources and programs that eliminate the isolation of the elderly from the rest of society and to provide the elderly opportunities to age in place and age in the community.

**Table 1 Population by Age, City of Neillsville, 2000, 2010, & 2019**

Age (years)	2000		2010		2019		% Change 2000- 2019
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	
Under 5	158	5.8	143	5.8	140	6.0	-11.4
5 to 19	606	22.2	465	18.9	297	12.8	-51.0
20 to 44	778	28.5	664	27.0	593	25.5	-23.8
45 to 64	512	18.7	608	24.7	718	30.9	40.2
65+	677	24.8	583	23.7	575	24.8	-15.1
Total	2,731		2,463		2,323		-14.9
Median Age	40.3 (county – 35.9)		43.6 (county – 37.2)		49.9 (county – 37.4)		9.6 years

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 & 2010, American Community Survey 2015-2019

## Population Projections

Population projections are based on past and current population trends and are not predictions, rather they extend past growth trends into the future and their reliability depends on the continuation of these past growth trends. Projections should be considered as one of many tools used to help anticipate and predict future needs within the City. Population levels are subject to physical conditions, environmental concerns, land use, zoning restrictions, taxation, annexation, and other political policies that influence business and personal location decisions.

# Population & Housing

It should be noted that demographic projections are not an absolute science. Some methods use a linear, historical approach using past growth trends to predict future growth or decline, and other methods use births, deaths, and migration to estimate the population. While certain factors, demographic, economic and geographic, influence growth, each community has an opportunity to shape its growth using tools or policies to promote or limit development.

In 2013, the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) Demographic Services Center released their population projections to the year 2040 for the communities and counties of Wisconsin. The WDOA utilized a projection formula that calculates the annual population change over three varying time spans. From this formula, the average annual numerical population change is calculated, which was used to give communities preliminary population projections for a future date. Table 2 below includes the official population estimates and projections for the City of Neillsville. The official population estimate projections, prepared by WDOA, anticipate a decrease in population over time. The projections likely reflect and place significant weight on the 2000 to 2010 population decrease.

While there have been some significant changes in the community that influence the community's population and demographics, including the closing of Sunburst, Homme Home, Leason and Figi's, along with the closing of the Neillsville Care & Rehabilitation nursing home, there are opportunities for attracting people to the community. Such opportunities include the new hospital being constructed in the Town of Pine Valley and growing employment opportunities at businesses such as Mayville Engineering and Cummins.

City of Neillsville officials expressed some skepticism regarding the accuracy of WDOA's 2020+ projections. The City is actively undertaking efforts to attract new growth and retain existing community members and businesses. Given that the City has employment opportunities, and is actively marketing such opportunities, the opportunity exists to grow the community if the housing is available that the market desires and a good quality of life is offered. Given these factors, an alternative population projection was created. The City Plan Commission believes that the alternative low-growth projection is reasonable and achievable, and could potentially even be exceeded.

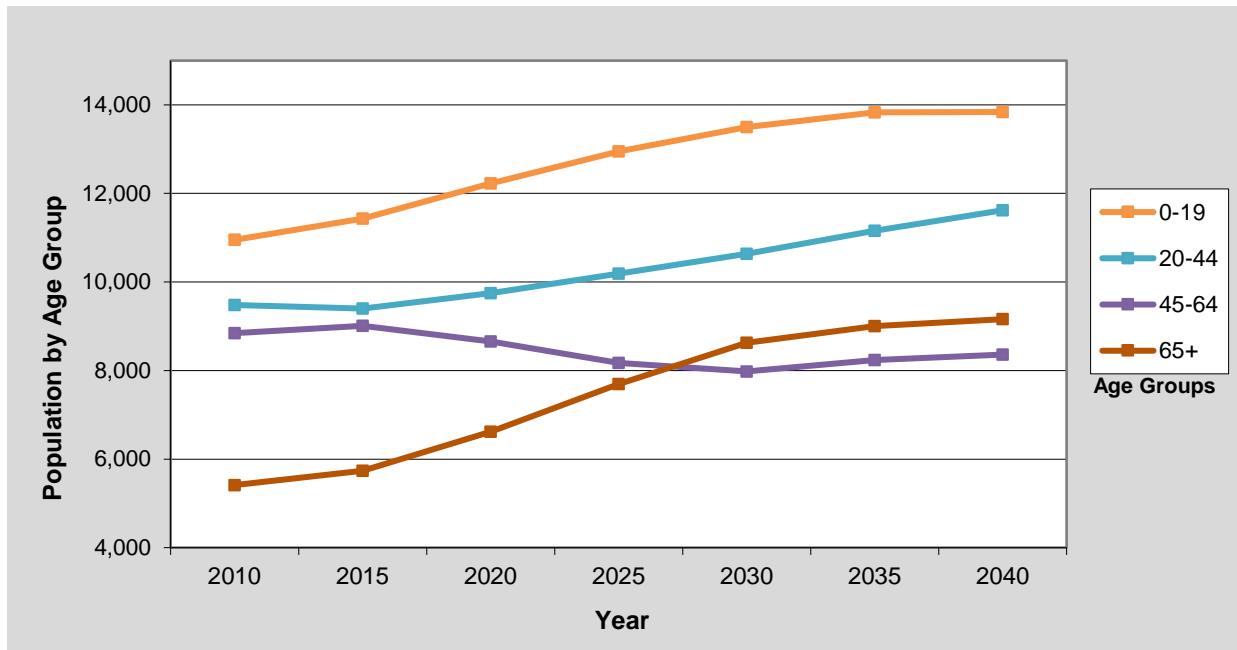
**Table 2 Population Estimates & Projections for the City of Neillsville, 2000-2045**

	2000 Census	2010 Census	2015 Proj.	2020 Est.	2020 Proj.	2025 Proj.	2030 Proj.	2035 Proj.	2040 Proj.	2045 Proj.	2020 Est. - 2040 change
<b>WisDOA Population Projections (2015-2040)</b>											
Total Population	2,731	2,463	2,465	2,362	2,480	2,495	2,500	2,485	2,425		
Population Change		-268	-2		+15	+15	+5	-15	-60		-38
% Population Change		-9.8	+0.8		+61	+60	+20	-60	-2.41		-1.54
<b>Alternative Low-Growth Population Projections (2025-2045)</b>											
Total Population				2,362		2,394	2,426	2,458	2,490	2,520	
Population Change						+32	+32	+32	+32	+30	+158
% Population Change						+1.3	+1.3	+1.3	+1.3	+1.2	+6.7

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Final Municipal Population Projections, 2013, WCWRPC Alternative Projections

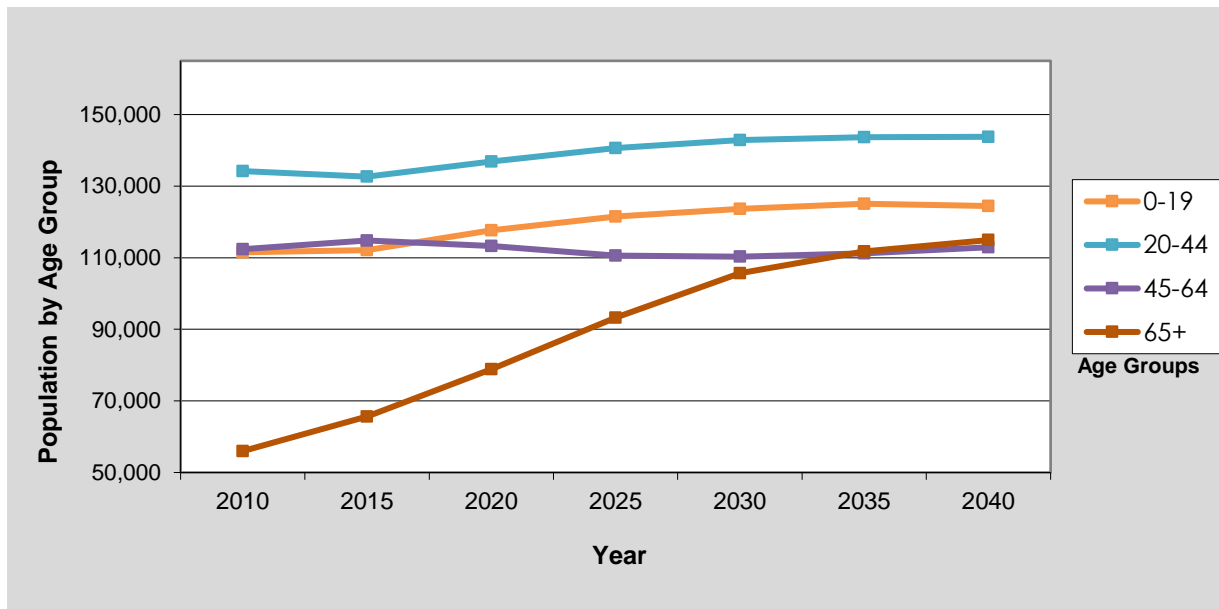
# Population & Housing

**Figure 2 Population Projections, Clark County, 2010-2040**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2014

**Figure 3 Population Projections, West Central Wisconsin, 2010-2040**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2014

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People consider many factors for why they move or stay in a location. Nationally, renters tend to be more mobile than homeowners. In a national survey, 37% of renters are specifically renting temporarily, with the remaining renting for reasons of affordability (or inability to afford a home), convenience, and amenities offered by their place of residence.<sup>2</sup> Consider the following from a 2008 Pew Research Center survey entitled “*American Mobility: Who Moves? Who Stays Put? Where’s Home?*”:

1. 63% of adults have moved to a new community at least once in their lives, while 37% have never left their hometowns.
2. In the Midwest, 46% of adult residents have spent their life in one community.
3. Rural residents are the most rooted Americans, with 48% of Americans living in rural areas spending their entire lives in the same place.
4. 77% of college graduates have changed communities at least once, compared with 56% of those with a high school diploma or less.
5. Major reasons why residents stay in their hometowns are: family ties (74%), desire to remain where they grew up (69%), and a belief that their communities are good places to raise children (59%). Fewer than half (40%) say a major reason for staying put is a job or business opportunities.
6. The most frequently cited major reason for moving is a job or business opportunity (44%).
7. Levels of community satisfaction do not appear to be correlated with people’s past mobility patterns.
8. Just 10% of movers say that cultural activities were a major reason they chose their current community.

The Pew Survey shows that in a rural area, such as the Neillsville area, residents are fairly rooted. Jobs and business opportunities are likely the largest sources of potential new residents. But when deciding upon two locations, other factors will contribute to the decision-making (e.g., schools, retail opportunities, sense-of-place, crime, aesthetics, recreation, amenities).

## 3.2 Housing Characteristics, Needs, and Projections

Housing costs are the single largest expenditure for most Wisconsin residents. For homeowners, their home is likely their most valuable asset and largest investment. Housing also plays a critical role in state and local economies. The housing in a community may be its largest asset. The construction industry and other occupations that support housing are a major portion of the economy. Residential development is also a major source of revenue for local communities in the form of property taxes. Beyond the financial aspects of housing, there are also social effects that are not so easily measured. People develop a sense of pride in their homes, which in turn creates a sense of community and a likely increase in participation in community activities.

Planning for the provision of housing may be new to many local units of government. Nonetheless, the programs and actions of local governments can influence the housing market. The comprehensive planning process necessitates that the community analyze the impact of the policies and regulations on

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<sup>2</sup> National Multifamily Housing Council. 2017. 2017 NMHC/Kingsley Renter Preferences Report.

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the development of various types of housing. The analysis is intended to take into account the current and projected housing needs in the community. The analysis should result in policies that provide opportunities for the development of the types and amounts of housing expected to be needed over a twenty-year planning horizon.

The following sections discuss in more detail specific information about the City's existing housing stock, patterns, and future trends.

## City of Neillsville General State of Housing

Table 3 from the *Economic Impact Study for the planned Marshfield Medical Center-Neillsville Campus* provides some housing data for Clark County, Town of Pine Valley and City of Neillsville based on 2013-2017 ACS data. Some key points from the 2017 data:

- Overall, Neillsville has a healthy renter-to-owner mix, with about 69% owner and 31% renter. As expected, a higher proportion of Pine Valley households own their home (79%/21% mix).
- The low vacancy rates in red reflect a tight housing market and suggest a demand exists for more units.
- Also in red are overcrowding rates higher than the State average of 3.1% of all rental units and 1% of all owner units. Overcrowding is defined by 1.01 or more persons per room.
- Over half of the assisted living units in Clark County are located within the City of Neillsville. Assisted living units are included in the rental units since occupants have a fully furnished apartment, while nursing homes are included in the group quarters and not considered a household.

**Table 3 Housing Occupancy Characteristics, 2017**

2017 Census	Clark County	Town of Pine Valley	City of Neillsville
Population	33,923	1,400	2,165
Population in Rental Units	6,600	288	1,582
Population in Owner Units	27,323	1,112	583
Population in Group Quarters	590	0	137
Households, excluding group quarters	12,755	544	1,058
Avg. Household Size	2.7	2.6	2.1
Renter Avg. Household Size	2.3	2.6	1.7
Owner Avg. Household Size	2.8	2.6	2.2
Housing Units, excluding seasonal	13,866	578	1,208
Rental Units	3,041	122	373
Owner Units	10,825	456	835
Occupied Units	12,755	544	1,058
Renter-Occupied Units	2,834	112	348
Owner-Occupied Units	9,921	432	710
Vacant Units for Rent, excludes seasonal	165	10	12
2017 Rental Vacancy Rate	5.4%	8.2%	3.2%
Rental Vacancy Rate Standard <sup>[1]</sup>	5-7%		
Vacant Units for Sale, excludes seasonal	200	0	12
2017 Homeowner Vacancy Rate	2.0%	0.0%	1.7%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate Standard <sup>[2]</sup>	2-2.5%		
% of Overcrowded Units – Renter Occup.	4.6%	0.0%	5.5%
% of Overcrowded Units – Owner Occup.	3.4%	3.0%	2.8%
Seasonal & Other Vacant Units <sup>[3]</sup>	2,002	44	137
Licensed Assisted Living Units	130 @ 25	0	71 @ 7

Appendix C provides housing details for the City of Neillsville based on the 2015-2019 ACS data. Some key findings of Neillsville's housing situation include:

- Housing Supply:** The total number of housing units in the City, per the Census data, increased by 14 units (1.1%) from 1,230 in 2010 to 1,244 in 2019. Like many other communities in the State, new residential construction has been slow since the 2008 economic recession.
- Age of Structures:** Per the 2019 ACS, 48.6% of the City of Neillsville total housing stock was built before 1950. Approximately 34% of housing structures in the City were built in 1939 or

# Population & Housing

earlier which may suggest a need for rehabilitation or replacement. The majority of the older-occupied housing stock is owner-occupied.

- **Structures:** As of 2019 69% of all occupied housing units were single-family detached homes. 23% of all occupied units were within structures with 3 or more units.
- **Housing Mix:** The overall City housing mix of occupied units as of 2019 was 36% renter and 64% owner.
- **Rental Units:** About 50% of all renter-occupied units are single-family homes. 80% of renter-occupied units have less than 2 bedrooms. 56% of single-person households rented their housing unit.
- **Rental Vacancy Rate:** The 2017 ACS data estimates the rental vacancy rate to be 3.3%.
- **Rental Costs:** Housing costs is a significant challenge from many renters in the City. The 2019 median contract rent in the City was \$430. About 35% of renters in the City of Neillsville spent more than 30% of their income on housing costs (rent, insurance, utilities) in 2019 and are considered cost-burdened.
- **Owner Units:** 97% of owner-occupied units were single-family detached units, while the other 3% were in structures with 2-4 units (duplex, triplex or fourplex) and mobile homes. 70% of owner-occupied units have 3 or more bedrooms. 98% of married-couple families were homeowners, while 44% of single-person households owned a home.
- **Owner Vacancy Rate:** The 2017 ACS data estimates the owner vacancy rate to be 0.0%, meaning there are very few, if any, vacant homes available for owner-occupancy.
- **Owner Costs:** The 2019 median home value in the City was \$90,500. About 12% of homeowners with mortgages spent more than 30% of their income on housing costs in 2019 and are considered cost-burdened.

By parcel and acreage, residential housing is the primary land use within the City of Neillsville. Map 3 shows the general distribution of residential parcels with improvements (e.g., single-family homes, duplexes, apartments) within the City. Additional housing units shown on the map are included as mixed use, largely located downtown on the second story of commercial buildings (vertical mixed use).

The City of Neillsville has the following community living arrangements:

- Adult Family Homes (AFH): three facilities totaling 11 units/rooms/beds
- Community Based Residential Facilities (CBRF): two facilities totaling 32 units/rooms/beds
- Residential Care Apartment Complex (RCAC): one facility with 24 units/rooms/beds



**HOUSING**  
CITY OF NEILLSVILLE, WI

**Legend**  
 Housing  
 Municipal Boundary

April 2021  
 0 0.13 0.25 0.5 Miles  
 Data Sources:  
 WCVRPC, 2018 Aerial, WDOA  
 2020 Parcel Assessment



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## Housing Affordability & Value

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing as housing that does not cost a household more than 30 percent of its household income. This affordability benchmark is not an underwriting standard; it does not address the ability to pay for housing. Households may choose to pay more to get the housing they need or want; however, according to HUD standards, people should have the choice of having decent and safe housing for no more than 30 percent of their household income.

Finding affordable and quality housing has historically been somewhat difficult in Clark County. A lack of affordable housing has overriding impacts on population migration patterns, economic development and the tax base.

While the individual financial situation of each household varies, a common analysis to affordability is based on the Federal affordability standard that households should not pay more than 30% of their income (before taxes) on housing costs, regardless of income. In other words, a household that is paying more than 30% of its income on housing costs is considered cost-burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. This section explores the housing cost situation for City of Neillsville renter and owner households.

## Rental Affordability

To explore the current supply of housing relative to affordability, Table 4 shows the households income range and the number of rental housing units that fall within the corresponding affordable renter range as of 2017. This approach assumes that a healthy rental market mix will have a supply of rental units at certain affordable price points that are near or equal to the number of households within the respective household income ranges.

**Table 4 Renter-Occupied Housing Affordability by Cost, 2017**

City of Neillsville & Pine Valley Renter Housing Gap Analysis					
Household Income Ranges	# of Renter Households	% of Renter Households	Affordable Renter Range	Number of Renter Units	Balance
Less than \$10,000	58	13%	\$0-\$199	98	40
\$10,000 to \$14,999	68	15%	\$200-\$299	53	-15
\$15,000 to \$24,999	63	14%	\$300-\$549	173	110
\$25,000 to \$34,999	95	21%	\$550-749	70	-25
\$35,000 to \$49,999	47	10%	\$750-\$999	27	-20
\$50,000 to \$74,999	38	8%	\$1,000-\$1,499	39	1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	45	10%	\$1,500-\$1,999	0	-45
\$100,000 to \$149,999	46	10%	\$2,000-\$2,999	0	-46
\$150,000 or more	0	0%	\$3,000 to \$3,499	0	0
Source: U.S. Census 2013-2017 ACS 5 Year Estimates and WCWRPC calculations					
NOTES: (i) The above price points are calculated based on affordable contract rent at 25% of household income, which is different than the commonly used 30% Federal standard for gross rent. The additional 5% in the Federal standards allows for the payment of all other housing costs. (ii) The above includes some rental units with zero cash rent. (iii) The U.S. Census Bureau provides data for household incomes and house values in ranges. To calculate the "Affordable Renter Range", the household income was divided by 12 (months) and multiplied by 0.25. This result did not yield household income ranges that aligned perfectly with the contract rent value ranges; these ranges were matched up as closely as possible.					



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When considering Table 4, it is important to understand that the balance does not necessarily represent a rental market surplus or deficit. The balance is simply the difference between the number of households and the number of rental units for each income range or price point. The balance suggests how the City's existing rental units might be better distributed based on household income and monthly contract rent price points; the total number of units does not change. A negative balance suggests that households are paying more or less than their affordable price point (30% of their income) for their housing. These households may be interested in housing at their price point should it become available.

Table 4 provides the following insights:

- The City of Neillsville's primary pool of rental housing is at the \$300 - \$549 price point and is being relied upon by many renters from other income ranges. Per the 2017 ACS data, about 38% of all rental units in the City fall within the \$300 - \$549 price range. Several income ranges are relying on this supply for housing.
- With the exception of the \$50,000 to \$75,000 income range, the balance is negative for household income ranges of \$25,000 or more. While 59% of all rental households fall into the \$25,000+ income ranges, only 30% (136) of rental units falls within those affordability ranges. This creates challenges and opportunities:
  - While the City may have some renting households that could potentially afford to be paying more for their housing, the actual market rates are not solely based on income. Numerous factors influence rental rates and what an individual can afford, such as location, the quality and characteristics of the rental units, local cost of living, property maintenance costs, and unit demand.
  - Many of these "higher-income" households may be interested in purchasing a home. These higher-income renters have income ranges whereby they could possibly afford to purchase a house but there may be a lack of houses in their affordability range or lack of homes for sale with the characteristics they desire (e.g., size, style, location). In the interim, some of these households may be residing in rental housing below their price point as a cost-saving measure, possibly in anticipation of buying a home in the future.
  - The City identified a need for some new apartments for younger professionals; this need is validated by the data in Table 4. Providing new rental units could potentially free up entry-level, more affordable rental units for some of the income-constrained households.

## **Owner Affordability**

Similar to the rental analysis, an analysis was conducted to more fully explore the current supply of owner-occupied housing in the City relative to affordability. Similar to the rental affordability analysis, the balance in Table 5 does not necessarily represent a home sales market surplus or deficit. The balance is simply the difference between the number of households and the number of owner units for each income range and affordable price point range. The balance suggests how the City's existing owner units might better be distributed based on household income and the price points; the total number of units does not change. A negative balance suggests that households are paying more or less than their affordable price point (30% of their income) for their housing.

Table 5 shows the City of Neillsville and Town of Pine Valley's owner households by income range and the number of owner housing units that fall within that range. This approach assumes that a healthy homeownership market mix will have a supply of owner units at certain affordable cost ranges (or price points) that are near or equal to the number of households within the respective housing income ranges.

Similar to the rental affordability analysis, the balance in Table 5 does not necessarily represent a home sales market surplus or deficit. The balance is simply the difference between the number of households

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and the number of owner units for each income range and affordable price point range. The balance suggests how the City's existing owner units might better be distributed based on household income and the price points; the total number of units does not change. A negative balance suggests that households are paying more or less than their affordable price point (30% of their income) for their housing.

**Table 5 Owner-Occupied Housing Affordability by Cost, 2017**

City of Neillsville & Town of Pine Valley Owner Housing Gap Analysis					
Household Income Ranges	# of Owner Households	% of Owner Households	Affordable Owner Range	Number of Owner Units	Balance
Less than \$25,000	187	16%	\$0-\$59,999	221	34
\$25,000 to \$34,999	128	11%	\$60,000-\$89,999	298	170
\$35,000 to \$49,999	210	18%	\$90,000-\$124,999	202	-8
\$50,000 to \$74,999	324	28%	\$125,000-\$199,999	268	-56
\$75,000 to \$99,999	153	13%	\$200,000-\$249,999	54	-99
\$100,000 to \$149,999	87	8%	\$250,000-\$399,999	87	0
\$150,000 or more	53	5%	\$400,000 +	12	-41
Source: U.S. Census 2013-2017 ACS 5 Year Estimates and WCWRPC calculations					
NOTES: (i) The above affordable price points are calculated based on 2.5 times the annual household income, which accounts for the financing of the home purchase over time at about 25% of the household income. This is less than the more commonly used 30% Federal affordability standard. The additional 5% in the Federal standard allows for the payment of all other housing costs, such as real estate taxes, insurance, and utilities. (ii) The U.S. Census Bureau provides data for household incomes and house values in ranges. To calculate the "Affordable Renter Range", the household income was multiplied by 2.5. The result did not yield household income ranges that aligned perfectly with the house value ranges; these ranges were matched up as closely as possible.					

Table 5 provides the following insights:

- The largest concentration of current owner housing supply is less than \$200,000. While this presents an opportunity, as the price point is generally considered to be "starter" level housing, it also has challenges. 2019 housing interviews within Clark County indicated that houses within this price range, especially those on the lower end, may require significant updates. A realtor commented that people looking to buy are generally pre-approved for \$120,000, so, if purchasing a home, it can't require significant updates as there's not a lot of "extra" money for improvements.
- Like the rental analysis, a significant proportion of homeowners are living in owner-occupied units that may be less than what they can afford. Some of these individuals may be interested in a higher value unit. Given that the largest concentration of current owner-housing supply is in the starter-home range, this is an opportunity if the market can be adjusted.

## **Housing Needs, Demand & Projections**

Traditionally, rural communities, such as the City of Neillsville, have a high percentage of single-family homes, often with few other housing types available. However, as new residents move in and as the population ages, other types of housing should be considered to provide an assortment of housing types needed to meet the needs and demands of area residents. In such places, there is a desire for these residents to remain in the community during their retirement years.

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Housing projections are helpful in identifying housing program strategies as well as to estimate the amount of land that may be needed for future residential development. Additionally, as the number of households and new housing units grow, there is a resulting need for government to provide additional public facilities and services such as roads, sewer and water extensions, fire and police protection, schools, etc.

The projected demand provides guidance based on recent trends and the best information available. No estimate, model, or projection is perfect. As previously noted, the community and partners have the ability to influence these projections based on other programming and policy decisions. Moreover, the housing market does not stop at municipal boundaries. A municipality's housing supply and demand is influenced by what is occurring around it. Further, many unanticipated social, economic, and policy factors in the larger region or nationally can also influence local growth, housing costs, and market demands.

Table 6 estimates existing and projected housing demand for Neillsville and Pine Valley combined, with the following assumptions:

- The 2017 estimate is from the U.S. Census and is largely driven by the difference in 2017 vacancy rates and the healthy vacancy-rate standards.
- Future demand is based on WDOA population and household projections with a small factor added for market flexibility (note: adding additional housing units beyond those identified in Table 6, along with providing a high-quality of life, will likely put the City on the alternative low-growth trajectory as discussed in Section 3.1);
- The current owner-to-rental mix;
- The additional rental and owner units needed are in addition to the 2017 vacant units shown in the previous table above.
- Additional units are included in 2017 as an adjustment in order to reduce overcrowding to state levels.
- The 2020 estimate does not include any new construction or demolition that has occurred since 2017; adjust these numbers accordingly as needed.
- For this preliminary analysis, the group quarters projection is the difference between the total population and the population in households. Given the area's aging population, the demand for group quarters (nursing care) and rental units (downsizing, accessory dwelling units, assisted living) is expected to increase.

## **Housing Trends and Outlook**

The following trends are of particular importance to the City of Neillsville:

- Continued interest in a variety of housing types and sizes.
- Increased need for senior housing.
- Increased remodeling and rehabilitation of older housing stock.
- Increased demand to build housing in nearby towns.
- Increased difficulty in finding affordable and quality rental housing.

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**Table 6 City of Neillsville Housing Demand Projections (based on DOA projections)**

	2017 Est.	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Net
Total Population	2,165	2,480	2,495	2,500	2,485	2,425	260
Total Households, excluding group quarters	1,058	1,091	1,097	1,100	1,097	1,076	18
Change in Total Households	--	33	6	3	-3	-21	--
Change in Rental Households (33% Rent)	348	11	2	1	-1	-7	6
Change in Owner Households (67% Owner)	710	22	4	2	-2	-14	12
Additional Rental Units Needed*	16-23	12	2	1	0	0	31-38
Additional Owner Units Needed**	25-30	23	4	2	0	0	54-59
Total Additional Housing Units Needed	41-53	34	6	3	0	0	84-96
Population in Group Quarters	137	157	158	158	157	153	16

\* In addition to the 12 rental units currently for rent

\*\* In addition to the 12 owner units for sale

As previously noted, the City Plan Commission believes that the alternative low-growth population projections, as presented in Table 2 are reasonable and achievable. It's also recognized that household sizes continue to decrease. To better understand the housing needs and demand based on these alternative projections, an updated demand table was prepared as shown in Table 7.

**Table 7 City of Neillsville Housing Demand Projections (based on Alternative Low-Growth Projections)**

	2017 Est.	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Net
Total Population	2,165	2,362	2,394	2,426	2,458	2,490	2,520	355
Total Households, excluding group quarters	1,058	1,123	1,138	1,165	1,181	1,209	1,223	165
Change in Total Households	--	65	15	27	15	28	15	--
Change in Rental Households (33% Rent)	348	21	5	9	5	9	5	54
Change in Owner Households (67% Owner)	710	44	10	18	10	19	10	111
Additional Rental Units Needed*	16-23	23	5	9	5	10	5	74-81
Additional Owner Units Needed**	25-30	45	10	19	11	19	10	138-143
Total Additional Housing Units Needed	41-53	67	16	28	16	29	15	212-224
Population in Group Quarters	137	149	151	154	156	158	159	22

\* In addition to the 12 rental units for rent in 2017.

\*\* In addition to the 12 owner units for sale in 2017.

A number of recent developments impact the above rental unit demand. The closures of Sunset Gardens and Merchant Hotel further increases the needed number of units. And more recently, a developer has expressed interest in the adaptive reuse of the former hospital for the creation of 80-100 units, which would meet much of the projected demand above; a tax incremental financing district is being contemplated to assist the developers in making this project cost feasible.

As of April 2021, the demand for group quarters beds is underestimated. The group quarters numbers shown in the housing demand tables includes an estimated 38 residents at the Neillsville Care and Rehab nursing home, which had 50 licensed beds, but recently closed. As of April 2021, there are no

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publicly known plans to reopen the facility. Some of this population may have now left the community but could return if the facility reopens. Due to the closure, the demand for additional group quarters beds should be increased to include the population at the time of its closure.

## 3.3 Population and Housing Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the City is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the City can use to aid in making land use decisions.



**Goal:** *The City of Neillsville will be a “growing, welcoming community with a quality of life that is desirable for residents of all ages” and all households types.*

### Objectives

1. Maintain quality of life amenities (workforce, housing opportunities, broadband, schools) within the community that retain and attract residents and families.
2. Maintain an open government and welcome new citizens and business owners to participate in a process that fosters trust, communication, and sense of community.
3. Build on market and community preferences to create a community that attracts new growth. And provide opportunities to capture some of the individuals who work in the City of Neillsville but live outside of the City. Act on opportunities to create a community environment that will draw some of these in-commuters to move to the City of Neillsville.

**Goal:** *The City of Neillsville will have an adequate housing supply that will meet the needs of future residents and provide a range of housing choices including all income levels, age groups and special housing needs while maintaining the current housing stock in economically and sound locations.*

### Objectives

1. Increase the number of rental and owner housing units within the City and provide a range of housing choices that attract and retain families and individuals of all income levels.
2. Increase the availability of quality rental apartments and low to moderate income quality housing that is consistent with the City’s comprehensive plan.
3. Increase efforts to work with the county housing authority and other local agencies in monitoring and creating solutions to the housing affordability issue.

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4. Increase the availability and accessibility of senior apartments, assisted living, and elderly care facilities while continually monitoring the housing needs of the aging population.
5. Avoid public actions which would not allow persons of lower income levels, ethnic origin, creed, age groups, or special needs to reside in the community.
6. Pursue any available state or federal housing funding for the development or redevelopment of low to moderate income quality housing.
7. Improve public education on available funding or assistance sources that will allow LMI residents and elderly residents to make accessibility or other improvements to their homes for special needs.
8. Continue to enforce the City's building codes for new housing construction and rehabilitation.

***Goal: Provide for housing development that maintains the characteristics of the community.***

## ***Objectives***

1. Support opportunities for multi-family, group housing, and other high density residential development within existing neighborhoods with established urban services.
2. Direct development to areas currently served by existing roads, public utilities, parks or other services.
3. Direct residential development to planned growth areas.
4. Encourage and allow for a mix of housing types that reflect the needs and demand of residents and the workforce.
5. Utilize various programs and concepts that can encourage creative ways to preserve community character and natural resources.
6. Support developers who want to develop other forms of housing, such as duplexes or small apartment buildings, as long as they are congruent and consistent with the City comprehensive plan.
7. Maintain an adequate supply of land planned and zoned for multi-family housing and for development at higher densities to meet forecasted demand. Ensure there are adequate lots available to meet the City's housing goals.
8. Carefully design residential subdivision developments to be cost-efficient and meet the daily living and recreational needs of residents. Residential development, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse should enhance community beautification and vitality.
9. Encourage multi-family, rental, and higher density housing within and nearby the City's downtown district which is compatible with the historic nature of the district and contributes to the function of the district as a commercial retail and service center.

***Goal: Maintain or rehabilitate the City's existing housing stock.***

## ***Objectives***

1. Promote maintenance and rehabilitation efforts for the existing housing stock.



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2. Increase citizen education about unsafe or unsanitary housing conditions including lead paint, carbon monoxide emissions, radon, exposed heat pipes, and broken or missing smoke detectors.
3. Maintain an inventory of historically significant homes and allow for maintenance and support rehabilitation that will encourage their existence.
4. Pursue development and redevelopment efforts which serve to enhance the character of the community.
5. The City should seek to cooperate with other public agencies in housing rehabilitation and energy conservation programs.

## Policies

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

1. The City of Neillsville, by undertaking many of the recommendations throughout this plan, will enhance quality of life amenities to attract residents, encourage business investment, and foster new growth.
2. The City of Neillsville will continue to explore ways to encourage the provision of affordable housing and evolving market housing in the City to retain and attract residents.
3. The City will continue to monitor and promote its housing revolving loan program and explore strategies to attract new multi-family housing.
4. The City of Neillsville, in promoting attractive and affordable residential development, will ease some of the pressure of non-farm residential development on the surrounding countryside.
5. Encourage housing developers to consider issues of accessibility and aging in place standards as part of new home construction.
6. The City will work collaboratively with Clark County Housing Authority, other housing service providers, developers, and other municipalities and public agencies to meet the City’s housing goals and objectives.
7. The City will strive to achieve a balanced housing mix, both rental and owner, that serves all areas of the market.
8. The City will work with developers and other partners to address the low rental and owner housing vacancy rates.
9. The City will encourage renovation of older housing units and ensure new units are of quality construction.

### “Aging in Place”

Aging in place (or aging in community) is the ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably regardless of age, income, or ability level.

This concept is not limited to housing design and construction, but should be expanded to encompass the entire community, includes aspects of other plan elements such as transportation, access to goods and services, social opportunities, recreation, and urban design.

# Population & Housing

10. The City will encourage developers and builders to consider market preferences to create housing that attracts new growth.
11. The City explore and encourage rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, and replacement, to help meet the housing demand.
12. Housing development, infill, and adaptive reuse will be carefully planned and consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan and compatible with the existing neighborhood setting or, for new subdivisions, creates a livable, inviting neighborhood that fosters a sense of place and community.
13. Dispel myths associated with "affordable" housing and high-density development and encourage involvement of neighborhood residents when planning new residential developments.
14. Ensure that assisted-living and nursing home facilities can be accommodated in the City to meet the project increased demand by the aging population. Encourage partnerships that address these specialized housing needs.
15. Promote and prioritize the development of projects that support healthy neighborhoods, those which provide a variety and balance of jobs and housing and have quality of life amenities including parks and open space, community gathering places, and other social and recreational opportunities.
16. Identify and encourage opportunities to add value and residential density to existing developed parcels.
17. Identify and work to minimize barriers to development that make development projects riskier, longer, and more expensive.
18. Monitor demographic and housing changes and trends over time and adjust housing projections as needed. Be careful to not overbuild.

## Recommendations

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the City's policies, and therefore will help the City fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

1. Review the City's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to ensure that the City's land use regulations allow for and encourage a range of housing types (forms, sizes, and prices) and subdivision design standards that meet the City's housing goals and objectives. (short-term)
2. Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow for an attached or detached accessory dwelling unit and/or a dependency living arrangement on a single residential lot as a conditional use under very limited circumstances (e.g., size limits, one unit must be owner occupied, require an on-site caregiver).
3. Rezone property as needed to accommodate new housing development, including multi-family apartments and for low- and moderate-income housing, twin home units for aging seniors, and new rental units for young professionals. (on-going/as needed)
4. Review existing City regulations regarding building maintenance and property upkeep; increase enforcement if necessary. Explore program opportunities that incentivizes or assists



# Population & Housing

homeowners with maintenance and upkeep, such as volunteer assistance, fix-up events, and partnering with local businesses for special rebates on purchases. (short-term)

5. Regarding housing assistance programs:

- a) Encourage developer/builder participation in local, state, federal, and non-profit housing assistance and initiatives, potentially including public-sector cost-sharing for quality housing projects that provide public benefit. (short-term)
- b) Explore opportunities to increase advertising and use of the City's housing revolving loan fund program and pursue grant opportunities to recapitalize the fund if needed. (short-term)
- c) Increase the promotion of assistance programs and resources available for home renovations and make rehabilitation of existing older homes more appealing and accessible. (short-term)
- d) Pursue housing rehabilitation grants for low-to-moderate income families and owners.
- e) Utilize tax increment financing to partner with developers to provide infrastructure for residential development and make needed housing projects cost feasible, including the use of an affordable housing extension, when such projects support the City's housing goals. (short-term)
- f) Work with large employers in the area to address housing needs, including exploring an employer-assisted housing program.

- 19. Work with local realtors and other partners to develop and distribute informational materials, install signage, and undertake other efforts to market and promote the specific housing needs, development opportunities, and available resources within the City to potential homebuyers, housing contractors, and developers. Such marketing efforts should be considered by the City as part of residential development agreements. (short-term)
- 20. Actively identify, plan for, and foster infill and adaptive reuse opportunities for housing that would be compatible with the neighborhood context.
- 21. Work with builders and developers to build more housing designed for the senior population. (short-term)
- 22. Use tax incremental financing to make the west side neighborhood more attractive and cost feasible for housing and compatible, light commercial redevelopment and infill, potentially including needed project costs for street and utility improvements along connecting streets to and within the neighborhood; multi-modal, non-motorized connectivity to and within the Arboretum and to US Highway 10; and, if needed, financial support for the adaptive reuse of existing buildings such as the former hospital (short-term).

It is important to note that the previous housing goals, objectives, and policies will require collaboration and partnerships to achieve. There is not an expectation that the City has the resources to achieve these goals and support new housing programming on its own. Some solutions may be multi-jurisdictional, while non-profit housing partners and the private-sector may also take the lead role.

# Population & Housing

## 3.4 Housing Programs

The City of Neillsville has adopted a fair and open housing ordinance (Chapter 9 of Title 10 Land Use Regulations) which sets forth policy that the City endorses the concepts of fair and open housing for all persons and prohibition of discrimination. Additionally, the City has a Residential Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to assist with funding housing rehabilitation and homebuyer assistance. The RLF is capitalized through a HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). CDBG housing funds are loaned to low-to-moderate-income (LMI) tenants at an affordable rate. As part of the RLF, homeowners in owner-occupied dwellings and homebuyers can receive 0% interest loans that are either deferred or low monthly payments. Rental rehabilitation loans are 0% to 3% monthly installment loans. Loans are due in full when the title changes, when the home ceases to be the homeowner's primary residence, or when the property is sold. CDBG housing funds can only be used for CDBG-eligible activities, such as repairs/rehabilitation, down payment and closing cost assistance, and accessibility improvements.

To meet local housing needs, the City and its residents largely rely on the various public and non-profit housing programs and services that are identified in Appendix E.

## 4. TRANSPORTATION

# Transportation

## 4. Transportation

A transportation system should safely and efficiently move people and products. Transportation can directly influence a community's growth, or it can be used as a tool to help guide and accommodate the growth which a community envisions. Like the other elements in the plan, transportation is interconnected, especially with land use. Economic, housing, and land use decisions can increase or modify demands on the various modes of transportation (e.g., highways and roads, air, rail, pedestrian, bicycling). Likewise, the transportation decisions, such as the construction of new roadways, changing rail infrastructure, or bike facilities can impact accessibility, land values, and land use. For many smaller communities, maintaining the local transportation system is a very significant part of their budget.

This element includes a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, actions or policies, and programs to guide the future development and maintenance of transportation systems in the City of Neillsville. This element also compares the City's transportation policies and programs to other local, state, and regional transportation plans as required under Wisconsin State Statutes §66.1001.

### 4.1 Streets and Highways

Streets and highways constitute Neillsville's primary mode of transporting people, goods, and services. The primary components of the City's street and highway network are:

1. STH 73, which travels in a north-south direction through the City, is a major transportation route providing access to the northern portions of the county and to other major highways.
2. USH 10 travels through the southern portion of the City and provides for east-west travel.
3. CTH B, which travels in a western direction out of the City, and links for a short time to U.S. 10 before traveling through the neighboring Town of Hewett.
4. Local City roads provide access to abutting lands and to the state, county, and federal highway system serving the City.

It should be noted that the City has jurisdiction over County Highway B within the city limits, which is unique compared to most area communities.

#### **Road Functional/Jurisdictional Classification**

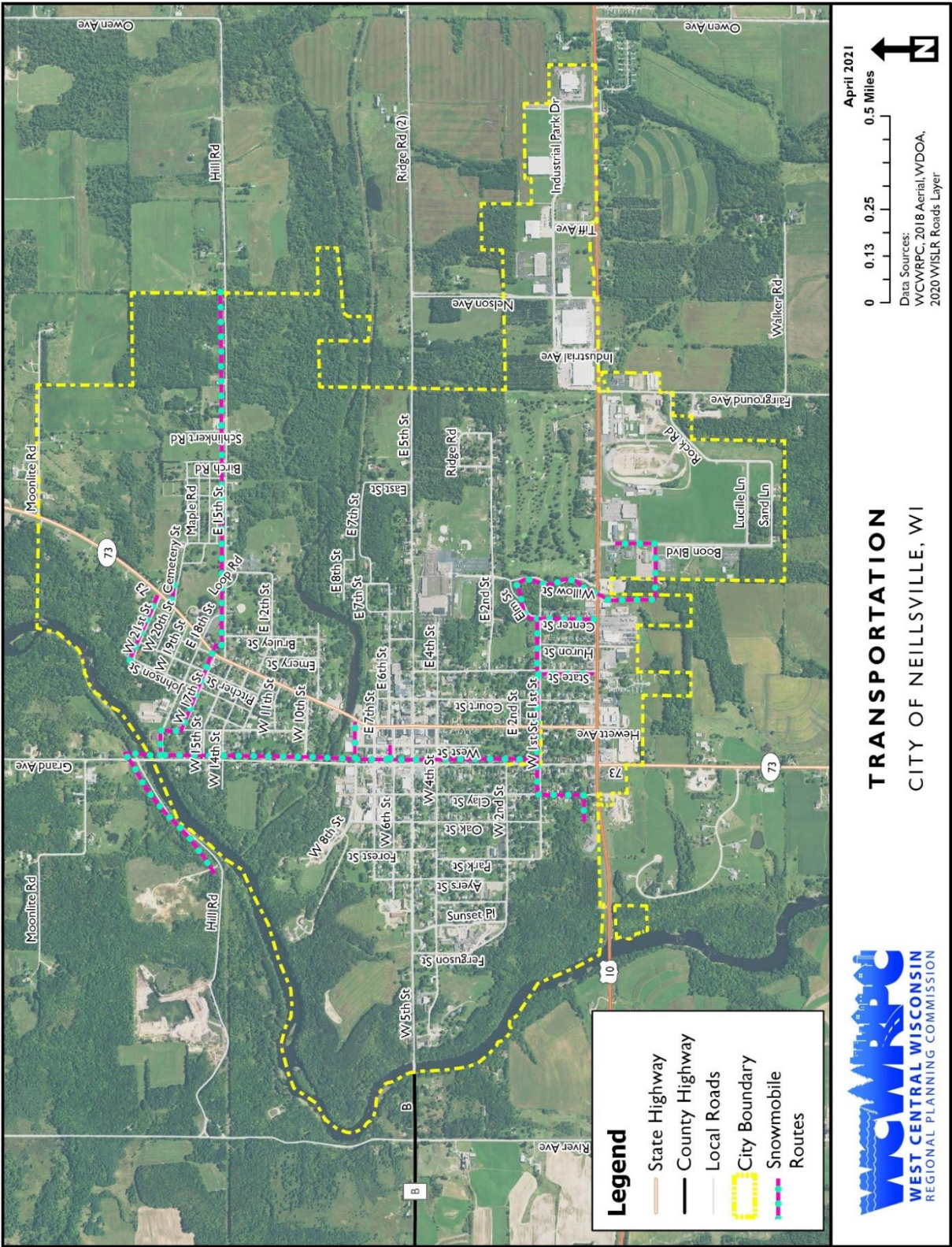
For planning, transportation funding, and design purposes, public roadways are divided into different functional classes, such as arterials and collectors. Factors influencing function include traffic circulation patterns, land use, the land access needs, and traffic volumes. The transportation system for Neillsville is depicted on Map 4. Map 5 shows the functional classification of roads within the City. Per the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Bureau of Planning and Economic Development Department, the breakdown of streets and highways within the City of Neillsville, by functional classification mileage, is as follows:

Principal Arterial: 1.15 miles  
 Minor Arterial: 1.74 miles  
 Major Collector: 0.95 miles  
 Minor Collector: 2.77 miles  
 Local Street: 22.46 miles



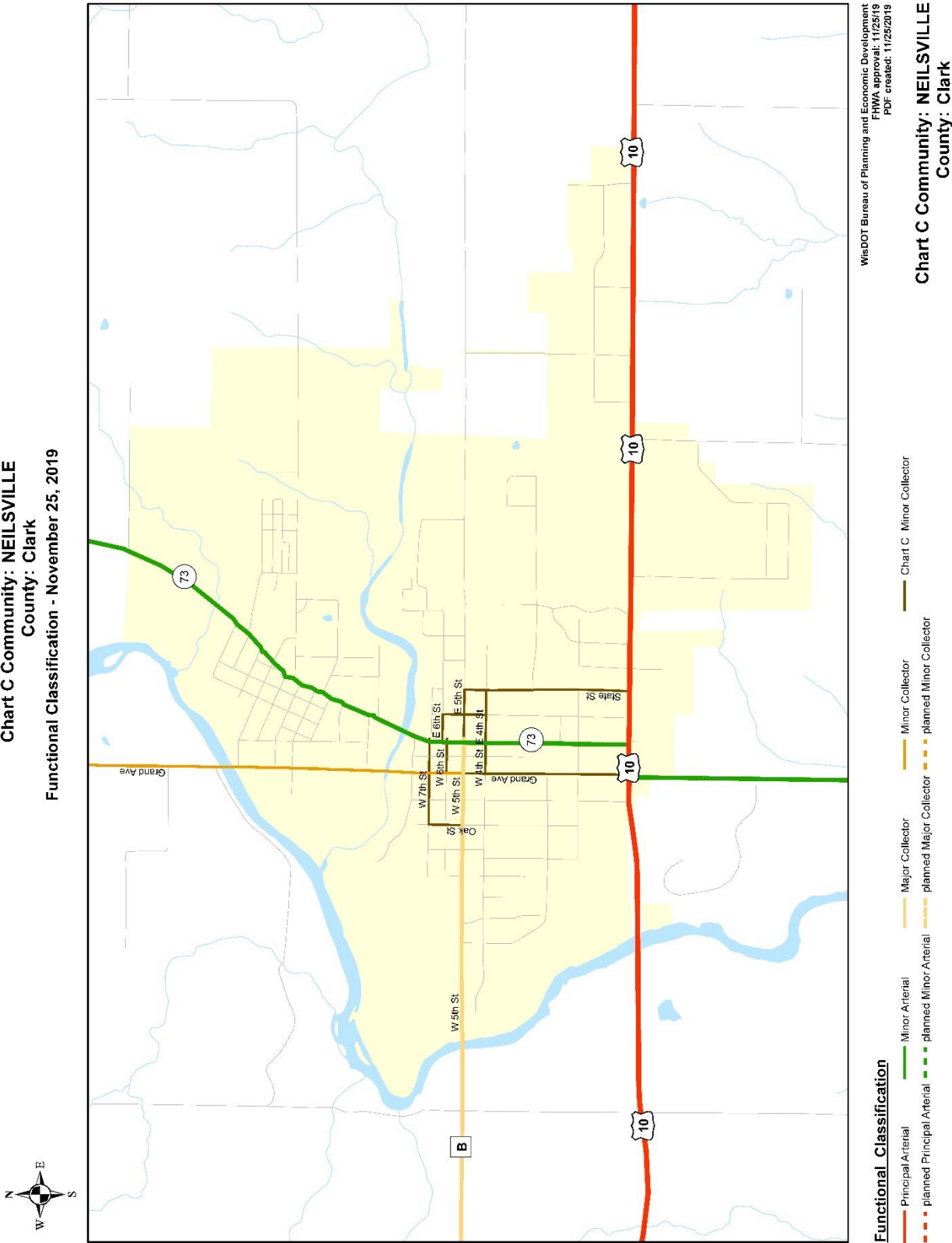
# Transportation

Map 4 Neillsville Transportation System



Transportation

Map 5 Functional Classification of Neillsville's Transportation System





# Transportation

## Traffic Volume Trends

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts are produced by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation every three years. The majority of these counts are focused on State highways, County highways and other higher traffic volume roadways. Table 8 shows that there have average daily trips on various roads in the City have declined since 2010.

**Table 8 Neillsville Traffic Counts, selected segments**

Road Segment	ADT (count year)	ADT (count year)	% change
USH 10 – bet. Hewitt & Court	6,500 (2010)	5,900 (2019)	-9.2%
USH 10 – just east of Fairground Ave	5,100 (2010)	3,300 (2019)	-35.3%
STH 73 – bet. 15 <sup>th</sup> & 12 <sup>th</sup>	4,400 (2010)	4,200 (2019)	-4.5%
STH 73 – bet. 5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	5,000 (2010)	5,000 (2019)	0.0%
STH 73 – bet. 4 <sup>th</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup>	4,200 (2010)	4,100 (2019)	-2.4%
5 <sup>th</sup> St. – bet. Oak & Clay	2,400 (2010)	1,800 (2019)	-25.0%
5 <sup>th</sup> St. – bet. STH 73 & Court	1,200 (2010)	890 (2019)	-25.8%

*Source: WisDOT Annual Average Daily Traffic interactive maps*

## Vehicle Use and Commuting Trends

The automobile is the dominant mode of transportation for the residents of Neillsville. According to the 2019 census estimates 89 percent of the households in the City had one or more vehicles. Close to 11 percent had no vehicle. Additionally, Table 10 clearly reflects this dominance as close to 90 percent of residents either drove alone or carpooled to work.

**Table 9 Vehicle Availability in the City of Neillsville, 2019**

# of Vehicles Available	Percent of Households
No vehicle	10.8
1	39.4
2	34.8
3 or more	15.0

*source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey*

**Table 10 Means of Transportation to Work for Neillsville Residents, 2019**

Primary Means of Transportation	Percent of Workers
Car, Truck, or Van – Drove Alone	80.6
Car, Truck, or Van - Carpooled	7.5
Public Transportation (excluding taxi)	0.0
Walked	4.0
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, or other	0.0
Worked at home	6.9

*source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey*



# Transportation

As a relatively small community in Clark County, Neillsville has employment opportunities for residents and people from the surrounding area. Figure 4 shows that in 2018, 1,872 (84.2 percent) of the total 2,224 workers in Neillsville lived outside Neillsville. In addition, it also shows that 62.5 percent of employed people that live in the City work outside of Neillsville.

**Figure 4 Neillsville Employment Inflow/Outflow, 2018 (Primary Job)**



source: 2018 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

## Truck Freight Service

Over the road trucking provides for most of the freight shipping needs of manufacturers and retailers in Neillsville. The major generators of truck freight and bulk commodity shipments include the commercial and industrial businesses in industrial areas. There is some interest in exploring the creation of a truck route from the industrial park to STH 73 on the City's north side in order to reduce truck traffic downtown; this would require significant infrastructure improvements and, potentially, grant funding.

## Accident Types and Locations

According to data from the Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory, there were 140 total crashes reported within the City of Neillsville during the 5-year period of 2015 to 2019; 35 of these crashes occurred in 2019. Of crashes that occurred in 2019, one included a pedestrian and one included a bicyclist.

# Transportation

## 4.2 Additional Modes of Transportation

### Transit and Specialized Transportation

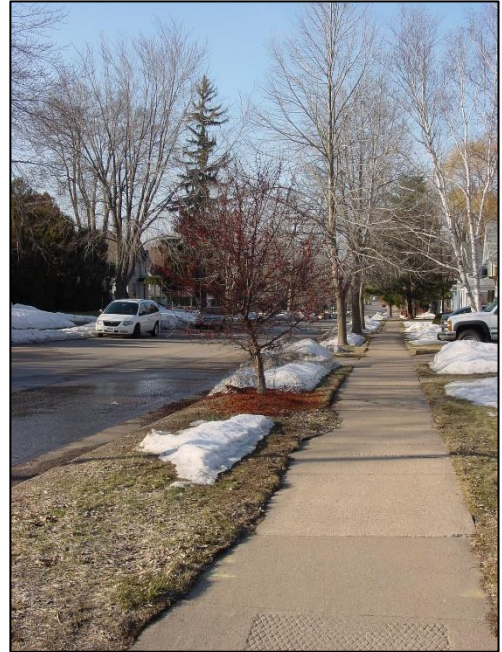
There are no municipal public transit services available in the City of Neillsville. A number of transportation providers are available for residents with specialized needs, often coordinated through of in partnership with the Clark County Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) office.

### Bicycles and Pedestrians

While there are no dedicated bicycle facilities in the City of Neillsville, the average bicyclist can be accommodated on most of the streets in the City. The surface condition of the roadway, the width of the street and the presence of parked cars and any physical barriers such as high traffic volume street crossings, may impact bicycling conditions in the community.

Similarly, the availability and condition of sidewalks and walkways impact the mobility of pedestrians. The majority of the streets within the City have sidewalks.

Publicly-owned and maintained walking trails in the City are available within Listeman Arboretum, which includes benches and interpretative signage, and a trail in Little Eddy Park. Both of these trails are located on the west side of the City along the Black River. A new, non-motorized recreational trail is being developed along O'Neill Creek, which will be discussed later in this section and Section 6.



The City does not have a *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, but the City has partnered with the Neillsville School District to create a *Safe Routes to School Plan* that aims to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. The SRTS Plan is essentially a pre-requisite for improvement project grants for implementing the plan's recommendations.

### Freight Rail Service

The nearest railroad to the City, a Wisconsin Central Limited line, is located approximately 30 miles to the north.

### Air Service

The Neillsville Municipal Airport is located three miles east of the City on USH 10 at Miller Avenue. The airport, set among rolling farm fields, is one of the newest in Wisconsin, having been constructed in 1973 with the help of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

The Neillsville Municipal Airport is a Small General Utility Aviation airport which is designed to accommodate aircraft of less than 12,500 pounds gross-weight, with approach speeds below 121 knots and wingspans of less than 49 feet. The airport does not provide commercial passenger service or commercial air cargo service.

The blacktop surface of runway 09/27 measures 3,400 feet in length by 60 feet wide. This length offers ample room for most single engine aircraft, twins, turbo prop and some small jet aircraft. The runway is well marked with paint that can be seen during the day and with lights at night. Pilot controlled lighting

# Transportation

as well as Non-Directional Beacon (NDB) instrument approach, make this a very accessible airport year round.

The terminal building is open to the public and has restrooms, weatheration system and telephone access. Local taxi service and courtesy vehicles are available for transportation to and from the City's lodging and restaurant facilities. Airplane tie-downs hangar space is also available.

The Fixed Base Operator offers a complete range of on-site services: aircraft refueling (100LL and Auto); flight instruction and pilot examinations; aircraft sales, leasing or rental; and aircraft maintenance.

Nearest scheduled passenger and freight service is available at the Central Wisconsin Airport in Mosinee (60 miles) or Chippewa Valley Regional Airport in Eau Claire (45 miles). The next closest airport is the Marshfield Airport approximately 30 miles away.

## **Horse-Drawn Vehicles**

There is a sizable Amish population in the Neillsville area, so it is not uncommon for horse-drawn vehicles to be present on some City roadways.

## **ATV and Snowmobile Routes**

ATVs/UTVs are a very popular recreational activity in Clark County with strong contributions to the local tourist economy. A number of snowmobile routes have been designated with the City of Neillsville as shown in Map 4. The primary ATV/snowmobile route through the City connects with Hill Road northwest of the City, then to a looped mix of trails and routes which extend throughout Clark County Forest with connections to Hatfield, Merrilan, Humbird, Rock Dam, and Fairchild. ATVs are allowed on all City streets.

## **4.3 Transportation Needs and Planned Improvements**

In general, the local and regional transportation system in the City of Neillsville is presumed to be adequate to serve projected traffic volumes within the City. Ongoing maintenance and minor safety improvements are expected on local, county, and state roadways. New roads may be needed if new development occurs as envisioned in the land use elements of this plan.

## **Transportation Trends and Outlook**

Four major transportation trends were identified:

1. The volume of highway traffic and demands on local roads will increase in the future;
2. Greater emphasis is being placed on walkability and downtown streetscape improvements;
3. There is increasing demand for multi-modal and recreational transportation facilities, some of which may conflict with existing land uses or each other; and
4. Due to the growth of agriculture, industry, motorized recreation, and Amish and Mennonite communities, there will be an increasing demand to accommodate special uses of roadways.

# Transportation

## **U.S. Highway 10 and State Highway 73 Improvements**

As of April 2021, Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) has no major highway projects planned or under study for Clark County. According to the WDOT's Transportation Improvement Program webpage, the resurfacing (<2.5" overlay) is scheduled for State Highway 73 north of U.S. Highway 10 for about 1.2 miles within the City.

During the past, discussions have taken place between State, County and local government officials, stakeholders, and other private citizens regarding the "straightening" of the State Highway 73/USH 10 intersection thus eliminating the current two turns only a block apart; no such improvements are planned. Should this occur, STH 73 would continue directly south from the east intersection and the City expressed interest in some initial land use planning and official mapping for this potential re-alignment.



Additional discussion has also taken place regarding a possible expansion of USH 10 to four lanes from City of Marshfield to the City of Osseo. However, according to WDOT representatives from the District 6 Office, these projects are likely only long-range improvements and not currently scheduled. There are two ways a four-lane highway project could become a reality: (1) The standard enumeration process which is determined by daily traffic volume, accident history and other factors and, (2) Being "Earmarked" with the help of federal funding. Currently, the project lacks attention by the WDOT at both the district and state levels largely due to low traffic counts, and no formal planning or activities regarding this project are scheduled. On the other hand, the City may want to consider working with their State Legislators and US Congressmen to advance the project for funding. Expanding USH 10 to four-lane status could have substantial positive economic impacts for the City of Neillsville, though these impacts would vary depending on the alignment. During a May 2021 discussion with the City's Plan Commission and Economic Development Commission, the expansion of USH 10 would only be supported if the improvements were on-alignment within the City, perhaps including passing or turn lanes, and not bypass the City and its businesses.

## **County and Local Improvements**

No major County highway improvements impacting the City are currently planned. The City has the following maintenance equipment: snow plows, grader, front end loader, a street sweeper and dump trucks. Asphalt paving is contracted with a private firm when that service is needed, all other maintenance duties are done by the City. There is a five-year capital improvement plan (Public Works project budget) in place including line items in the budget for maintenance and purchase of equipment. Planning for local streets and roads is a continual process and improvements may be hastened or delayed due to damage from flooding, winter-related damage, heavy use, or coordination with other infrastructure improvements.



# Transportation

The City has identified the following planned transportation projects for the future, some of which will occur concurrently with municipal sewer, water, and stormwater improvements:

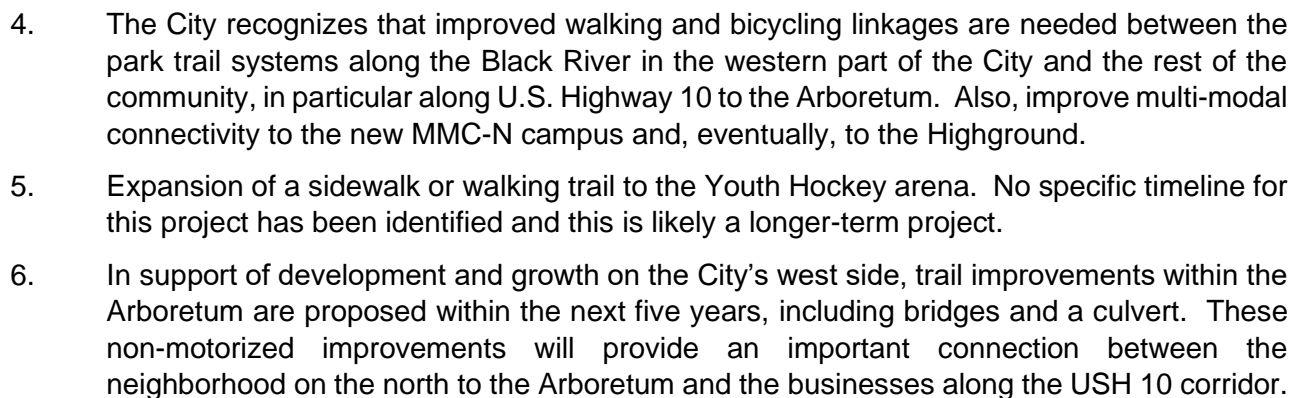
<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconstruct south portion of West Street</li> <li>• Reconstruct W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street from Ferguson Street west to City Limit</li> <li>• Reconstruct W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street from Ferguson Street east to Grand Avenue</li> <li>• Reconstruct Ferguson Street from W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street to Hill Street</li> <li>• Reconstruct W. Second Street from Hill Street to Grand Avenue</li> <li>• Construct/finish sidewalks that end in the middle of a block to a corner</li> <li>• Construct/finish sidewalk on W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street to Sunset Place</li> <li>• Road upgrades within the Neillsville Municipal Cemetery</li> <li>• Continue upgrading streets on an annual basis</li> <li>• Continue to use the PASER pavement evaluation program</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road construction – Industrial Park Drive</li> <li>• Expand pavement of E 5th Street to expand out to Nelson Avenue</li> <li>• Reconstruct 21<sup>st</sup> Street</li> <li>• Reconstruct 20<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Reconstruct 19<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Reconstruct portions of 7<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Reconstruct north portion of Center Street</li> <li>• Reconstruct north portion of Willow Street</li> <li>• Reconstruct south portion of Grand Avenue</li> <li>• Reconstruct portion of Court Street</li> <li>• Install new sidewalk on south portion of State Street</li> <li>• Work with the county and state on bridge evaluations and future upgrades</li> <li>• Improve and unify signage for points of interest.</li> </ul>

The City is actively considering or planning a number of pedestrian and biking projects:

1. Complete partially finished sidewalks. A number of sidewalks in residential neighborhoods end abruptly mid-block.
2. The City and Neillsville Improvement Corporation (NIC) have been partnering to develop a non-motorized trail on the former railroad grade along the south bank of O'Neill Creek east of Highway 73 within the City. It is hoped that this trail will be expanded to the east, eventually connecting to Granton, Chili, and Marshfield. Given the trail's proximity to the Clark County Courthouse and downtown Neillsville, as well as its potentially connectivity to the City's industrial park, the trail will serve a transportation function and not be solely for recreational use. The map on the following page provided by NIC shows the project boundaries within the City.

The City has adopted a resolution supporting the project and has executed an agreement making NIC the project's fiscal agent. Fundraising for the project is continuing and NIC has worked with Northern State Power (NSP) and a private landowner to purchase the trailhead area and first 0.7 miles of trail; as part of the purchase, an easement exists with NSP to keep the powerlines in place. Initial concept planning for the trailhead has been completed and a grant application has been submitted to WDNR for trailhead improvements. Additional work and land acquisition efforts are continuing. The project is also discussed within Section 6 of this plan.

3. Longer-term, there is a desire to expand bike trails to the southwest of the City to Columbia, Levis Mound, Merrillan, etc.



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# Transportation

## 4.4 Transportation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

***Goal: To provide a transportation system capable of delivering people, goods, and services to and from the community, while providing for the efficient and safe movement of traffic within the community.***

### **Objectives**

1. Reduce accident exposure by improving deficient roadways.
2. Direct future residential, commercial and industrial development to roadways capable of accommodating resulting traffic.
3. Maintain and/or expand current service agreements and consider alternative possibilities for providing local road maintenance.
4. Minimize the disturbance of environmental corridors, prime agricultural land, and natural areas for the purpose of accommodating the location of transportation facilities.
5. Maintain the use of the PASER evaluation rating system for road maintenance and project budgeting purposes.
6. Continue to administer minimum construction and maintenance standards for local roads.
7. Maintain qualified and trained personnel.
8. Provide educational materials to elderly or disabled individuals regarding transit opportunities.
9. The City of Neillsville will explore the establishment of a City biking and walking trail system.
10. Continue to identify truck routes on all roads and provide signage.
11. Provide accommodations on pedestrian facilities for people with disabilities such as curb cuts, minimizing inclines and slopes of sidewalks, ensuring sidewalk connectivity, and increasing signal times at crossings.
12. Pursue the development of street design standards (intersection design, signal phasing, roadway width, base materials) that give priority to and enhance the safety of pedestrians and minimize conflict with motorists.
13. Guide new growth to developed road systems so that new development does not financially burden the community or make inefficient use of public tax dollars.
14. Maintain safe access designs onto U.S., State and County highways.
15. Review of rezoning requests must consider impacts on the existing road network.
16. Work to achieve a traffic circulation network that conforms to the planned functional classification of roadways.



# Transportation

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the City is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the City can use to aid in making land use decisions.

## Policies

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

1. Developers shall bear an equitable share of the costs for new road development, improvements, and extensions. The subdivision code should be used to ensure that new residential developments are provided with adequate streets, curb and gutter, utilities, and sidewalks or other trail linkages, at cost of the developer. The City may make exceptions to this policy to explore cost-sharing and other financial alternatives when partnering with developers to achieve the community goals expressed in this plan.
2. Efforts shall be made to assure that adequate off-street parking is provided in commercial developments in order to lessen the total dependence upon on-street parking.
3. Off-street parking should be established and its use encouraged for employees and residents of the central business district and employees of the courthouse.
4. The capital improvement program shall be used to plan for the cost of maintaining existing streets and constructing new streets.
5. The State shall be encouraged to properly maintain the streets under their jurisdiction, particularly USH 10 and STH 73.
6. The City shall reserve adequate right-of-way through presently undeveloped land for future streets and recreational trails. This can be accomplished through the plat review process or through the City's official map ordinance.
7. All new streets should intersect each other and existing streets at 90 degrees (perpendicular).
8. Dead-end streets and long cul-de-sacs should be avoided where possible and economically feasible.
9. Plan and encourage the location of new major traffic generators and dense land use patterns to locate along or near arterial and collector streets.
10. Where opportunities allow, highway commercial development should make use of a frontage road to properly collect traffic to and from the highway and businesses.
11. The City of Neillsville will continue to provide appropriate services to support the operations of the airport. Maintain a maintenance plan with long-term improvements for the Neillsville Airport and work with Clark County for potential cost-sharing of airport operations.
12. The City of Neillsville, through its Transportation Committee, will continue to work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation on USH 10 physical improvements and safety enhancements between Osseo and Marshfield. Continue to explore opportunities to enhance connections to four-lane highways and create a presence on them, possibly through public/private partnerships in advertising.

# Transportation

13. As a prerequisite for WDNR grant funding, maintain an up-to-date outdoor recreation plan that incorporates the City's proposed recreational trail projects. Section 6 of this plan serves as the City's current comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.

## Recommendations

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the City's policies, and therefore will help the City fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

1. Maintain a capital improvements plan to guide the implementation of the planned transportation improvements identified in this Plan. (short-term)
2. Continue efforts to develop a biking/walking trail on the old railroad grade adjacent to O'Neill Creek with a trailhead at Fountain Park and connectivity to the east and west. (short-term)
3. Explore options to improve walking and bicycling linkages between the park trail systems along the Black River to rest of the community, including a paved surface or sidewalk along U.S. Highway 10 and old County Highway B to the Arboretum with possible future connections to the MMC-N campus and the Highground.
4. Complete those sidewalks in the City which terminate mid-block or short of potential destinations. (on-going/as needed)
5. Continue working with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) West Central District Office and legislators to advocate for the USH 10 four-lane expansion project between the City Marshfield and City of Osseo, but only if USH 10 remains on-alignment with the City limits.
6. Work with WDOT to install additional directional and information signage on highways for the City of Neillsville and the Highgrounds.
7. Explore the creation of an official map and utilize the City's official mapping authority to reserve possible locations for future roads and, if feasible, the widening of USH 10 to allow for passing/turn lanes and potential STH 73 alignment changes as well as a truck route from the industrial park to STH 73 on the City's north side.
8. Continue to work cooperatively with the Eat Right-Be Fit Coalition to develop and improve the City's walking and biking infrastructure. (on-going/as needed)
9. Partner with the School District to implement the recommendations of the Safe Routes to School Plan to improve pedestrian and biking safety and connectivity. (short-term)



# Transportation

## **4.5 Other Transportation Plans and Programs**

Several state and regional organizations development plans and programs for the management and systematic update of transportation facilities that may include the City of Neillsville. These other plans were considered during the planning process, as reflected by the text and maps in the previous subsections. Based on a review of these plans and programs, no land use or policy conflicts were identified. Appendix E includes a review of these other potentially related transportation plans and programs.

# 5. UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

# Utilities & Community Facilities

## 5. Utilities and Community Facilities

Utilities and community facilities provide the foundation on which a community is built and maintained. Utilities may include sanitary sewer, storm water, and water systems as well as electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, and solid waste disposal. Community facilities can vary greatly by community, but typically include parks, schools, libraries, cemeteries, and various health and safety providers (e.g., police, fire, ambulance, hospitals). Special services deemed to be vital to a community, such as childcare facilities, may also be included as a community facility though they are not typically publicly owned. Some community services, such as health care, libraries, parks, and schools, also provide services to a population outside the corporate limits.



Utilities and community facilities can also be used to guide growth, encourage development, contribute to quality of life, or help establish community identity. Aside from roads, the construction, maintenance, and operation of public utilities and community facilities often constitute the largest proportion of a community's budget. The City of Neillsville maintains a five-year capital improvement plan, as well as line items in the budget, for maintenance and construction of utility and community facility infrastructure projects.

This element contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, actions or policies/programs to guide the future maintenance and development of utilities and community facilities in the City of Neillsville. Chapter 4 previously discussed transportation-related facilities, while Chapter 3 discussed the nursing, assisted living, and senior housing facilities in the City. For all public utilities, local government services, and community facilities that serve the local governmental unit, the location, use, capacity, and approximate timetable to address short-term needs (1-5 years) and long-term needs (5+ years) are identified if available, including expansion, rehabilitation, or new development.

### 5.1 Assessment of Utilities and Community Facilities

The City of Neillsville is home to the Clark County Courthouse located at 517 Court Street. The Courthouse is the offices for the majority of Clark County's governmental services, including the Sheriff's Department and County Jail. The Clark County Highway Department's main offices and maintenance facility is also located in Neillsville, with additional facilities local in Loyal and Owen.

#### **City Administrative Facilities and Services**

Administrative facilities for the City of Neillsville are currently located in the City Hall at 118 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The City will be relocating the administrative functions of City Hall to the former BMO Harris Bank building along USH 10, and is exploring the technology capabilities as well as ADA accessibility of the building. The Neillsville City government consists of the five Common Council members, the Mayor, other City officers, and various committees, boards, and commissions. Regular City Council meetings are held in the Council Room of City Hall every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. The City's website can be accessed at [www.Neillsville-wi.com](http://www.Neillsville-wi.com), and details a variety of government related information about the City.

City Street Department offices and maintenance facility is located at 607 Oak Street, while the Water Department is located at 606 Clay Street and the Sewer Department at 500 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street.



# Utilities & Community Facilities

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update computers on a regular basis.</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional fireproof storage in the basement</li> <li>• Extending the elevator to the basement level</li> <li>• Adding an additional staff person to be shared by various departments to cover absences (vacation, sick leave, and training)</li> </ul>



## **Sanitary Sewer Service**

The Neillsville Sewer Department provides the day-to-day operations of providing sanitary sewer service, from the customer through treatment. The operation includes; maintenance, and repair of service connections, collection mains, interceptor mains, force mains, receiving wells, pumping equipment, treatment equipment/chemical additions and removals (chlorine, phosphorus, and other chemicals), buildings and structures, machinery and equipment, and administrative duties – laboratory testing and reports, inventory and expenditures.

The Neillsville sanitary sewer system includes 8-10 inch mains, 12-24 inch mains, force mains, lift stations, two grinder pumps, and a sewage treatment plant located in the northwest portion of the City. The City is very hilly, therefore requiring the use of thirteen lift stations to move waste uphill; an additional lift station was installed for the new hospital bringing the total of city-owned lift stations to fourteen. Four houses, located in a low area, have individual grinder pumps to move the sewage into the system. There are only four homes not connected to the system; they have holding tanks or private sewer systems.

Sewage is pumped to an activated sludge sewage treatment plant. The treatment plant was originally constructed in 1952 and updated in 1973. In 1996 the City of Neillsville started construction of a new wastewater treatment plant and it was completed in May of 1997. Approximately 450,000 gallons of sewage is treated on an average day. The plant was designed to handle 520,000 gallons of sewage and 647 pounds of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) per day.

The new treatment facility utilizes a portion of the old plant as a wastewater pump station, but mostly consists of new processes and equipment. The new major processes are as follows:



## Utilities & Community Facilities

1. Raw wastewater pumps and controls
2. Flow metering and manually cleaned bar screen
3. Biological phosphorus removal and controls
4. Oxidation ditch for activated sludge and controls
5. Final clarifier and controls
6. UV disinfection and controls
7. Scum and return/waste sludge pumping and controls
8. Aerated sludge storage and controls

The wastewater treatment plant is designed to meet the community's needs up to an estimated population of 2,700 people, depending on the industrial loads. The City's Economic Impact Study for the Marshfield Memorial Center Campus (MMC-N) Development in the Town of Pine Valley comments on the City's infrastructure capacities as the MMC-N Campus is being served by municipal water and sanitary sewer from the City of Neillsville. The Study indicated that with the proposed sewer extension and liftstation to service MMC, the City will have wastewater treatment capacity to support the planned development and adequate capacity to support future, modest growth in the immediate area.

The cost for new sanitary sewer extensions are assessed against the property served as are new water line extensions. The owners on each side of the street are assessed 50 percent of the cost per lineal foot of main.

In order to protect surface water quality, the WDNR has been enforcing phosphorus limits for treatment plant effluent and other point-source discharges. In accordance with the wastewater treatment system's master plan, the City's system uses chemical treatment to control phosphorus and is in compliance with phosphorus limits. The City's plan considers additional options should they be needed in the future, such as plant improvements or the identification of a wetland for further phosphorus removal prior to being discharged into the creek. Another option would be working with area farmers to reduce phosphorus loading in the watershed (e.g., water quality trading, adaptive management).

Businesses and residents can also have a role in helping the City's treatment plant to perform effectively and efficiently. For example, some manufacturers within the industrial park pre-treat wastewater to remove oil and solvents, while the car wash uses reverse osmosis to recycle its water.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<p>Continue to review the condition of the wastewater distribution system and wastewater treatment plant for needed maintenance and/or expansion. Integrate any needs into the City 5-year capital improvements plan that identifies its short-term utility needs. This includes replacement of sewer mains, manholes, lift station maintenance, etc.</p> <p>Specific short-term needs identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace/upgrade sewer mains – south Court Street</li> <li>• Lift stations with only one pump should have two, all should have auxiliary power</li> <li>• Replace all stone manholes</li> <li>• Disconnect all roof drains and storm sewer connections found hooked into sanitary system</li> <li>• Lift station maintenance</li> <li>• Televiser some sewer mains each year until all infiltration sources are identified</li> </ul>
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# Utilities & Community Facilities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep working on getting relief operators training and certifications, they also need to operate the plant routinely</li> <li>• When replacing sewer mains in the future, do service from main to building</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<p>Continue to review population growth and development and monitor the need for future sewer main replacements.</p> <p>Specific long-term needs identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace sewer mains – 20<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Replace sewer mains – 19<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Replace sewer mains – north portion of Prospect Avenue</li> <li>• Replace sewer mains – portions of 7<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Replace sewer mains – north portion of Center Street</li> <li>• Replace sewer mains – north portion of Willow Street</li> <li>• Replace sewer mains – portion of 8<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Televise some sewer mains each year until all infiltration sources re identified</li> <li>• Keep working on getting relief operators training and certifications, they also need to operate the plan routinely</li> <li>• When replacing sewer mains in the future, do service from main to building</li> </ul>

## **Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS)**

There are four private onsite wastewater treatment systems in the City of Neillsville. These systems should eventually be served by the City's sanitary sewer system.

## **Public Water Supply**

The Neillsville Water Department provides the day-to-day operation of providing water from the wells to the customer. The operation includes: maintenance, and repairs of wells, pump houses, pumping and purification equipment, supply mains, reservoirs/standpipes, transmission and distribution mains, meters, fire hydrants, buildings and structures, machinery and equipment, and administrative duties – meter reading, laboratory testing and reports, inventory, expenditures, and public information on water source protection and conservation.

The Neillsville Municipal Water Utility was organized in 1885. The water system services almost all of the developed areas of the City. As of April 29, 2021, the utility had 1,192 customers broken down as follows: 959 residential; 14 multi-family, 166 commercial, 10 industrial, and 43 public authority.

Until mid-1979, the City's source of water was the Black River. Geology conditions prevented the development of sufficient groundwater sources in an area near the City. The water from the river was treated in a purification plant. This was a less-than-desirable source of water and there were many complaints from users about the water quality. The river water and purification plant supply was replaced by three gravel packed wells located approximately 12 miles southwest of the City limits. The wells are shallow, which is common in Clark County. Wells #1 and #2 are each 41 feet deep and Well #3 is 38 feet deep. The water is ph adjusted at the well site with the addition of sodium hydroxide. The water is then pumped to a booster station where fluoride and chlorine are added. The water is then delivered to the distribution system.

The utility currently has four wells in service. A fifth well has been studied but not installed. Three wells were installed in 1979 and one in 1990. Wells are located approximately 12 miles south of the City in a gravel quarry pit west of the Black River. The water distribution system is divided into two pressure zones with an elevated tank in each zone and a booster pump station between them. The static pressures range from 78 to 93 psi. The water is pumped by vertical turbines driven by 10 or 15

## Utilities & Community Facilities

horsepower electrical motors. Wells are rated between 200 and 420 gallons per minutes (gpm). In the event of a power failure, an auxiliary gas engine fueled with propane is available for emergency power.

One elevated storage tank has a 250,000 gallon capacity, the tank is steel and was constructed in 1926. This tank is supported by and enclosed within a cylindrical concrete tower. Another elevated tank is steel, with a 200,000 gallon capacity. This tank was built in 1970 and services the southeast portion of the City. In 1999 the utility constructed a new booster station in the City linking both water towers and installed a second 12" main to the industrial park. This gives the utility the ability to transfer water from one tower to the other in the event of a shortage or for additional fire fighting capability. The booster is controlled by three – three hundred gallon per minute pumps and has a generator backup if the commercial power is disrupted. The utility's booster station consists of a 55,000-gallon ground concrete reservoir which was built in 1979. The booster pumps and vertical turbines are used alternatively and are driven by 75 horsepower electrical motors. There is space for a future third pump. Each pump at the booster station delivers about 600 gpm.

The utility currently has approximately 171,000 feet of water main, ranging in size from less than six inches to 12 inches. A 12inch main is provided to the industrial park. The utility also has approximately 199 fire hydrants.

The most recent updates to the water system were in the summer of 2012. Upgrades were made to the water filtration system and water treatment plant for efficiency. The City also contracts annually to have one of the four wells rehabilitated so at a minimum each well gets a full rehabilitation once every four years. The City currently has an adequate water supply and no water quality issues. However, the City is actively looking to site a fifth municipal well to come online in the next five to fifteen years.

As noted previously, the MMC-N Campus in the Town of Pine Valley is being served with municipal sanitary sewer and municipal water from the City of Neillsville. The City had stated that the planned improvements have the capacity to meet the potable water needs of the Campus, with additional capacity to sustain additional modest growth in the future.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paint both water towers and inspect as required (every 5 years)</li> <li>• Replace water mains – 9<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Continue one well rehabilitation per year</li> <li>• Continue with siting, and possible land acquisition, for fifth municipal well</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy land surrounding wells to protect from contamination</li> <li>• Identify and construct another well site</li> <li>• Replace water mains – 21<sup>st</sup> Street</li> <li>• Replace water mains – 20<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Replace water mains – 19<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Replace water mains – Lloyd Street</li> <li>• Replace water mains – north portion of Prospect Avenue</li> <li>• Replace water mains – portions of 7<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Replace water mains – north portion of Center Street</li> <li>• Replace water mains – north portion of Willow Street</li> <li>• Replace water mains – portion of 8<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Replace water mains – on Division Street from Fairground Ave to Willow St</li> <li>• Replace water mains – portion of Court Street</li> </ul>

# Utilities & Community Facilities

## **Stormwater Management**

The goal of stormwater management is to prevent runoff from delivering pollutants or sediment to lakes, rivers, streams, or wetlands. Commonly applied stormwater management tools include: ditches, culverts, grassed waterways, rock chutes, retention basins or settling ponds, curb and gutter, storm sewer, and construction site erosion control.

The City has a separate storm sewer system providing service to the majority of the City. The size of pipes range from 12 inches to 24 inches. The Goose Creek storm sewer system also contains open channels. All new subdivisions are required to have curb and gutter and storm sewers. Due to its small size, Neillsville is not required to have a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. The City does not have a storm water utility with separate user fees.

Goose Creek is the primary drainage-way for the south side of the City. It is a natural drainage-way which, most of the time, is a tiny brook than can easily be leaped across. As the City developed and grew southward, storm runoff increased and flooding occurred more frequently. The storm sewer system begins just west of the intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Willow Streets on the southeast side of the City. Stormwater is collected at the outlet of a stormwater detention pond constructed in 1981. Stormwater is then transported in a westerly-northwesterly direction through open areas, culverts, and underground pipe. In 1982, the City received a grant for almost \$500,000 to undertake major improvements to this drainage-way. The improvements were completed in 1984 and included the removal and replacement of concrete box culverts, repair of existing structures and street repairs.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the existing storm sewer system and monitor the need for future expansion, as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As roads are constructed or reconstructed, evaluate the feasibility of adding storm sewer if the need exists.</li> </ul>

## **Solid Waste Management & Recycling**

There are no licensed solid waste landfills located within any of the communities in Clark County nor is there any Material Recovery Facilities (MRF) for recycling. According to the DNR, the majority of solid waste in the County goes to the Cranberry Creek landfill operated by Advanced Disposal and the Chippewa Falls landfill operated by Waste Management.

Solid waste collection and recycling services in Neillsville are currently provided via contract with Advanced Disposal through a multi-jurisdictional agreement for improved pricing. Working in cooperation with other Clark County cities and villages through the United Communities of Clark County (UCCC) group, the solid waste and recycling services contract was recently extended through 2024.

Curbside pick-up is done on a weekly basis and there are no drop-off sites available. Recycling bins are provided to residents. As of April 2021, the monthly charge to private residences was \$11.28. For building and construction material waste, Advanced must be contacted directly. Residents may drop off motor oil and batteries anytime at the City Garage. Appliances and tires can be picked-up curbside for a fee by contacting Waste Management.

Yard waste, brush, branches and Christmas trees are collected curbside periodically throughout the year by the City. Residents may also drop off waste at the City compost site located at 800 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

Clark County, through its Extension Office working with the County Planning, Zoning, Surveying & Land Information Department and the County Land Conservation Department, hosts a Clean Sweep program

## Utilities & Community Facilities

about once every three years. Agricultural and household hazardous waste is collected along with tires, batteries, and appliances. The collected materials are then recycled or disposed of properly. The program has been held every three years since 1993.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate the public on the need for recycling</li> <li>• Work with Clark County to increase the number of Clean Sweep events</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage and monitor, with guidance from DNR, the old landfill ensuring no future harm to the public and adjoining lands</li> <li>• Maintain agreement with the United Communities of Clark County group in bidding any future solid waste and recycling contracts in an effort to reduce local cost</li> </ul>

### **Communication and Power Facilities**

The City is provided electric service by Xcel Energy. There is one substation located on Hewett Street, just north of O'Neill Creek. Phone service is provided in the City by TDS Telecom, gas service is provided by WE Energies, and cable television is provided by Charter Communications. The 2012-2013 comprehensive plan public opinion survey indicated that improvements in high speed, broadband Internet survey may be needed.

Clark County, with assistance from WCWRPC, recently completed a broadband study in June 2021, which included a resident and business survey. Overall, the City fared better than most areas of the County. A total of 33 respondents from Neillsville completed the survey with an average speed of 77 Mbps download and 23 Mbps upload, which is well above the FCC's minimum of 25/3 for broadband but less than the Public Service Commission's 100/20 goal. Of the respondents, 42% were very satisfied with their internet service, 49% were somewhat satisfied, and 9% were not satisfied. The study notes that most cities and villages in the County do not have a firm understanding of the internet service providers, type of broadband technology(s), and available speeds for their business parks, which is important for marketing. The study notes that CVTC is satisfied with the service provided to their Neillsville Campus under an agreement with Charter-Spectrum, but recognizes that improvements in broadband service is needed for many of its students, especially in the towns. This could be a competitive advantage for the City when marketing the community to perspective homebuyers.

The siting of new wireless telecommunication towers has been an issue at times in the State of Wisconsin. The need to construct additional towers is being driven by advancements in mobile telephone technology, additional demand for mobile telephone service, and increased numbers of service providers competing to supply that increased demand. The popularity of the handheld digital phone is the primary reason that more towers are needed. These phones require more towers to operate than the older cellular telephone. The expansion of digital service can assist in the ability to access the internet by wireless mobile technologies, though such mobile services can be more costly and slower than many fixed wireless and wired (e.g., DLS, cable modem, fiber) technologies.

During this period of digital service expansion, areas along major highways tend to be targeted first. The STH 29 corridor currently has enough tower locations to provide continuous cellular coverage, but additional towers may be required to provide uninterrupted digital coverage. The USH 10 corridor is primarily served by towers in Neillsville and towers outside of Clark County. This corridor is likely to have gaps in coverage for both digital and cellular service due to topography, foliage, and lack of towers. Locally, there is one tower located within the City of Neillsville.

There is interest in exploring the idea of adding charging stations and WiFi access in public spaces throughout the City. The PSC reports that public Wi-Fi is currently available at the Neillsville Public Library and at the CVTC-Neillsville campus.



# Utilities & Community Facilities

## Emergency and Protective Services

### Police Services

Law enforcement and protective services are provided by the Neillsville Police Department. The department provides 24-hour, seven-day-a-week police coverage for the City. There is typically 1-2 officers assigned per shift. The department provides: enforcement of state statutes and City ordinances; prevention and determent of crime; protection of citizen health and safety; the maintaining of public peace and order; assistance with traffic forms and questions; issuance of bow-hunting (within the City limits) and parking permits; and assisting other emergency personnel at fire or accident scenes. The Chief of Police also has the duties of Emergency Government Director for the City. There is a mutual aid agreement between the department and other law enforcement or emergency workers in the County.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As suggested in the County Mitigation Plan, explore an agreement with Clark County to allow law enforcement response beyond City limits.</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition of one (1) officer to allow for 2 officers on at all times allowing for more surveillance and drug investigations</li> <li>Integrate a countywide computer system</li> </ul>

### Fire Protection Services

The Neillsville Fire Department is located in the City of Neillsville. The department is staffed by volunteer firefighters, the Fire Chief, First Assistant Fire Chief and Second Assistant Fire Chief, and paid firefighters. All volunteers have completed at least basic certification requirements. Equipment includes three pumpers, three tankers, a rescue van and a wildfire pick-up. The department is a cooperative association of seven area municipalities: the City of Neillsville, and the townships of Pine Valley, Weston, Levis, Grant, Seif, and Hewett, all located in Clark County. In addition to extinguishing fires, the department provides rescue services at accidents (jaws of life, boat and ATV), fire prevention talks and training, fire extinguisher refill program, and fire inspections for businesses. The department's current facility was built in 1986 and is partially owned by all communities which the department serves.



The facility is in good condition and has adequate space. Department equipment is under split ownership, the City solely owns some equipment while the rural areas own other equipment. There are mutual aid agreements for use of equipment when needed.

The facility is in good condition and has adequate space. Department equipment is under split ownership, the City solely owns some equipment while the rural areas own other equipment. There are mutual aid agreements for use of equipment when needed.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many of the vehicles and equipment are aging.</li> <li>As suggested in the County Mitigation Plan, replacement PPE and Tactical EMS funding may be needed in future.</li> <li>Continue cooperative exercises with other partners and agencies.</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer firefighter and EMS recruitment and retention has been a challenge for many departments in the region.</li> </ul>



# Utilities & Community Facilities

## Ambulance Service

Neillsville Ambulance is located in the City of Neillsville. The department is hospital based, meaning that the ambulances are located at the hospital and that is also where they are dispatched from. Ambulance Service consists of twenty-four EMTs, including the Director. Staff are paid a minimal fee when on call and receive an additional amount if they are dispatched. The department has two ambulance vehicles. There are plans to upgrade defibrillators. The department has no other immediate staffing or equipment needs. The service is a cooperative association of twelve area municipalities: the City of Neillsville, the Village of Granton, and the townships of Grant, Hewett, Levis, Lynn, Pine Valley, Seif, Sherwood, Washburn, Weston and York, all located in Clark County.

In addition to emergency ambulance response, the Ambulance Service provides safety and accident prevention talks to school children and businesses and provides standby services at community events, such as school sporting events, Clark County Fairgrounds events (demolition derby, fireworks, motorcycle races, etc.), and the Highground Indian Pow-Wow.

## 9-1-1 Emergency Communications

Clark County has a single emergency dispatch for the entire county, including the City of Neillsville. Enhanced 9-1-1 is in place and a mobile or portable 9-1-1 system is now available, as well as a stationary back-up site. The Clark County Emergency Services Association maintains the mobile response center that is available for emergencies anywhere in the County. City Public Works digital radios does have some coverage gaps that could pose a challenge during an emergency. Some law enforcement radios have also been experiencing scan delays and feedback; this is being addressed in cooperation with Clark County Emergency Management.

## Hazardous Materials Planning and Response

The City coordinates with Clark County Emergency Management and the Clark County Local Emergency Planning Committee on issues of hazardous materials planning, exercises, and response, including EPCRA compliance for hazardous substances.

Clark County does not have a local "Type II" hazardous materials response team, though most fire departments have been trained to the operations level. This is important since local fire departments are often responsible for managing a HazMat incident until it is stable or another Team (e.g., railroad team, higher-level team) arrives.

As needed, the West Central Wisconsin Regional Response Team, based in the Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire Fire Departments, can be contacted for additional reconnaissance and research support. This "Type I" team can also be requested to respond to the most serious of spills and releases requiring the highest level of skin and respiratory protective gear. This includes all chemical, biological, or radiological emergencies requiring vapor-tight "Level A" gear with self-contained breathing apparatus.

Railroads, pipelines, and some larger industry and businesses (e.g., EHS planning facilities) have their own hazardous materials response teams. These entities often work closely with local responders, dispatch, and emergency management personnel for training, incident command system exercises, and sharing of emergency operational procedures.



# Utilities & Community Facilities

## Neillsville Emergency Operations Plan

This plan identifies procedures, roles, responsibilities, and contact information in case of a large emergency or disaster event. This plan was recently reviewed and updated.

## Clark County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan

The City actively participated in the development of the *Clark County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan* and adopted the plan in November 2020. Adoption of the plan is a prerequisite for certain FEMA mitigation grant programs and is updated every five years. The plan included the following highlights for the City:

- The City's flooding history and the flash flooding and basement flooding potential along Goose Creek as well as the flood acquisition projects undertaken by the City to mitigate flood risk.
- The lack of public storm shelters (community safe rooms) for mobile home park residents, slab-on-grade construction (homes and industrial), and at the Fairgrounds.
- Truck traffic on USH 10 and STH 73 poses the highest hazardous materials spill concern.
- City Hall lacks an emergency power generator.

The Plan notes that in Neillsville, a new County Highway Shop Building and new facilities at the fairgrounds are being considered that could offer opportunities to integrate a community safe room as well as an emergency operations center.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement those recommendations pertinent to the City of Neillsville within the <i>Clark County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan</i> as opportunities and resources all.</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	

## Dams

According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Dam Safety Program, there are six existing or planned dams located in or adjacent to the City of Neillsville, however, City officials are only aware of two existing dams of any significant size-- the Neillsville Dam on O'Neill Creek at the Highway 73 bridge and the small pond dam at Listeman Park. In the WDNR database, all six dams within the City are identified as having a low hazard potential.

## Schools

### Neillsville Public School District

The Neillsville School District is the largest school district within Clark County, serving the City of Neillsville and all or portions of ten towns. Neillsville High School, Neillsville Middle School, and Neillsville Elementary School are included within the School District of Neillsville. All schools are located within one facility located within the City. Student enrollment in the 2020-21 school year was 801 while enrollment in the 2019-20 school year was 929. It is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic played a role in this decrease. Study enrollment within the district has been decreasing. According to the 2013 Plan data, the school district had 1,254 students in the 2000-2001 school year and 1,012 students during the 2012-2013 school year, a decrease of 19.3%. A new front of the high school is being planned; one design concept is shown below. The district does not have any other construction or facility expansion plans at this time.

# Utilities & Community Facilities



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEILLSVILLE CANOPY  
CONCEPT TWO

MATERIALS SHOWN ARE FOR CONCEPTUAL PURPOSE ONLY AND DO NOT REFLECT FINAL COLORS OR FINISHES.

Faced with declining enrollments and budgets, the need to update facilities, and the expectation to maintain a high level of education standards, the school districts of Clark County have stepped up discussions to address tough issues. The sharing of programs between neighboring school districts has worked in the past. For example, Neillsville and Granton have teamed up for cooperative football and softball teams. Other cooperative opportunities exist with Loyal for the softball and football programs and Greenwood for the cross-country and golf teams.

However, the sharing of programs between school districts may not be enough to deal with the financial realities of declining enrollments for some districts. In early 2005, consolidation discussion between the Neillsville and Greenwood School districts began to occur. Granton and Loyal had started discussions as well. Talks of consolidations in Clark County have slowed greatly in recent years, but discussions and efforts to share staff, programs, and even whole grades of students have significantly increased.

## Private Schools

The City of Neillsville is also served by St. John's Lutheran School. A number of Amish and Mennonite schools are located in the area outside the City.

## Higher Education

Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) was constructed in 2004 in Neillsville's Industrial Park. The new center allows area residents and businesses to have immediate access to the latest training and technology locally. The college also serves the area with regular classes at the Eau Claire campuses and special courses provided off-site in cooperation with the local school district and area employers.

The City identified a need to strengthen the partnership with CVTC and better align the program offerings (classes & scheduling) at CVTC meet the needs of the local workforce. This can help ensure that locals are able to attend training within the community and eliminate commute trips to Eau Claire for course offerings.



## Utilities & Community Facilities

The University of Wisconsin system serves central Wisconsin with a number of campuses. Nearest to Neillsville is the two-year UW Marshfield/Wood County center. The nearest four-year campuses are UW-Eau Claire and UW-Stevens Point.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to strengthen the partnership with Chippewa Valley Technical College.</li> <li>• Encourage CVTC to pursue opportunities to better align program offerings to meet the needs of the local workforce.</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As the City looks to expand and diversify its industrial base, work with CVTC to monitor and adjust programming needs to fit the technical needs of the local workforce and industries.</li> </ul>

### **Health Care and Senior Housing Facilities**

Marshfield Medical Center-Neillsville (MMC-N) is the primary provider of health care services for the City. The Memorial Medical Center is a full-service medical facility offering a wide range of care for a population base of 12,000 individuals in the southern Clark County area with clinics located in Neillsville (just outside the City), Greenwood, Loyal and Fairchild. Services include: Cardiac Rehabilitation, Dietary, Diabetic Education, Emergency Care (ER), Hospital, Home Health, Laboratory, Nursing Home, Obstetrics, Occupational Therapy, Pain Management Clinic, Podiatry, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Radiology, Respiratory Therapy, Speech Therapy, Sports Medicine, Surgery, Social Services, and Urgent Care. MMC-N recently moved from the City to the Town of Pine Valley just to the southwest across the Black River.

There are also a number of dental offices available within the City.

The following nursing and senior housing facilities have a Neillsville address:

1. Whispering Pines Manor (Adult Family Home, capacity 4)
2. Whispering Pines Manor II (Adult Family Home, capacity 4)
3. Wilke New Beginnings LLC (Adult Family Home, capacity 3)
4. Willow Ridge Adult Day Care Center III (ADC, capacity 10)
5. Neillsville Retirement Community (Residential Care Apartment Complex , capacity 24)
6. Riverside Assisted Living (CBRF, capacity 17)
7. Bella House (capacity 2)
8. Chadwick Supportive Apartments (capacity 3)

As the population continues to age, there will likely be an increase demand for senior facilities and associated services.

### **Day Care Facilities**

There are six licensed or certified day care facilities with a Neillsville address identified on the State's registry, though not all are located within the City:

1. Growing Into Kindergarten (capacity of 8)
2. ICAA Neillsville Head Start (capacity of 20)
3. Little Blessings Daycare (capacity of 8)

## Utilities & Community Facilities

4. To the Moon and Back Home Daycare (capacity of 8)
5. Little Rays of Sunshine (capacity of 8)
6. St. Johns Early Learning Center (capacity unknown)

The *America's Child Care Deserts in 2018* report, prepared by the Center for American Progress, notes that "Families in rural areas face the greatest challenges in finding license child care, with 3 in 5 rural communities lacking adequate child care supply." The report uses a definition of child care deserts, such that **a ratio of more than three young children for every licensed child care slot constitutes a child care desert**. The definition comes from the U.S. Census Bureau's findings that show approximately one-third of young children are regularly in the care of someone who is not a relative. "When the number of licensed child care slots is insufficient to reach at least one-third of young children under age 5, the likelihood that parents face difficulty finding child care increases. This could affect employment decisions or force families to turn to unlicensed options."

Per the State's registry, the previously mentioned five facilities have an identified capacity can accommodate a maximum of 52 children, with additional unknown capacity at St. Johns Early Learning Center. The 2015-2019 ACS data shows that there are approximately 140 children under five years old within the City of Neillsville and 145 under five years old within the Town of Pine Valley. Based on the ratio above, a minimum of 82 childcare spaces are needed to avoid becoming a child care desert.

While there are some childcare facilities that have closed since the 2013 plan, there are a few new facilities that have opened. The availability of child care is a quality of life factor that is important when working to attract young families to the area and maintain a sound economy and workforce.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work to maintain a ratio of at least one child care slot for every three children under age 5 within the community.</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support existing childcare facilities to remain open and encourage the development of new facilities within the community.</li> </ul>

### Libraries

There are 11 libraries in Clark County. The City of Neillsville is served by the Neillsville Library, 409 Hewett St., Neillsville. The Neillsville Public Library had its beginning back in 1879 as the Neillsville Library Association, and was housed in various locations until 1914. Fortunately, the City of Neillsville had a direct link to the Carnegie Foundation via one Mrs. J.W. Hommel, who with her second husband was a resident of Neillsville. Mrs. Hommel's first husband was George C. Carnegie, whose father was a nephew of Andrew Carnegie. Thanks in part to that relationship Neillsville was allotted \$10,000 for the construction of a new library. The Chicago architect, George Awsumb, was hired to design the building. True to Carnegie standards, the brick structure stands stately atop a hill and remains today in its original splendor. Following their original lead the City constructed an addition in 1994 nearly doubling the size of the library facility while remaining true to the Carnegie brick design.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain library staffing at current levels and continue children's story hour and summer reading programs.</li> <li>Make the public more aware of the services that the library offers.</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the library to make more room for continuously expanding collection</li> </ul>



# Utilities & Community Facilities

## Post Offices

The City of Neillsville is served by the Neillsville Post Office, 619 Hewett Street, Neillsville. No related needs were identified.

## Churches

The City of Neillsville is home to eight churches. They are as follows:

1. Bible Baptist
2. Calvary Lutheran
3. Hillside Community Church
4. The Living Hope Evangelical Free Church
5. Seventh Day Adventist Church
6. St. John's Evangelical Lutheran
7. St. Mary's Catholic Congregation
8. United Church of Christ



## Cemeteries

There are two cemeteries located in the City. The largest being the Neillsville Municipal Cemetery. This cemetery has one full-time employee – the Cemetery Sexton – and various part-time employees on a seasonal and as-needed basis.

The municipal cemetery consists of 34.5 acres of former rolling farmland. Currently, the platted area encompasses 19.2 acres. The first recorded burials pre-date both the cemetery platting and the City of Neillsville's incorporation in 1882. As the cemetery grew from the

original site in 1870, plots were added in 1890, 1899, 1910, 1927, and 1969, creating a very pleasant pastoral view of the wildlife that passes through. The western end of the cemetery (original plat), with its canopy of big oaks, large granite headstones, mausoleum, and veterans' graves, provides a step back into the City of Neillsville's history, with many of the founding families represented. A 4,400 square foot cemetery building with a Sexton office was recently constructed.

The Cemetery Sexton provides for the overall operation of the cemetery; sale of grave lots; opening and closing of graves (regular and cremations); mowing lawn; weed-whipping around headstones; snow removal; maintenance and repair of cemetery roads, signs, buildings and structures, machinery and equipment; supervises part-time personnel; develops the department budget proposal for the next fiscal year, while controlling expenditures of the current fiscal year budget; assists family members doing genealogy research and performs the duties of City Forester and Parks Director.

<b>Short-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pave all roads in the cemetery</li> </ul>
<b>Long-Term Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None identified</li> </ul>



# Utilities & Community Facilities

## **American Legion Hall**

The American Legion Hall located along Boon Boulevard was constructed in 2006 and is often used for community functions.

## **Rod, Gun, and Other Outdoor Clubs**

Clark County is home to several rod, gun, and conservation clubs. Locally, the Neillsville Gun Club is an active conservation organization. These clubs promote outdoor recreation sports such as shooting and trail use activities. These clubs are also active participants in land conservation projects raising thousands of dollars annually, which are further used to leverage public funds for various projects.



The Neillsville-Grantton Trailbusters Inc. has been active in Clark County for about twenty years. The purpose of the club is to create and maintain the snowmobile trails in Clark County. The group has worked to create and maintain approximately 60 miles of trails. Local landowners have worked closely with the groups to allow for trails to cross their land. All of the trails are well groomed, double wide when possible and well signed.

## **Clark County Fairgrounds**

The County Fairgrounds is located on approximately 40.5 acres owned by Clark County. The Fairgrounds was established in 1872 and has a long history of celebrating the County's agricultural and small town culture. In addition to the annual County Fair, the Fairgrounds hosts many additional events and activities. A major Fairgrounds Revitalization Project was initiated in 2017, and fundraising efforts are underway for the following planned additions or upgrades:

- Construct a new multi-purpose livestock building with arena (to be completed in 2021).
- Remove certain deteriorated buildings and create a new family-friendly green space.
- Relocate and construct new Listeman Bandshell.
- Expand Horse Show Arena and seating area, plus construct a Draft Horse Addition.
- Improve traffic, lighting, parking, & camping area options.
- Construct a new multi-purpose Event Center for year-round use, which would include a large exhibition/banquet hall seating approximately 700 people.

The Clark County All Hazards Mitigation Plan identifies the Fairgrounds as a severe storm vulnerability for which a community safe room would be beneficial.

## **Civic Organizations/Other Clubs**

There are a number of civic organizations and other clubs located in Clark County such as chambers of commerce, Lions Clubs, 4-H Clubs, conservation groups, etc. Coordination with these groups with regard to planning or implementing programs should be considered and utilized whenever possible because of the guidance, funding, support, and volunteer efforts the groups may provide. Civic organizations provide local governments a cost effective way to leverage tax dollars for community projects.

# Utilities & Community Facilities

The City of Neillsville is home to a number of organizations including, but not limited to, the following:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Kiwanis Club of Neillsville            | 11. Knights of Columbus                 |
| 2. Neillsville Optimists                  | 12. Neillsville Men's Club              |
| 3. Ministerial Alliance                   | 13. Clark County Historical Society     |
| 4. Friends of the Black River – Clark Co. | 14. Memorial Hospital Auxiliary         |
| 5. Neillsville Lions                      | 15. Veterans of Foreign Wars            |
| 6. Neillsville Chamber of Commerce        | 16. Neillsville Boy Scouts              |
| 7. Haugen-Richmond Post #73               | 17. Clark Cultural ART Center           |
| 8. Woodland Girl Scouts                   | 18. Clark County Jail Museum, Inc.      |
| 9. FFA Alumni Association                 | 19. Neillsville Improvement Corporation |
| 10. Neillsville Gun Club                  |   |

## **Utilities and Community Facilities Trends and Outlook**

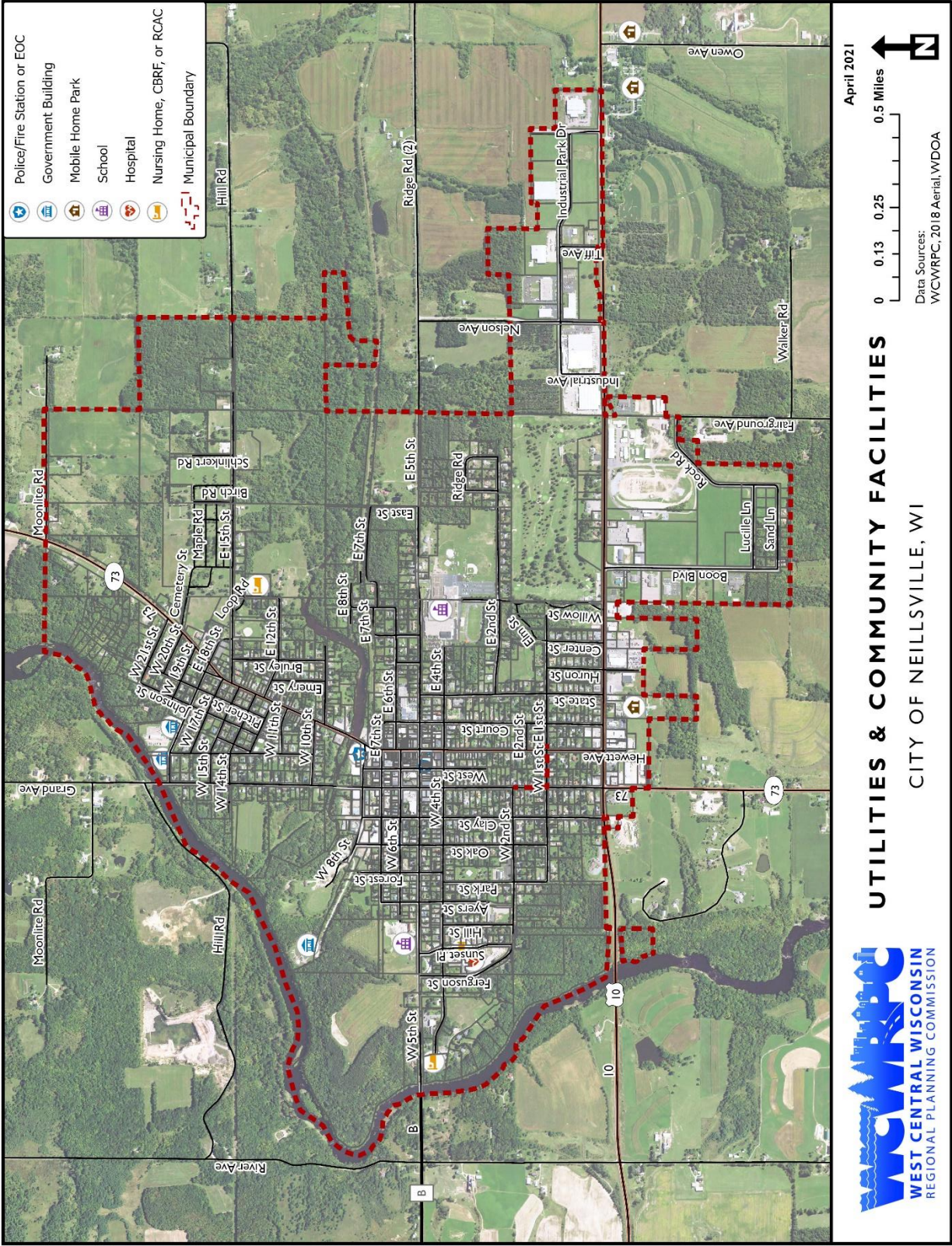
The following are current trends that are anticipated over the planning period with regard to utilities and community facilities.

1. Schools and school districts will continue to seek new ways to share services and reduce expenses in order to deal with continued declining enrollment. School district consolidation is not beyond the realm of possibilities within the 20-year planning period.
2. Increased public interest in more Clark County-coordinated Clean Sweep collections.
3. Local government budget constraints will drive the need for intergovernmental cooperation for services and programs.
4. County POWTS programs will expand due to additional state requirements to inventory and monitor the maintenance of all POWTS within their jurisdiction.
5. Surface water quality and stormwater management standards and planning requirements at the Federal and State level have continued to increase.
6. Increased demands on emergency services as population and development increases. As technologies, risks, and rules change, keeping up with current equipment, training, and resident expectations can be a challenge. Some area fire departments have been struggling to maintain volunteers.
7. Increasing demand for reliable, high-speed Internet. Broadband is an essential infrastructure. While current service levels are overall good within the City and can be a competitive advantage for attracting business and residents, there may still be room for improvement in both speeds and marketing this asset.
8. Local services and amenities are increasingly being viewed as important aspects of a community's economic marketability in terms of retaining existing businesses and attracting new business investment, a skilled workforce, and tourism dollars.
9. Increasing demand for senior services to meet the needs of the aging population.
10. Like many rural communities in the region, the demand for child care services is outpacing supply.



# Utilities & Community Facilities

Map 6 Existing Community Facilities and Services





**NEILLSVILLE, CLARK COUNTY, WISCONSIN**  
WATER MAIN

**LEGEND**

- 1. OLD PUMPING STATION
- 2. WATER TREATMENT PLANT
- 3. WELLS
- 4. 250,000 GALLON TANK & BOOSTER STATION
- 5. 200,000 GALLON TANK
- 6. 150,000 GALLON TANK
- 7. 100,000 GALLON TANK
- 8. 50,000 GALLON TANK
- 9. 25,000 GALLON TANK

**KEY MAP - WELLS TO CITY**

0' 3,600' 7,200' 14,400'

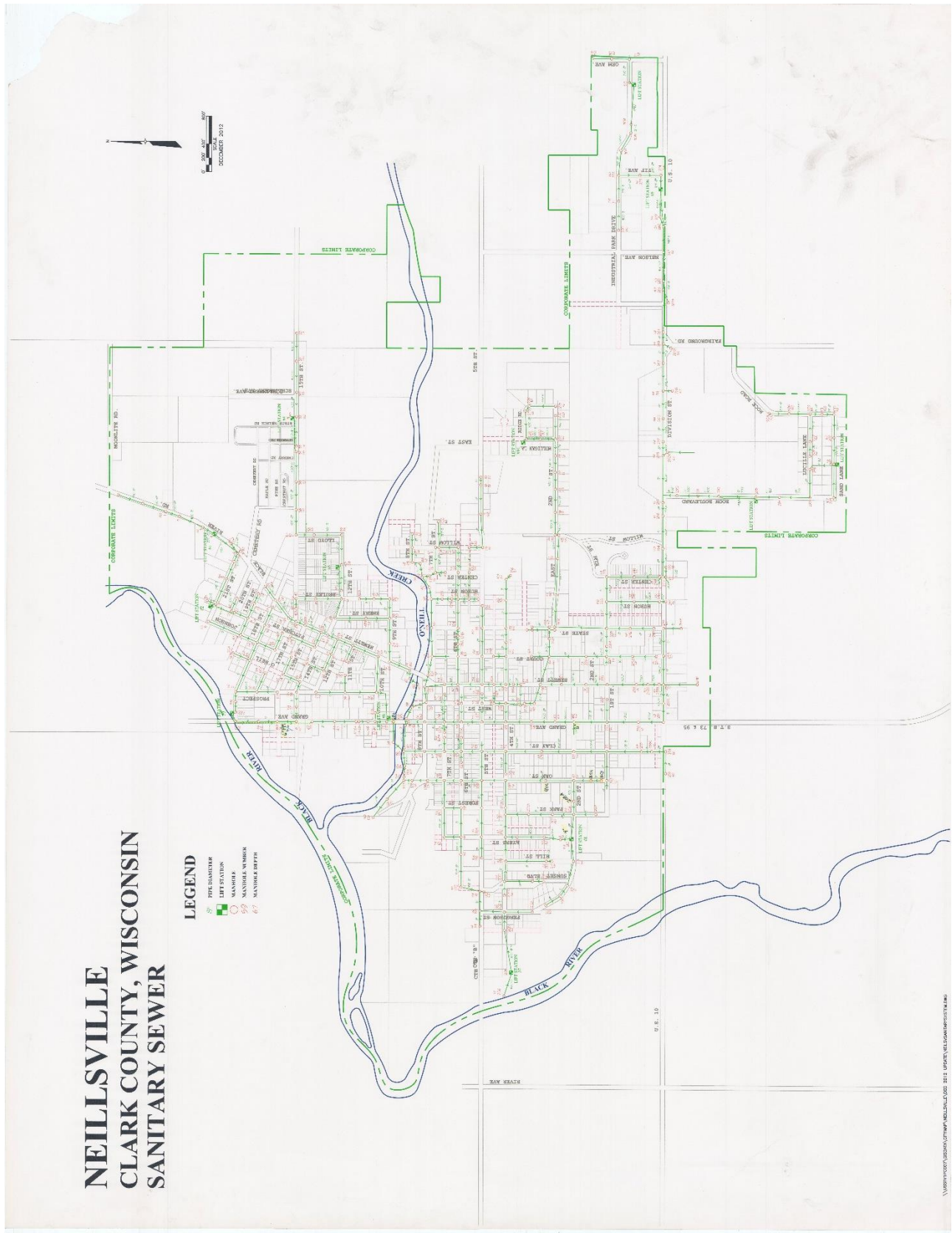
SCALE  
APRIL 2017

0' 600' 1,200' 2,400'

SCALE  
APRIL 2017

# Utilities & Community Facilities

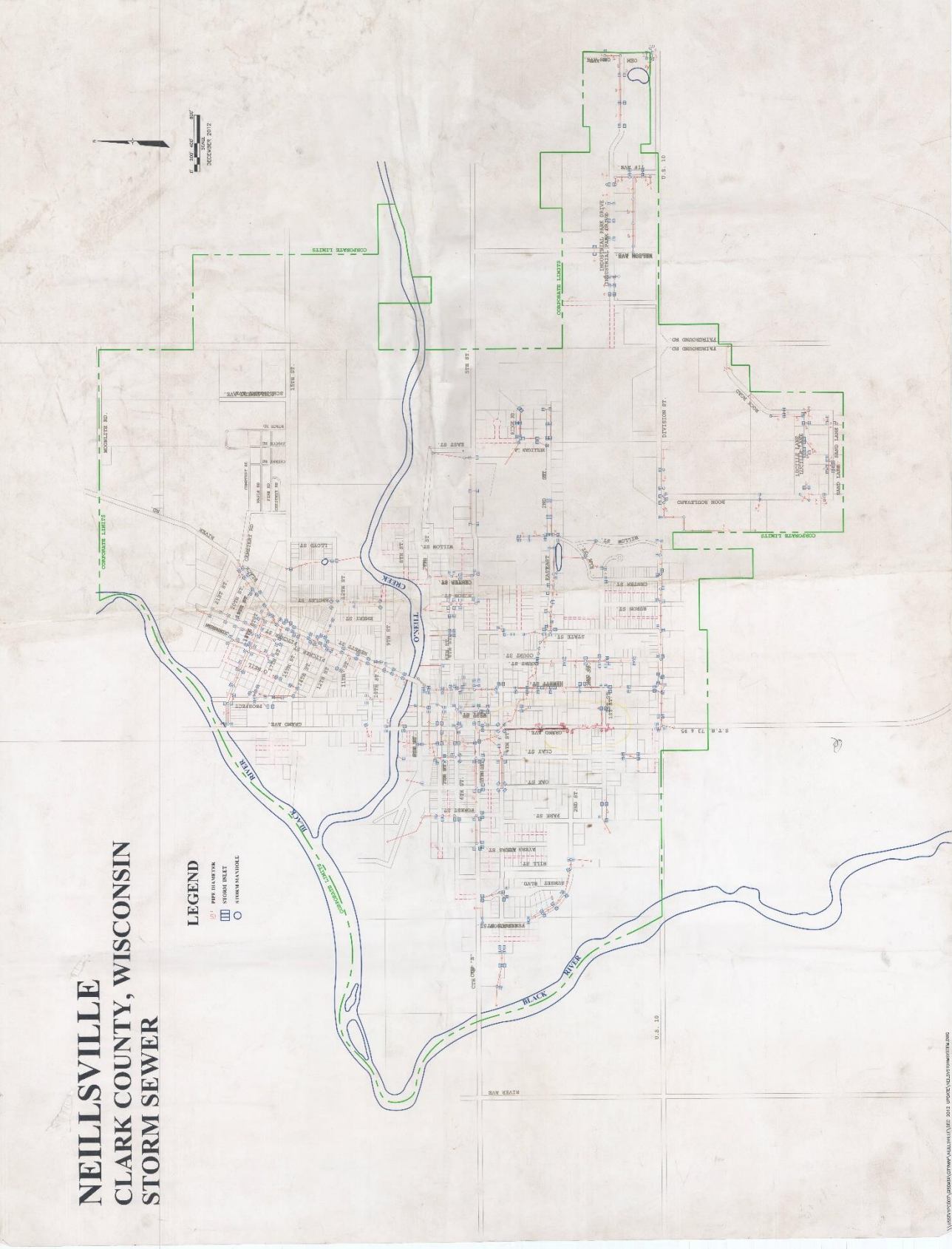
## Map 8 City of Neillsville Municipal Sanitary Sewer System





# Utilities & Community Facilities

Map 9 City of Neillsville Municipal Storm Sewer System





# Utilities & Community Facilities

## 5.2 Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

***Goal: Provide quality cost effective community facilities and services that meet the existing and future demands of residents, landowners, and visitors.***

### ***Objectives***

1. Actively pursue and maintain the highest levels of service from solid waste, natural gas, electrical, telephone, cable, telecommunications and other technology providers.
2. Continually, consider impacts of development proposals to City facilities and services.
3. Maintain or pursue additional cooperation between communities to avoid duplication of facilities and increase the cost effectiveness of services provided to residents.
4. Continually monitor the need for new, expanded or rehabilitated services.
5. Increase coordination of utility and community facility planning with the location of future service areas as guided by the comprehensive plan, environmental considerations, economic development and growth management policies.

### Sanitary Sewer

***Goal: Ensure proper disposal of wastewater to ensure public health and protect ground and surface water quality while meeting the needs of current and future residents.***

### ***Objectives***

1. Reduce the impact of sewer extensions in environmentally sensitive areas.
2. Maintain sewerage assessment policies that will encourage compact development and discourage scattered development.
3. Institute technically and economically feasible wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal systems.
4. Public sewer services should be provided for all residential, commercial, and industrial land uses within the corporate limits of Neillsville.

### Water Supply

***Goal: Ensure that the water supply for the community has sufficient capacity, remains drinkable and is available to meet the needs of current and future residents.***

### ***Objectives***

1. Reduce the potential of point and non-point source pollution.
2. Continually evaluate the potential impacts of development proposals on groundwater quality and quantity.

## Utilities & Community Facilities

3. Maintain the quality of the City's water supply and distribution system.
4. Public water should be provided for all residential, commercial, and industrial land uses within the corporate limits of Neillsville.

### Stormwater Management

***Goal: Promote stormwater management practices which reduce property and road damage and ensure a high level of water quality.***

#### **Objectives**

1. Manage the use of stormwater management practices to reduce non-point source pollution.
2. Preserve natural open space areas such as wetlands and floodplains that will accommodate flood water and minimize flooding.
3. Maintain a community stormwater system which addresses stormwater quantity.
4. Reduce the number of stormwater outfalls (drains) that discharge unmanaged stormwater into wetlands, aquifers or other environmentally sensitive areas.

### Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities

***Goal: Promote effective solid waste disposal and recycling services and systems that protect the public health, natural environment, and general appearance of land use within the community.***

#### **Objectives**

1. Increase City and citizen involvement in decisions involving the type, location and extent of disposal facilities and services.
2. Annually evaluate solid waste and recycling services available to residents to determine if current needs at adequately being met.
3. Require major developments to adequately address solid waste disposal and recycling needs.
4. Increase collection opportunities for the proper recycling and disposal of unique (i.e. tires, white goods, etc.) and/or hazardous wastes.

### Other Utilities and Communication Services

***Goal: Ensure the provision of reliable, efficient, and well-planned utilities ( i.e. gas, electric) and communication services ( i.e. telephone, cable, telecommunications) to adequately serve existing and future development.***

#### **Objectives**

1. Increase community involvement in the planning and coordination of utilities (gas, electric) with other agencies and jurisdictions in order to efficiently serve existing and future development and regional growth.
2. Continually monitor the location, condition and capacity of existing and future public utilities in order to efficiently serve existing residents and planned service areas.
3. Direct new utility transmission and distribution lines into public right-of-ways whenever feasible.

## Utilities & Community Facilities

4. Establish structural design, location and service standards for towers to reduce the negative visual impacts, co-locate facilities and address public safety issues.
5. Continue to work with Internet service providers and other stakeholders to ensure that the City, its residents, and its businesses, have adequate, affordable broadband service today and that broadband infrastructure and services continue to take advantage of new technologies to meet changing demands in the future.

### Libraries and Schools

**Goal: Promote quality schools and access to educational opportunities for everyone. Objectives**

1. Increase community involvement in the coordination of local planning efforts with the School District in order to allow them to anticipate future growth and to provide appropriate facilities.
2. Increase support for local libraries in their efforts to increase community education.
3. Explore additional revenue sources for the public library system.



### Police Protection

**Goal: Ensure that police services are appropriately meeting the existing and future needs of the community.**

#### **Objectives**

1. Maintain the current service agreement with the Clark County Sheriff's Department.
2. Pursue relationships and/or agreements with neighboring communities for utilization of police services when needed.

### Fire/Rescue Services and Facilities

**Goal: Provide a level of fire and emergency services that meets existing and future demands of residents and development patterns.**

#### **Objectives**

1. Monitor the ISO rating of the fire department and develop strategies to improve the rating.

# Utilities & Community Facilities

2. Increase resident education on ways to reduce the risks of fire and increase access and response time of emergency vehicles to local residences (i.e. forest and grass fire prevention, driveway design that eases emergency vehicle access).
3. Continually monitor and evaluate the condition of equipment and facilities and address needs where appropriate.
4. Maintain a properly trained staff of volunteers.

## Government Facilities

***Goal: Maintain quality City services and facilities.***

### ***Objectives***

1. Maintain a public meeting place for large gatherings, community activities and public meetings.
2. Continually monitor the need for new or expanded local government facilities or services.
3. Assess if current staffing levels are effectively providing quality City services.
4. Provide a contact person for developers, homeowners, landowners, agencies and local business owners for information regarding City procedures, ordinances and/or land use regulations and programs.
5. Maintain a Capital Improvement Program (Annual budget) to provide local decision makers, private developers, and citizens with detailed information on any capital improvement projects that will take place in the City's future.

## Health and Child Care Services and Facilities

***Goal: Allow residents reasonable access to health care facilities and child care.***

### ***Objectives***

1. Allow opportunities for local residents in providing child care facilities.
2. Support school districts or local community organizations in their sponsorship of child care programs and early developmental programs.
3. Support local clinics and hospitals in developing education programs to inform citizens of available services or health care advances.



## ***Policies and Recommendations***

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the City is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the City can use to aid in making land use decisions.

### **Policies**

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory

# Utilities & Community Facilities

aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

1. Adequate public water and sewer utilities should be provided for all residents, businesses and industries, along with proper storm sewer facilities.
2. Development should occur in an efficient land use pattern and cost-effective manner concurrent with the capacity of municipal utilities, services, and the infrastructure distribution network without leapfrogging.
3. Sewer and water lines should be adequately sized to handle added water and sewer volumes.
4. Areas to which public sewer and water would be extended should be annexed to the City prior to extension of services in most cases, unless there is a significant benefit to the community.
5. Developers should pay the full cost of sewer and water lines of a size sufficient to serve their development, except the City may explore cost-sharing partnerships when proposed new development benefits the community and is consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan.
6. When street, water main, and sewer main projects are planned, contact local broadband service and telecommunications providers to identify opportunities for the installation of fiber optics, cable, or other telecommunications lines.
7. The City of Neillsville will continue to coordinate with the School District to integrate and expand educational, recreational and other community programs, services and activities.
8. The City of Neillsville will maintain an ongoing five-year capital improvement program that annually prioritizes and estimates the cost of needed infrastructure improvements for the next five years and considers potential grant resources and other funding opportunities to augment City expenditures.
9. Infrastructure and facilities in Downtown Neillsville should be safe and inviting for persons of all ages and abilities, while enabling seniors to age in place/community.
10. The City of Neillsville may provide appropriate support to the services and activities of its service clubs.
11. The City of Neillsville may help interested individuals and organizations find public and private funding sources to support its attractions.
12. The City of Neillsville will continue to provide appropriate services to support the hospital, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities.
13. The full impacts of locating and siting of a government or institutional structure should be studied before it is implemented. These studies should include, but are not limited to, the increased traffic generation on surrounding streets and the increased demand on parking.
14. Where sewage disposal or water problems have developed within the City, public sewer and water should be extended on a priority basis.
15. Where no apparent sewage or water problems exist within the community with private systems, plans for eventually extending public sewer and water should be made when cost-effective opportunities present themselves.
16. Return on investment and long-term maintenance/operating costs should be considered and planned for before creating or expanding a new facility or service. Some benefits are difficult to quantify and a positive financial return may not be necessary or definable in all instances.



# Utilities & Community Facilities

17. Use the subdivision code to ensure that new residential development is provided with adequate streets, curb and gutter, utilities, and sidewalks, subject to the previous policies.

## Recommendations

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the City's policies, and therefore will help the City fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

1. Implement or further explore the short-term and long-term projects identified in this chapter.
2. Work with Clark County Land Conservation, UW-Extension, other municipalities, and stakeholders to address phosphorus loading within the Black River watershed and continue to work with WDNR to maintain compliance with permitting limits for the wastewater treatment plant. (on-going/as needed)
3. Work with the School District, Library, UW-Extension, and other stakeholders to explore the provision of basic computer and Internet classes and/or open computer labs for adults and seniors and pursue strategies which use the Internet and new technologies to involve and serve community members.
4. As part of outreach to City employers, survey child care demand among employers. Work with Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce to share demand data with existing and potential child care providers as well as promote available technical and financial assistance programs such as the Wisconsin Child Care Business Initiative and the Regional Business Fund, Inc. Explore employer-supported child care options. (short-term)

## 5.3 Other Utilities and Community Facilities Plans and Programs

Appendix E includes some additional regional, state, and federal programs that may assist the City of Neillsville in achieving its utilities and community facilities goals and objectives.

## 6. PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION

# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

## 6. Parks and Outdoor Recreation

The element provides the core sections of the City of Neillsville's 2021 update of its Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and is consistent with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' guidelines included in Appendix 10 of the *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Comprehensive Plan—2019-2023*. A five-year update of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is a pre-requisite for certain grant programs available through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, most notably:

- Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program grants (i.e., Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks, Urban Green Space grants, Urban Rivers grants, and Acquisition of Development Rights)
- Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON)
- Federal Recreational Trails Act (RTC) funds

Leisure time is an important component of people's lifestyles and quality of life, whether they live in urban centers or sparsely populated rural regions of the country. Compared to a century ago, shorter working hours, more disposable income, earlier retirement, and longer life spans have led to an increased demand for leisure-time activities, including outdoor recreation. As more and more people participate in outdoor activities, the economic value of recreational facilities increases for tourism as well as for attracting and retaining workforce. The design, accessibility, function, and amenities of local outdoor recreational facilities also reflect and can reinforce a community's identity, brand, and sense of place. However, the increased demand and use of these facilities that can endanger the environmental qualities that residents and non-residents are attracted to in the first place. Consequently, there is a need to provide for increasing recreational demand while at the same time protecting natural resources for future generations.



Broadly defined, recreation is an activity or experience undertaken solely for the pleasure or satisfaction derived from it. Although recreational preferences may vary from individual to individual, recreation occupies a necessary and significant place in every person's life. It is important to provide a variety of parks and outdoor recreational facilities to offer opportunities for participation in a wide range of active and passive recreational pursuits.

The primary purpose of this plan element is to provide direction for the programming, maintenance, and improvement of Neillsville's existing outdoor recreational facilities, while guiding the acquisition and development of land, right-of-way or other improvements to satisfy the outdoor recreational needs of the current and projected population of the City. It must be also kept in mind that Clark County is blessed with many nearby outdoor recreation opportunities that also serve City residents and visitors; these relationships are further explored in the Economic Development element of this plan as well as within the *Clark County Outdoor Recreation Plan—2016-2021*.

# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

## 6.1 Supply

The City's Recreation Department is funded through a cost-share agreement with the School District. The following section inventories the existing public and private properties developed or designated for outdoor recreation purposes within the City of Neillsville as shown on Map 10 at the end of this section.

### Mini-Parks

#### C.C. SNITEMAN TOWN SQUARE PARK

.25 ACRES

This small downtown park is highly visible and located at the intersection of old USH 10 (5th Street) and STH 73 in downtown Neillsville. The park offers a place to sit and rest after shopping downtown or a place for an outdoor break for downtown workers. The adjacent parking lot is used for farmers markets and the public library is located immediately adjacent on the park's south side.

Town Square Park amenities include:

- A gazebo which is 28-years old and in good condition. The Neillsville Improvement Corporation (N.I.C.) is proposing to use the gazebo a small performing arts stage during the summer months.
- Benches (fair condition), lighting, flag pole, fountain (good condition), some landscaping, trash receptacle, and a historic-style clock (good condition).
- The nearby parking lot is in good condition, though sidewalk paving stones (with memorial names) in the center of the park are in need of some repair.



### Neighborhood Parks and Playgrounds

#### CLIFF'S PARK

2.5 ACRES

Cliff's Park has been extensively developed for active sports in the past few years. It is a relatively small neighborhood park that has amenities that attract residents throughout the community. Parking is available on the street.

Cliff's Park amenities include:

- two sand volleyball courts
- ½-court basketball hoop with cement slab
- youth baseball field
- small "overhang" pavilion with restrooms
- play equipment (new) in a small fenced-in play area

All Cliff's Park amenities are in good-to-excellent condition, with the exception of the pavilion roof, which is planned for replacement in 2016.

#### FOUNTAIN PARK

3 ACRES

O'Neill Creek and the dam are the most unique features of this small neighborhood park making it popular for fishing and those wanting the scenic experience of the creek. Overall, the park has low

# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

use. Even so, at least three weddings have occurred at the park in recent years. The scenic value and use of this park could be enhanced. The park also has the potential to offer a visual, public “anchor” on the north end of the downtown and some conceptual planning has occurred for use of this park as a future bike/walking trailhead. The horseshoe pits and benches were removed in recent years.

Fountain Park amenities include:

- 1 picnic tables (fair condition)
- 1 decorative fountain (good condition)

## TOCK FIELD

2 ACRES

This neighborhood park is located on the grounds of the former brickworks. It is primarily used as a play area, picnicking, and baseball for younger children.

Tock Field amenities include:

- 7 picnic tables
- 1 shelter/pavilion with a roof that was replaced in 2015.
- Flush restrooms and drinking water with a roof that was replaced in 2015.
- Play equipment for children.
- Full basketball court
- Baseball/softball field for younger children, with associated amenities.

All of Tock Field amenities are in good condition, except the play equipment that is somewhat older and in fair condition.

## **Community Parks**

### LISTEMAN PARK

9 ACRES

Listeman Park is a small community park that also functions as a large neighborhood park. The provide a mix of active and passive recreational opportunities, including picnicking, play equipment, youth fishing, and field sports.

Listeman Park amenities include:

- 1 shelter/pavilion, grills, and about 10 picnic tables.
- Restroom facility with drinking water.
- Play equipment for children.
- Tennis court, basketball court (1/2 court), and lighted baseball/softball field. The baseball field is equipped with dugout, press box, scoreboard, bleachers, and backstop.
- Youth fishing at a stocked trout pond.

All of the above amenities, except the restroom facility, are in good condition. The restrooms are in poor condition and their replacement is a priority.

### SCHUSTER PARK

17.5 ACRES

This is the City of Neillsville’s primary community park offering a diversity of recreational opportunities, as well as an outdoor place that community members can come together for music, festivals, and other



# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

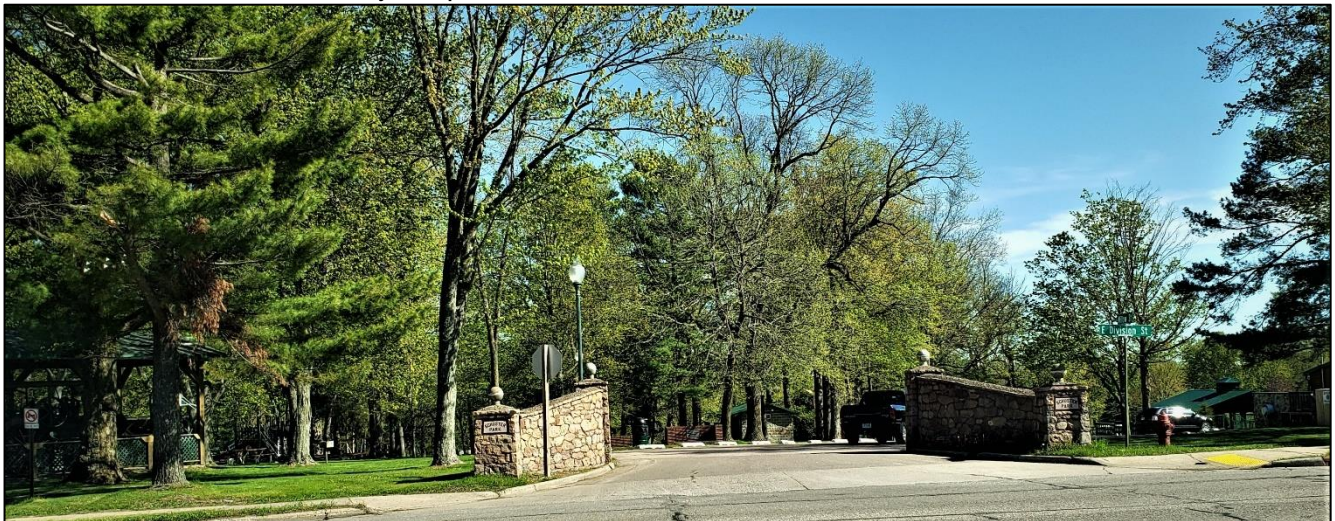
events. The park receives heavy use from family “get togethers” and other picnics. It is also the site of many activities during Neillsville Heritage Days and outdoor volleyball during the annual Winter Carnival. Of special interest within the Park is a part of the old Grand Avenue Bridge, which was saved when the bridge was rebuilt, and a 1919 Case steam engine. Many of the improvements at this park have been funded by donations from the Listeman Foundation.

Schuster Park Amenities include:

- A large picnic area with 34 picnic tables, 7 grills, 2 shelters/pavilions, and some play equipment for children.
- An active recreation area includes 2 lighted tennis courts, 1-4 volleyball courts, basketball court (1/2 court), skateboard park, and a 15-hole disc golf course.
- Flush restrooms (2) that serve the picnic and active recreation areas.



Overall, all of Schuster Park’s amenities are in good condition, though the south restroom facility should be replaced to meet ADA accessibility requirements. The north restroom facilities was replaced and the two shelters received major repairs in 2015.



## **Specialty Outdoor Recreation Facilities**

### **LISTEMAN ARBORETUM**

**47 ACRES**

The Arboretum provides a passive recreation outing for area residents and visitors. An entrance off U.S. Highway 10 West, complete with signage and picnic facilities, coupled with the entrance on West 2nd Street, makes this area very visible and easily accessible. The City-owned acreage fronts the Black River providing access for fisherman. The entire 47-acre site could be considered an outdoor classroom. Trails cross the arboretum with benches and clearings for interpretive study. No restroom facilities are available.

# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Listeman Arboretum's amenities include:

- 1 picnic table and signage at the parking area
- Walking trails, with benches and some interpretative/educational signage

Overall, the Arboretum's amenities are in good condition, except some of the benches that may need replacement in the near future. Improvements were made to some of the walking trails and pedestrian bridges about three years ago, though these must be monitored and maintained, especially in areas potentially at risk of erosion.

## MOUNT MOLDY

6 ACRES

Mount Mouldy is largely an undeveloped hill. At one time, the area was used for downhill skiing, but now it is used for tubing and sledding. Lighting for nighttime use and a parking area are available at the top of the hill, both in fair condition.

## PROCK PARK

0.06 ACRES

This recently created mini-park is located on a triangular parcel on the north side of the community along U.S. Highway 27. The park includes a gateway signage welcoming southbound visitors to the City (and thanking northbound travelers for visiting) as well as a flowers, a flagpole, and a decorative rock with historical plaque about the Prock family.

## O'NEILL ICE ARENA

The ice arena is an outside skating/hockey rink, primarily used by youth. The area has lighting with a timer providing children nighttime use and parking is available on site. The area is maintained by the Youth Hockey Association of Clark County through fundraisers during the non-winter months. The City provides utilities and plowing at the site.

O'Neill Ice Arena's amenities are in great condition and include:

- Skating/hockey rink with new used rink board installed in 2015.
- Warming house
- Restrooms, seating, and lighting.

## School Facilities

### NEILLSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

15 ACRES

This site, owned and operated by the school district, primarily serves the outdoor recreation needs of students. The site does serves as a community active-sports park, particularly when school is not in session and the facilities are available to district residents. The school's indoor recreational facilities include two full-sized basketball courts, a junior high basketball court, full-sized Olympic pool (with low and high dives), weight and training room, and an open area for exercise and wrestling classes. A 206' x 208' gym with three practice basketball courts, indoor track, press box, locker rooms, etc. were completed in the summer of 2000. Outdoor facilities include a running track and field event stations, lighted football field, two softball diamonds, one baseball field, practice football field, golf driving range, and an extensive array of youth play equipment.

### ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL

1 ACRE

This privately owned and operated site is primarily used for school recreation programs, but is also sometimes used by neighborhood children. Approximately one acre is devoted to a baseball/soccer

# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

field and a playground with some equipment. Another six acres of school grounds are available for passive recreation and other activities.



## Other Outdoor Recreation Facilities

### CLARK COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Though planning for this facility is not included as part of this plan, the County Fairgrounds on Neillsville's east side accommodates special outdoor events and shows, including the annual Clark County Fair as well as being available for rent during the spring, summer, and fall months. As discussed in the previous section (Section 5), a major revitalization project at the Fairgrounds is underway including the relocation/construction of a new Listeman Bandshell, the creation of a family-friendly green space, and additional camping improvements. .

### NEILLSVILLE COUNTRY CLUB

Located just east of Schuster Park, the Country Club provides a 9-hole golf course.

### LITTLE EDDY

An unimproved fishing hole along the Black River is locally known as Little Eddy.

### BLACK RIVER AND O'NEILL CREEK

There are also various unimproved places to recreate along the Black River, including the fishing hole locally called Little Eddy. Within the City of Neillsville, the Black River and O'Neill Creek provide fishing opportunities and the City does allow bow hunting within the City limits.

### RECREATIONAL TRAILS & ROUTES

The transportation element in Section 4 discusses the City's existing and planned multi-modal transportation facilities, many of which also serve a recreational function. Most notably:

- Improve pedestrian connectivity within the City through the completion of sidewalks and connecting destinations, such as the Youth Hockey Arena.
  1. Continue efforts to create a new biking/walking trail along the old railroad grade adjacent to O'Neill Creek with a trailhead at Fountain Park and providing connectivity to the industrial park. Support the expansion of this trail system to connect to communities to the east (e.g., Granton, Marshfield).
  2. Explore options to improve walking and bicycling linkages between the park trail systems along the Black River to rest of the community, including a paved surface or sidewalk along U.S. Highway 10 to the Arboretum with possible future connections to the MMC-N campus and the Highground. Such connectivity could eventually be expanded to destinations and communities farther to the west and southwest.
- ATVs are allowed on all City streets and Section 4 includes a map of snowmobile routes. ATV and snowmobile routes are connected to the vast network of trails and routes to the west, including those within Clark and Eau Claire County forests.



# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

## OTHER AREA OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AMENITIES

Outside the City, there is a wealth of diverse outdoor recreation, hunting, and fishing options which makes the Neillsville area an outdoor recreation destination. There are more than 130,000 acres of public forests and a number of campgrounds managed by Clark County in the area which offers camping, ATV trails, off-road motorcycle trails, snowmobile trails, horse trails, hiking/biking, skiing, public hunting grounds, and other recreational uses amenities and uses. The County also manages the Bruce and Levis Mound winter sports areas.

## 6.2 Demand/Needs

This section of the plan describes recreational needs of the residents based on population and acreage available for recreation purposes. Park standards provide a measure for park acreage based on 10 acres per 1,000 persons. According to the population figures shown in the table below, the 2020 estimated population for Neillsville was 2,362 persons. The City's alternative low-growth population projection in Appendix B for 2020 to 2040 shows an expected increase of 123 persons, or 5.4 percent, though the Wisconsin Department of Administration projections from 2013 suggests that the City would grow at a slower rate.

**Park and Recreation Area Need • City of Neillsville**

Year	Projected Population	Recommended Acreage	Existing Acreage	Surplus/ Deficit Acres
2020	2,362	23.6	34.25	+10.7
2025	2,394	23.9	34.25	+10.3
2030	2,426	24.3	34.25	+10.0
2035	2,458	24.6	34.25	+ 9.7
2040	2,490	24.9	34.25	+ 9.4

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Official Municipal Population Estimate, 2020 and alternative growth projection in Appendix B.*

The total land area devoted to outdoor recreation within the City of Neillsville, not including the Arboretum and school facilities, is approximately 34.25 acres. Currently, 34.25 acres exceeds the desired amount of park acreage for the population according to the national park standard. The Arboretum would add an additional 47 acres to this acreage total. Although the population of the community is projected to increase by the year 2040, existing park acreage should continue to meet the needs of the community based on the standard, unless existing lands do not allow for a specific recreational activity (e.g., a trail and fishing amenities along the Black River) or existing parks do not meet the recreational needs of a specific area (e.g., lack of a small neighborhood park or playground for a new residential area). As such, the City should continue to regularly monitor population change, community-member interest, and recreational trends in order to evaluate future park needs.

During the update of this plan in Spring 2021, members of the City's Plan Commission, Economic Development Commission, Parks & Recreation Board, and City staff reviewed the City's 2016 outdoor recreation plan, evaluated the condition of current facilities, and considered outdoor recreation demands to develop the following goals, objectives, recommendations, and action plan.

# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

## 6.3 Parks and Recreation Goals and Objectives

**Goal:** Provide quality park facilities and a variety of recreational opportunities to meet the needs of the community's residents.

**Objectives:**

1. Maintain and improve the community's existing parks and recreational facilities in a manner that provides multi-use recreational opportunities for persons of all ages and abilities while protecting sensitive natural resources and wildlife habitat.
2. Identify areas where recreational opportunities can be increased as well as consider the changing recreational need and priorities of all resident age groups and for differing levels of physical abilities.
3. Recognize opportunities for rural residents and visitors to enjoy the community's parks and recreational areas and the importance of these amenities to tourism and enhancing local quality of life.

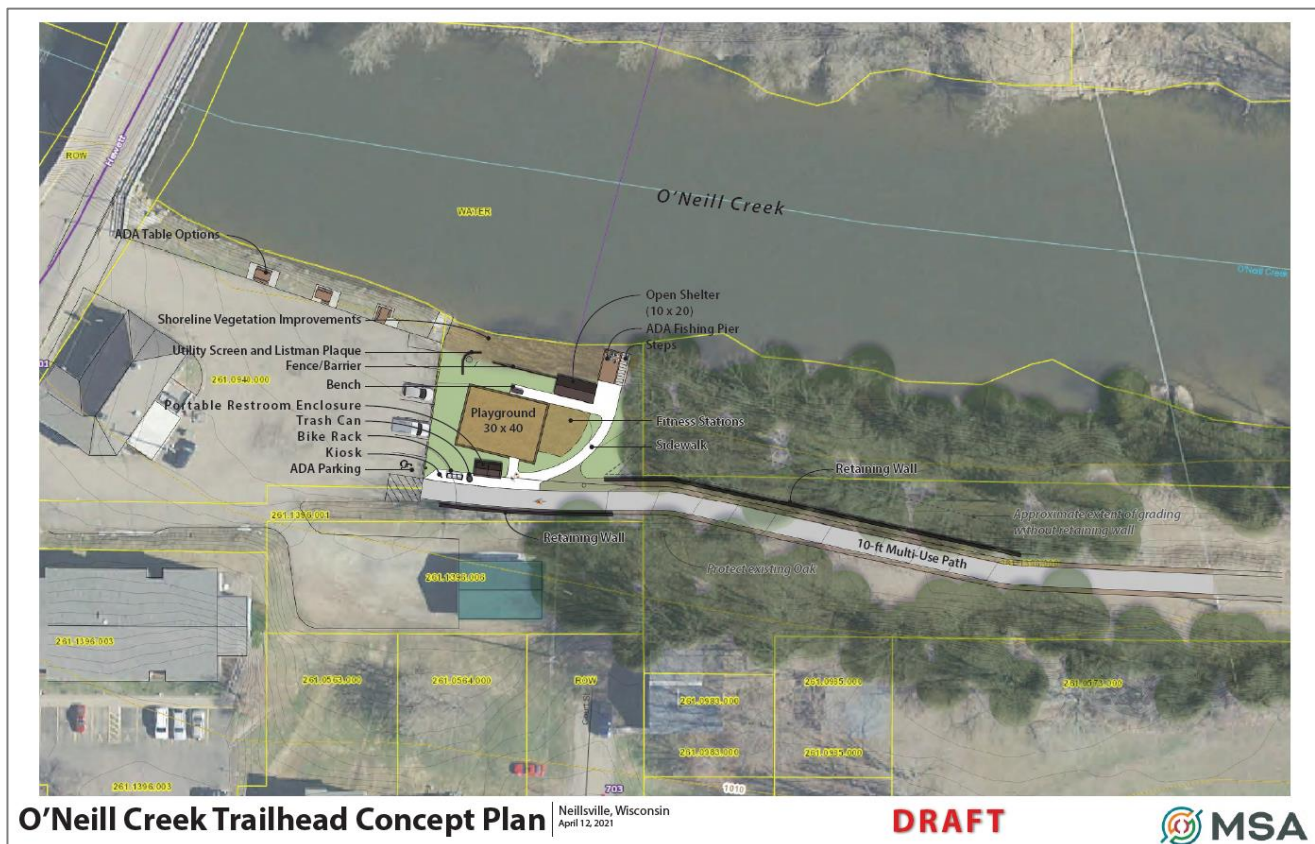
**Policy and Strategy Recommendations:**

1. Develop and maintain Neillsville's outdoor recreation and park system in a manner that follows the intent of general recommendations within Section VII. B. of the *Clark County Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2016-2021* pertaining to:
  - Park amenities and design, including safety, beautification/aesthetics, placemaking, sensitive resources, environmental education, and accessibility.
  - Park acquisition and development, including optimizing use of existing facilities, different types of parks, easements, dedications, economic considerations, and operations and maintenance.
  - Plan coordination, including park system continuity and linkages, public participation and strategic partnerships, capital improvements programming, coordination of other plans, treaty rights (if applicable), and plan evaluation and updates.
  - General recommendations for various selected recreational activities.
2. General outdoor recreation recommendations specific to the City:
  - a. Explore options to improve walking and bicycling linkages between the park trail systems along the Black River to rest of the community.
  - b. Work cooperatively with the Eat Right-Be Fit Coalition to explore and develop the City's walking and biking infrastructure.
  - c. Over the long-term, install new ADA-accessible playground structures at the City's parks.
  - d. Explore opportunities to improve canoe/kayak access or landings on O'Neill Creek and the Black River as well as other improvements that will enhance the recreational use of surface waters such as improvements at Little Eddy.
  - e. Consider the creation of a new dog park.
  - f. Continue the City's current tree replacement initiative in anticipation of Emerald Ash Borer infestation and work with UW-Extension and WDNR to increase public knowledge of this threat. Continue to monitor other such potential invasive species or plant disease threats that could impact the City's parks, urban forest, and surface waters.



# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

- g. Market and promote the City's high quality park system and its recreational facilities/amenities as well as other outdoor recreational opportunities in the area.
3. **Town Square Park** – Continue to partner with the Neillsville Improvement Corporation (NIC) and Chamber of Commerce to support their efforts to maintain and improve programming at this site, including the Farmers Market, informational kiosks, and performing arts.
4. **Cliff's Park** – Maintain existing facilities and install a splash pad with changing rooms.
5. **Fountain Park/O'Neill Creek Outdoor Recreation Trail (Rails-to-Trails Project)** – Improve public access and the visibility of this park as a trailhead, potentially including acquisition/easement and installation of signage. Continue to partner with Northern State Power (Xcel Energy), landowners, and community organizations to explore, plan, and take the leadership role to:
  - a. Establish and develop a non-motorized walking/biking trail along O'Neill Creek then east to Granton and/or Chili. Achieve a consensus on trail design, features, and amenities. Property or easement acquisition will be required. Develop Fountain Park as a trail head.
  - b. Explore the development of a western extension of the trail with potential connections to the Arboretum and the High Grounds.



# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

7. **Listeman Park & Schuster Park** – Priorities include replacement of the restroom facilities and maintenance of facilities and amenities.
8. **Listeman Arboretum** – With support from community organizations, replace benches, install informational kiosk, historical marker, and canoe landing, and encourage educational programming and its use as an outdoor classroom. Consider “freshening-up” amenities and signage, including updates to trails and educational markers of plant/tree species. Other potential improvements include added trails and bridges as well as ADA accessibility improvements, including adding connectivity between the west side neighborhood and through the Arboretum south to U.S. Highway 10.
9. **Mount Moldy** - Maintain existing facilities. Explore the potential addition of tiered wooden stairs or a tow rope to the top. Install pickle ball courts and additional disc golf holes.
10. **O’Neill Ice Arena** - Maintain existing facilities; no improvements or changes planned.
11. **Clark County Fairgrounds** – Partner with Clark County to explore grant opportunities for outdoor recreational improvements (e.g., camping, bandshell, pedestrian/biking connectivity) at the Fairgrounds, which are planned as part of the Fairgrounds Revitalization Project.
12. Implement the recommendations in the following action plan as resources, partnerships/volunteerism, and community priorities allow.

## 6.4 Action Plan

Facility	Action Items	Cost Estimate	Time Frame
<b>Town Square Park</b>	Repair/reset/stabilize the pavers on the pedestrian walkways.	\$500 - \$2,000	1-3 years
	Maintain the informational kiosk at this site.	N.I.C. & Listeman Foundation	ongoing
	Host music and/or other performances at the gazebo during the summer months.	N.I.C.	1-3 years
	Repair or replace benches.	\$5,000	1-3 years
	Clock maintenance.	\$1,400	1-3 years
	Install additional lighting for the basketball court/ice rink and playground.	\$3,000 - \$10,000	3-10 years
<b>Fountain Park &amp; Proposed O’Neill Creek Recreational Trail</b>	Improve public access and the visibility of this park, potentially including acquisition/easement and installation of signage. Develop the Park as a trailhead for the bike trail.	\$65,000	3-10 years
	Add restrooms.	\$50,000	5-10 years

# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

	If deemed feasible, establish and develop a non-motorized walking/biking trail with related amenities along O'Neill Creek then east to Granton and/or Chili. Property or easement acquisition will be required. Develop Fountain Park as a trail head.	more planning needed; \$3 - \$5 mil.	5-10 years
	If deemed feasible, explore the development of a future western extension of the O'Neill Creek trail with potential connections to the Arboretum and the High Grounds.	unknown; research needed	5+ years
<b>Cliff's Park</b>	Install a splash pad and update the restrooms to include changing areas.	\$225,000-\$250,000	1-3 years
<b>Mount Mouldy</b>	Install two pickleball courts.	\$50,000	1-3 years
	Install additional disc golf holes.	\$10,000	3-10 years
<b>Tock Field</b>	Replace the scoreboard.	\$4,800	1-3 years
	Add dirt to the diamond/ball field.	\$2,500	1-3 years
	Expand the ballfield.	\$100,000	3-10 years
	Update the restrooms.	\$50,000	3-10 years
	Replace playground equipment, install lights, and develop a soccer field.	\$5,000 - \$20,000	10+ years; potential
<b>Listeman Park</b>	Replace the restroom facility.	\$50,000-\$55,000	1-3 years
	Add lights to the tennis/pickle ball court.	\$5,000	1-3 years
	Resurface the tennis/pickle ball court.	\$25,000	1-3 years
	Install a new score booth/concession stand/storage unit.	\$75,000	1-3 years
	Add a sand volleyball court.	\$6,000	3-10 years
<b>Schuster Park</b>	Install a merry-go-round.	\$5,000	1-3 years
	Resurface the tennis courts.	\$50,000	1-3 years
	Replace roof at white shelter.	\$20,000-\$25,000	1-3 years
	Replace roof at red shelter.	\$10,000	3-10 years
<b>Prock Park</b>	Add benches.	\$3,000	1-3 years
	Add/maintain landscaping.	\$1,500	ongoing
<b>Listeman Arboretum</b>	Repair or replace some of the bridges.	\$60,000	1-3 years
	Add gravel to the trails and repair culverts.	\$10,000	1-3 years
	Partner with Boy/Girl Scouts, School District, and/or others to improve/replace benches and increase educational uses and nature-based and historical interpretive signage at the site.	volunteers	1-10 years

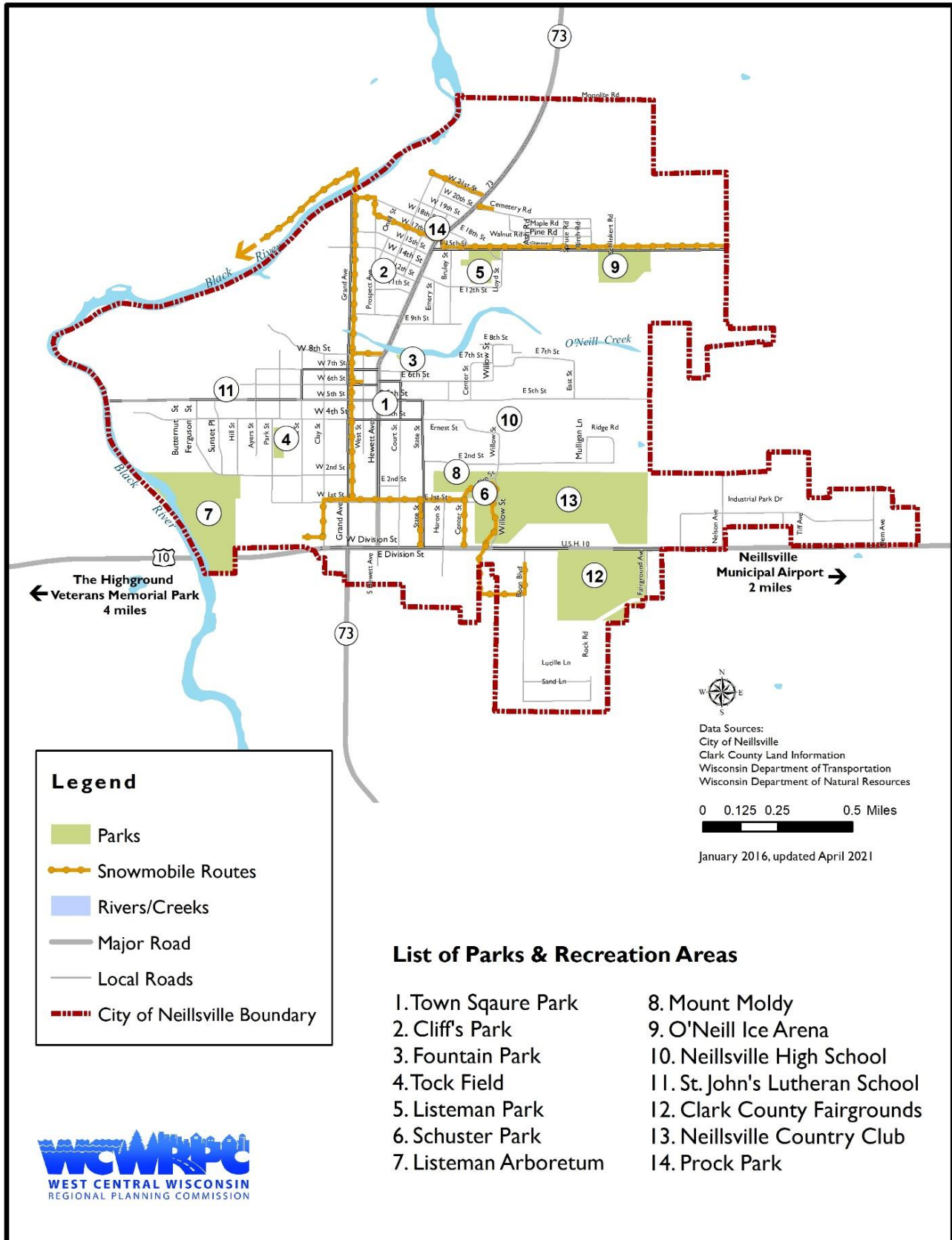
## Parks and Outdoor Recreation

<b>Canoe Landings</b>	In cooperation with the Friends of the Black River, pursue opportunities to improve access to O'Neill Creek and the Black River for canoe landings, including related signage and minor trail maintenance. Add one landing at Listeman Arboretum and one on the north side of Little Eddy.	\$500-\$800	5-10 years
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Many of the larger outdoor recreational improvement projects identified above are excellent candidates for grant assistance from the WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship local assistance grant program.

# Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Map 10 City of Neillsville Parks and Recreation Areas





## 7. AGRICULTURAL & NATURAL

# Agricultural and Natural Resources

## 7. Agricultural and Natural Resources

Neillsville's history is rooted in forestry and agriculture. Today, the natural resources of the community continue to offer a clean and abundant supply of groundwater and surface water, assure safe air to breathe, and provide a natural landscape of terrestrial and aquatic habitats such as forest, prairies, and wetlands. Natural resources include the parks, trails, scenic areas, and other outdoor places people rely on for recreation. Natural resources are essential to a vibrant economy – measured in tourism revenues, enhanced property values, sustainable agriculture and wood products, low cost raw materials (such as sand, gravel, and stone), available water for manufacturing processes, etc.

While Wisconsin's natural resources benefit each community they are also susceptible to internal and external forces. For example, the increasing human demands by a growing state population increase consumption of water, land, and raw materials. Our natural resources generally do not increase to meet this extra demand. Additionally, unplanned or poorly planned development patterns in the last several decades are often the result of a demand for "healthy country living", which is transforming our rural landscapes. This

rural migration along with the expansion of the urban fringe, forces local governments to consider expanding their services to meet the demands – sometimes costing more than will be recovered in new tax base revenues.



There are many state and some federal regulations designated to protect Wisconsin's natural resources. Some state laws, including those for floodplains, shorelands, and wetlands, establish minimum use and protection standards that must be adopted and administered by local governments. But not all natural resources are protected by state law. Local governments throughout the state have the flexibility to plan for and develop their own local ordinances to deal with the unique land use issues/conflicts in their community and to protect the natural resources that they value most. As population growth, land consumption, and technological improvements continue, communities need to take on the additional role of stewards and protectors of these resources.

Land development patterns are directly linked to the natural, agricultural, and cultural resource bases of each community. Therefore, these features need to be considered before making any decisions concerning future development within the community. Development must be carefully adjusted to coincide with the ability of the agricultural, natural and cultural resource base to support the various forms of urban and rural development. This balance must be maintained to prevent the deterioration of that underlying and sustaining base, because these resources make each community unique. The agricultural, natural, and cultural resources found within the City of Neillsville, as well as Clark County as a whole are, most often, not limited to jurisdictional boundaries. The natural features found within the County require coordinated efforts between towns, villages, cities, counties, and the state. These features promote civic pride and often create a sense of place.

This element of the *City of Neillsville Comprehensive Plan* presents the goals, objectives, and policies for two resources important to any community – agricultural and natural resources. These resources provide a firm foundation of all the other elements in the Comprehensive Plan.

# Agricultural and Natural Resources

## 7.1 Agricultural Resources

Most of the soils within the City of Neillsville can be considered productive, prime farmland soils as shown on Map 11 on page 93. The 2020 Wisconsin Department of Revenue data shows the City contained approximately 102 acres of assessed agricultural farmland. It is anticipated that portions of this land will be transitioned to other uses over the planning period and most, or all, agricultural lands with the City will eventually be used for uses other than agricultural.

While livestock and cropping operations are limited within the City limits, agriculture is a very important part of the City's and region's economy. City businesses provide supportive services to the agricultural industry, such as feed and farm supplies, banking, soil testing, legal, construction, mechanical repair, etc. Opportunities may also exist in the processing, manufacturing, and transportation of agricultural products.

### **Agricultural Resources Trends and Outlook**

Clark County and the City of Neillsville can expect the following trends in agriculture:

1. Expect an increase in the number of large "commercial" type farms, especially dairy.
2. Expect a transition of farms to Amish and Mennonite cultures.
3. Agriculture and forestry will continue to be a large part of the region's economy.
4. Increased interest in specialty farming.
5. Interest in "value-added" businesses to complement small dairy and general farming operations will increase.
6. Opportunities for the industrial processing or transportation of agricultural products may increase as well.

## 7.2 Natural Resources and Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Significant natural features within the City of Neillsville include:

1. O'Neill Creek and associated floodplains and wetlands
2. Black River and associated floodplains and wetlands
3. Listeman Arboretum

### **Soils**

The most predominant soil association in the City is the Loyal-Kert-Withee association. These are silty soils found on moraines and uplands. In small portions of the City, specifically in the southeast corner, the Loyal-Withee-Marshfield association can be found. These are silty soils that can also be found on moraines and uplands. Information on soils was obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture, 1993 Soil Mapping.

### **Forest**

The City of Neillsville contains 289 acres of assessed forest lands, not including the Arboretum (approximately 40 acres) and other public parks. As shown on Map 11, most of the forest land in the City, if the Arboretum is excluded, is located on the City's northeast side and along the Black River and

# Agricultural and Natural Resources

O'Neill Creek. The City adopted an *Urban Forestry Plan* in 2016 prepared by Aardvark Forestry Consulting, which included an inventory of trees along streets. A key focus of the plan are the recommendations to address the vulnerabilities of Ash trees to the Emerald Ash Borer; at the time, Ash were the second most numerous genus representing 23.5% of all street trees.

## **Topography**

The glacier activity of the past greatly influenced the topography of the County. The majority of Clark County has gently rolling terrain. The southwestern portion of the County has more hilly terrain. Bedrock is exposed at several locations. The contours range from 1,200 feet above sea level in the north to about 900 feet in the southern portion of the County. Topography and natural systems have posed a challenge to the City in extending needed infrastructure.

Map 11 show those areas of the City which may have steep slopes. The WDNR considers any area of 12 percent or greater to be steep slopes. Soil erosion on slopes 12 percent to 20 percent is often manageable with good practices. The WDNR discourages development of slopes greater than 20 percent without more intensive or engineered best management practices and erosion controls. Neillsville does have some areas with steep slope, such as along the Black River and between E. Second Street and O'Neill Creek on the east side of the community. More attention to site planning, stormwater management, and erosion control may be necessary in these areas.

## **Geology**

The bedrock geology of Clark County consists mainly of Upper Cambrian age sandstone. Precambrian crystalline rock underlies the northernmost and eastern portions of the County. The sandstone has been eroded away, exposing the crystalline rock along the Black River and its tributaries. The Cambrian sandstone is generally less than 50 feet thick in the majority of the County. The exception is the southwestern portion of the County. Here the most recent glacier activity has not eroded away the sandstone. In this area, the sandstone is more than 50 feet thick.

## **Metallic and Non-Metallic Mineral Resources**

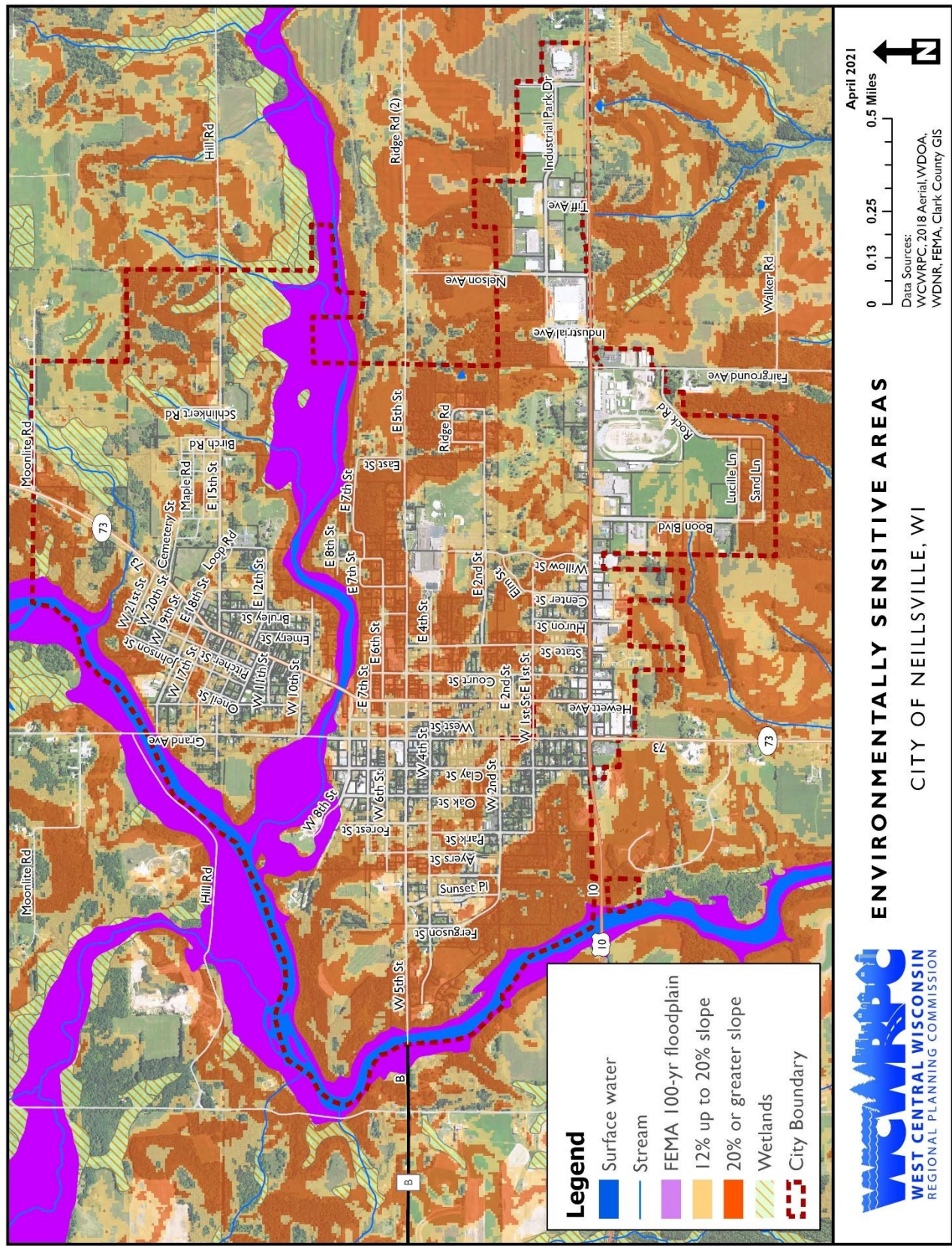
There are no active mining or quarry sites within the City of Neillsville. There are active non-metallic mining sites located immediately west of the City across the Black River within the Town of Pine Valley. Additional non-metallic mining has been expanding southwest of the City near Highway 95 and the City's well fields. The City is currently working with the mine operator (Mathy Construction) to ensure that the City's well will be protected. The boom in non-metallic mining extraction, processing, and transload facilities around 2010-2015 has subsided due to the declining demand for silica frac sand.

The Clark County Planning and Zoning Department and the Clark County Land Conservation Department currently administer the Clark County Non-metallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance which took effect on June 1, 2001. Ordinance standards address reclamation, surface water and wetland protection, groundwater protection, topsoil management, grading and slopes, maintenance, and a variety of other issues. Current and future mining or non-metallic mineral extraction operations must consult this ordinance for applicability and should consult with the administering Clark County Planning and Zoning Department for further assistance.



# Agricultural and Natural Resources

Map 11 Natural Resources & Environmentally Sensitive Areas





# Agricultural and Natural Resources

## **Watersheds and Drainage**

A watershed can be defined as an interconnected area of land draining from surrounding ridge tops to a common point such as a lake or stream confluence with a neighboring watershed. All lands and waterways can be found within one watershed or another. There are three watersheds which drain the City of Neillsville. They are listed in order of percent draining the City land area:

1. Cunningham Creek Watershed, 3.3%
2. Black River Watershed, 39.2%
3. O'Neill Creek Watershed, 57.5%

## **Wetlands**

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil, all year or for varying periods of time during the year, including during the growing season. Wetlands may support both aquatic and terrestrial species. The prolonged presence of water creates conditions that favor the growth of specially adapted plants (hydrophytes) and promote the development of characteristic wetland (hydric) soils.

Wetlands may be seasonal or permanent and are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes, fens, or bogs. Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants ranging from pesticides to animal wastes. Wetlands provide storage of flood waters preventing damage to developed areas. Wetlands can make lakes, rivers, and streams cleaner, and drinking water safer. Wetlands also provide valuable habitat for fish, plants, and animals. In addition, some wetlands can also provide the replenishment of groundwater supplies. Groundwater discharge is common from wetlands and can be important in maintaining stream flows, especially during dry months.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has inventory maps for wetlands two acres and larger. The wetland inventory map should be consulted in conjunction with this document whenever development proposals are reviewed in order to preserve wetland functions and to ensure regulatory compliance. According to WDNR wetland inventory maps, there are approximately 137 acres in the City of Neillsville. Approximate wetland locations within the City are shown on Map 11.



## **Floodplains and Flooding**

For planning and regulatory purposes, a floodplain is normally defined as those areas, excluding the stream channel, that are subject to inundation by the 100-year recurrence interval flood event. This event has a one-percent chance of occurring in any given year. Because of this chance of flooding, development in the floodplain should be discouraged and the development of park and open space in these areas encouraged. The floodplain includes the floodway and flood fringe. The floodway is the portion of the floodplain that carries flood water or flood flows, while the flood fringe is the portion of the

# Agricultural and Natural Resources

floodplain outside the floodway, which is covered by waters during a flood event. The flood fringe is generally associated with standing water rather than rapidly flowing water.

The City of Neillsville is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in good standing. Updated NFIP floodplain maps for Clark County were effective in July 2010, which have been adopted by the City, including a floodplain ordinance update. The official 100-year floodplains within the City are shown in Map 11.

The City has also adopted the *Clark County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan* which makes the City eligible for FEMA flood mitigation grant funding should it be needed. This plan identified ten structures in the City which may potentially be located within the 100-year floodplain, which is a relatively low number. Two structures were previously identified by FEMA as repetitive loss properties (RLPs) due to six NFIP claims of \$1,000 or more within a ten-year period; RLPs are a priority for mitigation grant projects. These properties, which were located near the confluence of Goose Creek with O'Neill Creek, have been torn down.

Additional properties not within the official floodplain but lying along the Goose Creek natural drainageway may also be at risk of flooding. The creek runs through storm sewers and culverts, and even under buildings; many residents are unaware of its existence. In the late 1990's, significant flooding on Goose Creek resulted in damage to buildings and basements. Since Goose Creek does not have an associated floodplain and is generally "out of sight," many property owners along its length do not have flood insurance. Please refer to the *Clark County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan* for more information on flooding in Neillsville and Clark County.



## **Surface Water**

The most significant surface water feature in the City of Neillsville is O'Neill Creek as shown on Map 11. The creek flows from the Black River and bisects the City into northern and southern portions. Map 11 shows that there are large areas of wetlands and floodplain along areas of the north bank of the creek. The Black River is located along the western border of the City. This river is the most significant river system in the County flowing north to south directly through the center of the County. The eastern bank of the river serves as the City's western border. Both river systems provide fishing opportunities for local residents and visitors.

The Black River, for that portion along the western boundary of the City of Neillsville, has been designated by WDNR as an Area of Special Natural Resource Interest. It is also identified as a 303d Impaired Water due to mercury pollution. In 2010, Wisconsin revised its Phosphorus Water Quality Standards for surface water. As a result, the WDNR has been increasing enforcement mandates related to phosphorus levels in discharges to surface waters and establishing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) limits on those waters most significantly impaired.

The Black River currently does not have a TMDL limit, though the City is being required to plan for reductions in the phosphorus levels within the effluent being discharged from its wastewater treatment facility. The sources of phosphorus loading varies by watershed, with non-point sources (e.g., yards,

# Agricultural and Natural Resources

agriculture) often being a larger contributor than point sources (e.g., wastewater and stormwater discharges). Curbing phosphorus run-off from non-point sources is generally more difficult. Agricultural operations (cropping and livestock) are the largest contributor of phosphorus loading in Wisconsin waterways. One WDNR study estimated that 76 percent of the total sediment load in Wisconsin waterways is from croplands. A watershed-level approach involving both point and non-point sources is required for an effective solution to phosphorus levels.

The Friends of the Black River is a citizen's watershed conservation organization focused on fostering community appreciation, understanding, and sustainable use of the river and its watershed by hosting educations and enjoyable programs, events, and conservation projects. A Clark County subgroup is focused on environmental conservation of the Black River by promoting and hosting cleanup events and other activities within Clark County.

## **Groundwater**

Groundwater is a limited resource, and both its quality and quantity are important factors. These factors are primarily influenced by local geology and local land use. Precipitation percolates through the soil and bedrock where it eventually reaches a saturated zone known as an aquifer. It is from these aquifers that private wells are used to draw water.

With some exceptions, groundwater in Clark County is generally abundant and of good quality. Three primary aquifers are present in the County: the sand and gravel aquifer, the sandstone aquifer, and the crystalline rock aquifer. The sand and gravel aquifer is present throughout most of the County at approximately 20 to 50 feet below the ground surface. This aquifer is easily accessible, but it is also the most easily contaminated. The sandstone aquifer is a deep aquifer and is found in the western and southeastern portions of Clark County. Groundwater is abundant in the sandstone aquifer and is generally less susceptible to contamination. The crystalline rock aquifer is also a deep aquifer and is found in the northern and northeastern portions of the County, as well as along the course of the Black River throughout the County. The crystalline rock aquifer yields low to moderate amounts of water, but is generally less susceptible to contamination.

Groundwater contamination is most likely to occur where fractured bedrock is near the ground surface, or where only a thin layer of soil separates the ground surface from the water table. According to a WDNR map, Groundwater Contamination Susceptibility in Wisconsin, 1989, Clark County is moderately susceptible to groundwater contamination. Potential sources of groundwater contamination include:

1. Chemical storage
2. Landspreading of animal, sewage, and industrial waste
3. Road salt usage and storage
4. Animal feedlots
5. Use and spillage of fertilizers and pesticides
6. Accidental spills
7. Septic tanks and drainfields
8. Underground storage tanks
9. Underground pipelines and sewers
10. Landfills
11. Mines, pits, and quarries

# Agricultural and Natural Resources

## **Wellhead Protection**

The goal of wellhead protection is to prevent potential contaminants from reaching the wells that supply municipal water systems. This is accomplished by monitoring and controlling potential pollution sources within the land area that recharges those wells.

Wellhead protection planning is administered by the WDNR as required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the 1986 amendments to the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. Wellhead planning is encouraged for all communities, but is required when any new municipal well is proposed.

The general process of community-level wellhead protection planning includes:

1. Forming a planning committee.
2. Delineating the wellhead protection area.
3. Inventorying potential groundwater contamination sources.
4. Managing the wellhead protection area.

The City has wellhead protection measures in place for the existing municipal wells.

## **Air Quality**

The City of Neillsville, and Clark County as a whole, has no major air quality issues. Clark County is considered an attainment area that meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards as defined in the Clean Air Act. Future air quality concerns in Clark County are likely to focus on smells associated with large livestock facilities and non-metallic mining operations.

## **Environmental Corridors/Sensitive Areas**

There are no specifically designated environmental corridors in the City of Neillsville. However, features of environmental significance in the City include the following:

1. WDNR designated wetlands
2. Black River and associated floodplains and wetlands
3. O'Neill Creek and associated floodplains and wetlands
4. Listeman Arboretum

## **Threatened and Endangered Species**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) lists species as “endangered” when the continued existence of that species as a viable component of the state’s wild animals or wild plants is determined to be in jeopardy on the basis of scientific evidence. “Threatened” species are listed when it appears likely, based on scientific evidence, that the species may become endangered within the foreseeable future. The WDNR also lists species of “special concern” of which some problem of abundance or distribution is suspected but not yet proved; the intent of this classification is to focus attention on certain species before becoming endangered or threatened.

The WDNR carefully monitors the level of detail provided regarding the locations of threatened and endangered species. Identifying specific locations of species in the City that are threatened or endangered is currently not provided by the WDNR.



# Agricultural and Natural Resources

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service identifies the following federally-listed Endangered, Threatened, and Proposed species in Clark County:

- Gray Wolf – endangered
- Northern Long-Eared Bat – threatened
- Whooping Crane – non-essential experimental population
- Karner Blue Butterfly - Endangered

## **Wildlife Habitat and State Natural Areas**

Wildlife habitat can simply be defined as the presence of enough food, cover, and water to sustain a species. The Neillsville landscape provides habitat for a variety of plants, birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and fish. In fact, the City has been challenged in controlling populations of certain wildlife species such as deer.

The City of Neillsville, like all of Clark County, sits in an important location with regard to whitetail deer, bear, and turkey populations. Both the Black River corridor and the Clark County Forest serve as important segments in the link between southern and northern Wisconsin deer and bear populations. These “wild” areas provide lanes of travel between major northern forest and southern farmland habitat blocks. There are no State Natural Areas in the City of Neillsville although the Listeman Arboretum is recognized as having regional significance due to the natural stand of hardwoods.

## **Natural Resources Trends and Outlook**

The following additional trends are anticipated with respect to forest resources within Clark County. These trends may have significance to the City of Neillsville as a "support" function.

1. Surface water quality, stormwater management, and natural resources standards and planning requirements at the Federal and State level continue to change.
2. Demand for forest products is predicted to increase, while forest lands managed for timber harvest are expected to decrease.
3. Forest land sales at rising prices for recreational purposes will continue.
4. The variety of recreational uses requested in the County Forest will increase.
5. The number of recreationists attempting to use the County Forest will increase.
6. Growing public interest and involvement in the County Forest will lead management of the resource further in the direction of accommodating multiple uses.
7. Continued mapping and access management efforts will minimize use conflicts in the County Forest.





## Agricultural and Natural Resources

8. Invasive species, pests, and diseases will continue to be a threat to native trees, flora, and fauna,
9. Amish and Mennonite interest in providing localized milling operations to supplement farm incomes will continue.

The following are other anticipated trends with regard to the agricultural and natural resources within the County. Likewise these trends may have significance to the City:

1. Interest in using water features for recreational purposes will continue.
2. The County's riverfronts, woodlands, and highland areas will be desired as residential and seasonal use building sites.
3. Pressure for development of residential subdivisions will increase for riverfront property.
4. Demand for sand and gravel resources will continue.
5. Conflict over forest management practices on public land will continue.
6. Challenges to groundwater resources will grow including increasing quantity of withdrawal and increasing potential contamination sources.

According to the *Clark County Land and Water Resource Management Plan* trends in relation to wetlands include:

1. Pressure from residential, non-metallic mining, and agriculture will increase.
2. Pond/wetland construction with rural populace will increase.
3. Public confusion about rules and regulations when dealing with wetlands will continue.

### 7.3 Agricultural and Natural Resources Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

***Goal: Maintain, preserve and enhance the community's natural resources.***

***Objective(s)***

1. Manage/Direct growth to protect natural areas and greenway corridors which, through their preservation, would: conserve and enhance natural or scenic resources; protect water supply/quality; promote conservation of soils, wetlands, and woodlands; enhance the value of adjoining public and private lands; and maintain and improve public and private recreation opportunities.

# Agricultural and Natural Resources

**Goal:** *Contribute to the preservation of surrounding productive farmlands.*

## Objectives

1. Preserve productive agricultural land in towns surrounding the City by guiding new development to planned growth areas in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the City is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the City can use to aid in making land use decisions.

## Policies

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

1. The City of Neillsville will take advantage of and not detract from its natural setting and good air quality, enhancing its residents’ quality of life and visitors’ experience.
2. When opportunities arise, capture jobs, business investment, and new industries that support or add value to the area’s strong agriculture and forestry industry cluster, if such development is deemed appropriate by the City and compatible with adjacent uses.
3. The City of Neillsville will strive to be more sustainable and energy efficient when opportunities present themselves.
4. Continue enforcement of the City’s tree ordinance and other urban forestry efforts.
5. Identify planned growth areas and guide new growth to these areas. Encourage development that is sustainable, responsible, efficient, and concurrent with infrastructure improvements.
6. Continue to support Neillsville Improvement Corporation’s management and coordination of the Farmer’s Market in downtown Neillsville.
7. Support the efforts of the Friends of the Black River in cleaning-up the River and improving signage and canoe landings.

## Recommendations

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the City’s policies, and, therefore, will help the City fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives. The following recommendations support ongoing efforts, rather than being short-term or long-term priorities.

1. Maintain and enforce a wellhead protection program for municipal wells and, if needed, purchase land or use rights within the zones of contribution to protect the wells from contamination. (on-going/as needed)
2. Work with Clark County Land Conservation, UW-Extension, other municipalities, local farmers, and other stakeholders to decrease phosphorus loading within the Black River watershed. (on-going/as needed)

## Agricultural and Natural Resources

3. Continue to implement the recommendations of the City's Urban Forestry Plan and addressing the vulnerability of the urban forest to the Emerald Ash Borer. (on-going/as needed)
4. Work with adjacent towns to coordinate land-use plans for areas adjacent to the City and consider their farmland preservation goals and policies during City planning and decision-making. (on-going/as needed)

### **7.4 Agricultural and Natural Resources Plans and Programs**

Numerous Federal, State, regional, local, and private plans and programs exist that contribute to preservation, conservation, or management of agricultural and natural resources in Clark County, many of which are summarized in Appendix E.

## 8. HISTORICAL & CULTURAL

# Historic and Cultural Resources

## 8. Historical and Cultural Resources



Historic and Cultural Resources are unique assets that offer a tangible connection to the history and cultural heritage of a place. These resources include historic buildings and structures, archaeological sites, native landscapes, and the cultural heritage that defines a community. Preservation of a community's historical and cultural resources fosters a sense of pride and provides an important social connection between the past, present, and future. This chapter inventories the City of Neillsville's historic and cultural base and identifies opportunities for the continued preservation and promotion of these unique resources.

### 8.1 Historical and Cultural Resources

#### Neillsville Historic Preservation Commission

The Commission is authorized by Section 1-3-3 of the City's Code of Ordinances to designate, regulate and recognize historic structures, historic sites and historic districts within the City of Neillsville. The Commission consists of a historian, a licensed real estate broker, a registered architect, a council member and three citizen members. One-year terms.

#### Historical Structures and Sites

The Neillsville area has a great variety of historical and cultural resources, with large numbers of historic structures. The Wisconsin Architectural and Historical Inventory (AHI) maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society identified 580 historic sites and buildings in the Neillsville area. Of these, 467 are residential home and 73 are commercial/trade buildings. The AHI does include a handful of non-building records, such as the railroad tracks over the Black River just north of USH 10, the Grand Avenue bridge over the Black River, the standpipe water tower, and the Fairgrounds grandstand.

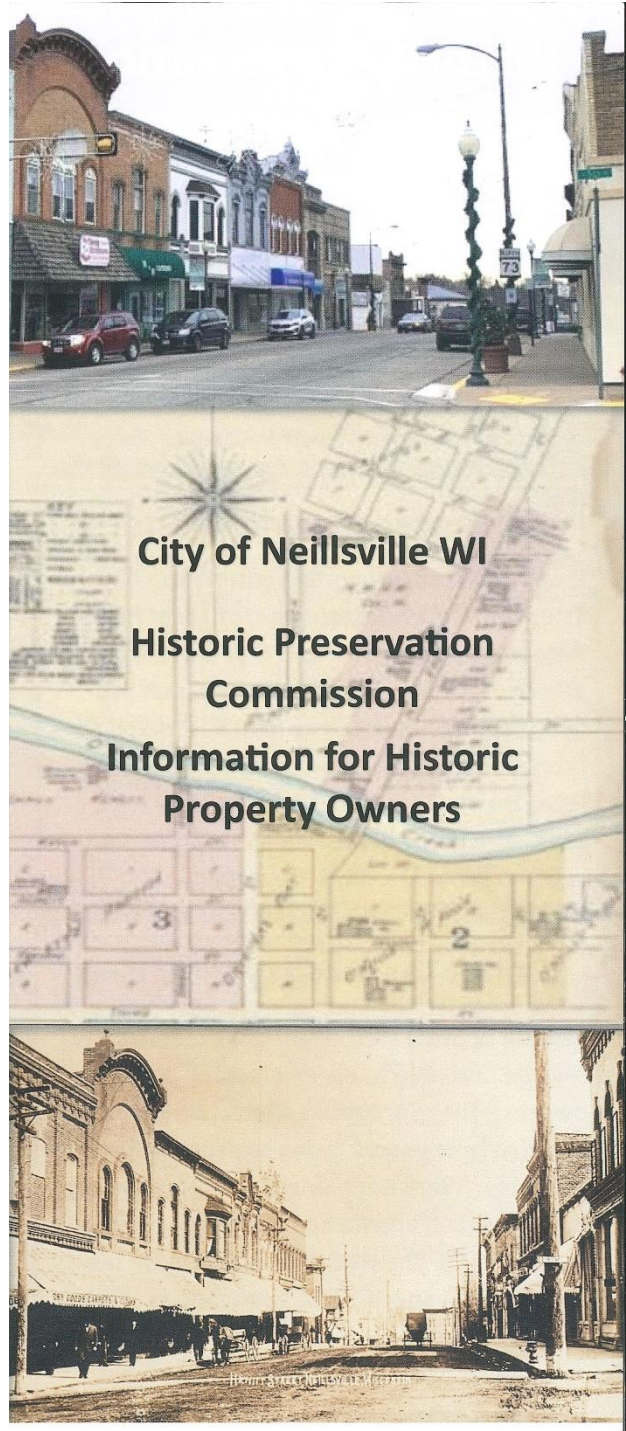
According to the **National Register of Historic Places**, there are numerous sites, including one district, located on the National Register for the City of Neillsville:

1. Clark County Jail, located at 215 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street, has a Romanesque architectural style and the period of significance is 1875-1899. The Jail Museum, which is one of the County's most notable cultural assets, is in need of an extensive renovation.
2. Neillsville Post Office, located at 619 Hewett Street, listed as having an architectural style of modern movement within the period of the 1940s.
3. Neillsville Downtown Historic District, architectural styles include late Victorian, late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century revivals, and late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century American movements, period of significance is from 1872-1949. Fourteen buildings are located within the district as listed in June 2000, which encompassed the 500 Block of Hewett Street and the 1887 Varieties Store at 118 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The downtown historic district was later expanded in September 2004 to include three additional buildings:



# Historic and Cultural Resources

- The Eberhardt building (432 Hewett St.), built in 1923, in the arts and crafts style of architecture.
  - The Esch building (436 Hewett St.), built in 1894, in the Italianate architectural style.
  - The Walk Brothers building (442 Hewett St.), built in 1897, in the commercial vernacular style of architecture with elements of the Italianate style.
4. First Church of Christ Scientist, located at 132 E. Fourth Street, has neoclassical revival style architecture.
  5. Masonic Temple Lodge No. 163 at 316 Hewett Street has stripped classicism architecture.
  6. Forest & Marian Calway House, located at 318 E. Fourth Street and listed as having a colonial revival architecture style, was added to the National Register in November 2005.
  7. Decatur & Kate Dickinson House, located at 411 State Street and listed as having a Queen Anne architecture style, was added to the National Register in March 2007.
  8. John & Maria Hein House, located at 824 Hewett Street and listed as having a Queen Anne architecture style, was added to the National Register in April 2006.
  9. Charles & Katharyn Sniteman House, located at 319 Hewett Street, was added to the National Register in September 2011.
  10. George & Sarah Trogner House, located at 108 Grand Avenue and listed as having a Queen Anne architecture, was added to the National Register in September 2005.
  11. William & Jennie Tufts House, located at 321 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street and listed as having a Mission/Spanish Revival architecture, was added to the National Register in January 2012.
  12. Wisconsin Pavilion at 1201 East Division Street was added to the National Register in February 2012.
  13. Omaha Hotel at 317 West 7<sup>th</sup> Street was added to the National Register in March 2013.
  14. Charles & Theresa Cornelius House at 118 Clay Street was build in 1909 in a Queen Anne architectural style and added to the National Register in October 2013.



## Historic and Cultural Resources

15. Neillsville Standpipe (water tower) at 325 E. Fourth Street was built in 1926 and added to the National Register in September 2013.

16. Hediger House at 8 Grand Avenue was constructed in 1949 in a late 19th And 20th Century Revival style.

One additional property is listed on Wisconsin's **State Register of Historic Places**, but not the National Register, as of May 2021:

1. Grand Avenue Bridge was added to the National Register in 1987, but later removed when the bridge was dismantled. A portion of the bridge is now on display at Schuster Park.

A survey was completed in 2003 identifying other properties of historic significance within the City. The survey was completed by Rebecca Bernstein as part of a grant from the Department of the Interior. Seventeen structures were identified in the survey as possibly being eligible for recognition on local, state and national historic registers. Some of the properties that were identified include Merchant's Hotel, Cornelius House on Clay Street, Dickinson House on State Street, the water tower near the high school, and the 1941 Clark County garage. Refer to Appendix G for photos of properties identified by the City's Historic Preservation Commission that may be eligible for consideration as a designated historical site or structure.

In addition to the above sites, the Reed School, located at US Highway 10 & Cardinal Avenue in the Town of Grant and built in 1915, is one of 12 historic sites and museums owned and operated by the Wisconsin Historical Society.

### Neillsville Historic Homes

The Neillsville Historic Preservation Commission has created a booklet that details the historic homes of the City in a walking tour type format. Five of Neillsville's historic homes are located on Clay St., two of which are the Cornelius Home and the Martin Home. The Cornelius Home is considered one of Neillsville's most elegant houses. A ballroom was once located on the second floor and its grounds, at one time, included a whole City block. The Captain A.C. Martin Home is of a more common design, yet rich in history.

Nine historical homes are found on Hewett St., which also runs through Neillsville's downtown historic district. C.C. Sniteman was the original owner of the Sniteman drugstore in downtown Neillsville. His home was built in 1917. Designed by a Chicago architect in a Craftsmen style, it is distinguished by Lake Superior sandstone face bricks.

In addition to the historic homes found in Neillsville there are also historically notable buildings of commercial and community significance. The Commercial Vernacular building at 502 Hewett Street was the first brick building to be built in Neillsville and in Clark County in 1872.

### Clark Cultural Art (CART) Center

Clark Cultural Art Center (CART), Inc. is a 501(c)(3) (tax-exempt organization) that serves for the primary purpose of developing and investing resources to promote the arts in Clark County. CART serves on behalf of its communities to promote arts education; exhibitions of local, regional, national art; expressions and explorations of cultural diversity; and economic growth for the greater Clark County area. The CART Center opened its doors in 2016 at the former Neillsville United Methodist Church building at 201 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street in Neillsville.

# Historic and Cultural Resources

## Other Cultural Resources

Neillsville's culture is largely grounded in its history and sense of community. The civic organizations and community groups identified in Section 5.1 are central and indispensable partners in celebrating, sharing, and preserving the history and culture of Neillsville.

Many cultural and community events revolve around the School District, with its plays, musicals, sporting events, and other activities. The City hosts annual community festivals which celebrate community life and the City's past, present, and future. Some of these events include Heritage Days, Winter Carnival, Men's Club Demo Derby & Mud Race as well as music at Schuster Park. The County Fairgrounds and annual Clark County Fair are rooted in the area's agricultural traditions. While local residents celebrate these traditions, old traditions are being restored, and new cultural resources are becoming available such as Country Club live music, Neillsville Area Players local theater group, and the seasonal Farmer's Market.

There are several other cultural resources throughout Clark County that reinforce the sense of place and culture in Neillsville, including weekend music at Wedges Creek in Greenwood and the Christine Center in Willard. The Highground Veteran's Memorial Park located west of the City pays tribute to veterans and their families, and is a world-class tourist, history, and cultural destination. The Clark County Economic Development Corporation and Tourism Bureau (CCEDC) organizes several cultural events throughout the County including the Spring Into Arts Tour, Bloomin' Greenhouse Tour, and Fall Harvest Tour along with many other events.

## 8.2 Historical and Cultural Resources Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

***Goal: Maintain, preserve and enhance the community's historic and cultural resources.***

### **Objectives**

1. Increase efforts to preserve the significant historical sites and structures that contribute to local identity and character.
2. The City's identity and sense of place should continue to be strongly grounded in its history, while still looking forward to and embracing the future.

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the City is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the City can use to aid in making land use decisions.

### **Policies**

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the words "will" or "shall" are advised to be mandatory and regulatory

# Historic and Cultural Resources

aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

1. When cost-effective alternatives exist, consider design elements and public amenities that reflect the City’s historic character, but are still in appropriate context of their surroundings.
2. The City of Neillsville will foster public support for historic preservation through education and partnerships with interested organizations and residents.
3. The City of Neillsville will partner with other organizations to build upon, foster, and continue to market the community’s and residents’ heritage in celebration of the community and as a tourism opportunity.
4. The City of Neillsville shall explore the establishment of a program such as the Main Street program to address the decline and potential usage of downtown structures and historic resources.
5. Working through the City’s Historic Preservation Commission, work with other community partners, such as the Neillsville Improvement Corporation, to promote the City’s history, maintain a current historic walking tour, and to explore other historic preservation amenities, activities, and design elements.
6. Historic tourism should continue to be marketed and enhanced as an important part of the City’s economic development strategy.

## Recommendations

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the City’s policies, and, therefore, will help the City fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

1. Coordinate with Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau for the advertising of area events and artists. Promote a location or locations within the City as a stop(s) on the Studio Arts Tour. (on-going/as needed)
2. Promote the Regional Business Fund’s Façade Loan Program as a possible source of financing for the renovation of facades of commercial buildings in the business district. (on-going/as needed)
3. Explore opportunities to enhance or expand historical tours, such as the use of QR codes and the creation of a self-guided cemetery tour. Look for opportunities to link such tours to other historical sites and destinations in surrounding area and Clark County.
4. Identify, advertise, and regularly update volunteer opportunities, perhaps through the City’s website, social media, and/or news releases, that benefits the community, but also brings residents together to foster inclusion and a sense of community. (short-term, then on-going as needed)



# Historic and Cultural Resources

5. Support the 1897 Clark County Jail Museum Inc's efforts to renovate and restore the Jail Museum and their continued preservation and operation of this historical attraction. (short-term)

It should be noted that there is significant overlap between the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations in this element with those in the Economic Development section. In particular, the City's historical and cultural resources complement or are central to the community's strategies regarding tourism, placemaking, community branding, downtown revitalization, and quality of life.



## 8.3 Historical and Cultural Resources Plans and Programs

Numerous Federal, State, regional, local, and private plans and programs exist that contribute to preservation, conservation, or management of cultural resources in Clark County, many of which are summarized in Appendix E.





# 9. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Economic Development

## 9. Economic Development

Through planning, a community can anticipate economic change and guide development to the best of its abilities to achieve the economic vision and objectives for the community. Economic development is about working together to maintain a strong economy which provides a good standard of living for individuals and a reliable tax base for the community. A community's economic development plan should reflect the values of the community and must be carefully linked to the goals, objectives, and strategies of the other plan elements.

### **Use Caution When Using Economic Data**

The data in this section should be used for general planning purposes and consideration of trends, but must be used cautiously and with a critical eye. Critical decisions may require additional data collection.

The data found here is taken from different sources and, sometimes, for different geographic areas. Some data sources use different definitions which may differ from each other (as well as your own definition). Further, when dealing with small samples or a single community, a single oversight during data collection (e.g., missing one business) or a change after the data is collected can make large differences. And in some cases, data may be withheld due to confidentiality.

When looking at the local economy, it has been determined that three things are paramount. First, innovation, knowledge, and public, private, and educational partnerships are critical keys to the growth of existing businesses and the creation of jobs and wealth. Second, through purchasing items from local businesses, the redistribution of local money the local economy will improve the economic condition of the City. Third, in the ever-expanding global economy, the City needs to give significant focus to what it can do well and what it can provide employees and residents. In a global economy, where communities and regions are focusing on specific industries and promoting what makes living there unique or special; to be successful, the City needs to give special attention to what they can provide best to its citizens.

This plan element provides a variety of economic data and indicators which guide and focus the goals, objectives, and policies. The element

shall assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries desired by the City, assess strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, and shall designate an adequate number of sites for such businesses and industries. Consideration of existing plans and programs is important to the development of strategies in this plan, as well.

### 9.1 Economic Conditions, Strengths, and Weaknesses

A simple determination of the strengths and weaknesses of Clark County and the City of Neillsville and its economy provide the basic planning steps for future economic development (e.g., attraction, growth, and retention of business and industry). Strengths should continue to be promoted and new development which fits well with these features should be encouraged. Weaknesses should be improved or further analyzed and new development which displays aspects similar to identified weaknesses should be discouraged.

The following City and County strengths and weaknesses were recognized in the City's 2013 Plan and were reviewed and updated during this plan update.

#### **Strengths - Neillsville**

1. Good Schools and the Technical College campus
2. Medical Facilities and Services

# Economic Development

3. Listeman and Naedler Foundations
4. Labor Force
5. Location (Highways 10 and 73)
6. County Seat
7. County Courthouse, including employees as a market for downtown businesses
8. Good Paying Jobs
9. Taxi Service
10. nearby County Forest and many outdoor recreation & tourism destinations
11. National Register Properties and historic properties are valued
12. The Highground
13. Clark County Fairgrounds
14. Revolving Loan Fund
15. Proactive Government
16. Black River and O'Neill Creek; Friends of the Black River-Clark County
17. Variety of Churches
18. TIF Districts and the opportunity to form a new district(s) in the future
19. Chamber of Commerce and Neillsville Improvement Corporation
20. Golf Course
21. Good City Borrowing Power
22. Opportunity to expand Nelson Avenue from E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street (Ridge Road) to connect to Moonlight Road
23. Neillsville Municipal Airport
24. Friendly community

## **Weaknesses - Neillsville**

1. Limited Industrial Park Land
2. Tight housing market
3. Vacant Downtown Buildings

## **Other Strengths – Clark County**

1. Centrally located within the State
2. Part of Agriculture Development Zone
3. STH 29 and USH 10 corridors.
4. Agriculture (infrastructure, desire to continue, existing industry)
5. Nine businesses/industrial parks with utilities
6. Revolving loan fund programs available through the Regional Business Fund, Inc. with Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau support
7. 12 unique incorporated cities and villages
8. Excellent schools and proximity to post-secondary education
9. Health care center

# Economic Development

10. Railroad availability
11. Diverse employers and economic base
12. County forest and other natural resources;
13. Technical and financial resources, local, state, and federal
14. Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau
15. High quality of life
16. Lower cost of living
17. Assembly of a Clark County Economic Resource Team
18. United Communities of Clark County (UCCC) group
19. Clark County Community Foundation
20. Abundant recreational opportunities
21. Available land for development
22. Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC)

## Other Weaknesses – Clark County

1. No large population or retail center
2. Not fully embracing and lack of consensus on a shared marketing strategy and brand
3. Under-skilled workforce
4. Low-income demographics
5. Declining public school enrollments
6. Limited industrial space
7. Poor condition of WDOT-maintained State and Federal highways
8. Lack of affordable housing and a substandard housing stock
9. No long-term economic plans locally or at the County level
10. Small and aging population
11. Distance to major markets – other communities and major regional centers
12. Not capturing or pursuing global markets for certain industries such as agri-business
13. Lack of good broadband connectivity in much of County

Major local employers with 100 or more employees in the City of Neillsville or very nearby include the following:

1. Clark County, county government
2. Abby Vans, Inc., local passenger and charter service
3. Cummins Filtration, manufacturer
4. Marshfield Medical Center-Neillsville campus, hospital and clinic
5. OEM Fabricators, Inc., manufacturer
6. School District of Neillsville, elementary and secondary school
7. Mayville Engineering Corporation, manufacturer

# Economic Development

## **Economic Development Trends and Outlook**

It is anticipated that future economic opportunities will be closely tied to the agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and government service sectors, with commercial retail and services being strongly promoted for the downtown business district. Public-private partnering is vital to effective downtown revitalization.

Additional economic trends include:

1. The “new economy” places greater emphasis on regional and global relationships and marketing. Many firms are smaller, leaner, and decentralized. Service-oriented industry is replacing manufacturing in many communities. High speed, broadband communication is essential to functioning in the new economy.
2. Economic and land use decision-making must consider lifestyle changes and the demands of today’s households. Households are continuing to get smaller. An active, vibrant community and downtown with a strong sense-of-place is desired. An appropriate retail, service, and amenity mix must reflect changes in purchasing and use patterns.
3. Related to lifestyle changes, greater emphasis is being placed on compatible mixed-uses and housing as a key factor in downtown revitalization strategies. However, this must be done in a way that maintains an intact, commercial corridor. As gaps occur within the continuity of the downtown through demolition, vacancies, and adaptive reuse to non-retail or non-service commercial businesses, the function and cohesion of the downtown as an intact commercial district begins to erode.

## **9.2 Current Economic Plans and Designated Sites**

Map 12 identifies parcels within the City that were assessed or identified by the Plan Commission as commercial or industrial businesses as of January 2020. The highest densities of commercial development can be found in downtown Neillsville, along Highway 10, and in the Industrial Park, with some additional commercial uses and home-based businesses scattered in other areas. The land use element in Section 11 considers the currently designated commercial and industrial sites and projected future demand within the City, then provides a future land use map with sites and growth areas for economic development.

### **Downtown**

As reflected in the vision statement, downtown revitalization and vibrancy is among one of the City’s foremost priorities. Downtown Neillsville, as shown on Map 12, is comprised primarily of a mix of commercial / service uses with some government / community buildings as well as residential structures (single-family residential homes and multi-family buildings). These uses, along with other small businesses, will continue to be concentrated in the downtown area centered along N Hewett Street. As discussed in Section 8, much of the downtown is a designated historical district for which historical preservation regulations apply. Many of the City’s placemaking efforts discussed later in this section have had a strong downtown focus. Within downtown, the City would consider and likely support the adaptive reuse of the former Merchant Hotel building or site as a unique retail destination (e.g., food, shopping, light production w/ onsite sales). Plans should also foster and strengthen linkages between the downtown, the proposed biking/walking trailhead, and other community destinations.

### **Neillsville Industrial Park**

The Neillsville Industrial Park is a fully-served municipally owned industrial park located along USH 10 in Neillsville (see Map 12). The park consists of 67 acres with 23.9 acres currently available. Thirty acres of adjacent property are also available and planned for industrial development. A satellite campus



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for the Chippewa Valley Technical College is located within the park with access to high quality and ultra-modern training opportunities.

The City of Neillsville owns all available land in the industrial park. The price is negotiable and projects that retain or create jobs in Neillsville may qualify to receive the land at attractive offers. While land is currently available within the park, there is a lack of larger parcels to attract a large-scale development.

The *Chippewa County Business Park Feasibility Study*, completed in January 2020, provides some useful information as it relates to design of new business parks.

- **Size of Site:** The feasibility study states that there is a trend towards companies requesting larger sites. It is also reported that there is a lack of large “ready” sites in Wisconsin and Minnesota. The report notes that “this indicates that having a shovel-ready site of over 200 acres could be a competitive advantage in this region”.
- **Infrastructure Capacity (transportation access, water, sewer, fiber, etc.):** Sites with infrastructure in place have a competitive advantage over those that require infrastructure improvements.
- **Ownership Status:** Municipal control over the land area is an advantage to site selectors of businesses looking to locate in a community.

Other factors include required approvals, financing incentives, labor force, and quality of life. Being “shovel ready” is not just about the site and infrastructure. A community should know the assets, incentives, and infrastructure capacity for its business parks, actively market this information, and be able to quickly and transparently share the approval process when asked. It’s important to keep in mind that many of the other elements discussed, specifically housing, will assist the City in its economic development initiatives; by providing housing that meets the needs and is desired by the workforce, it can create a community where people desire to live, work, and play, and subsequently attract new business growth.



## Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District #2

The Neillsville Industrial Park from TIF Avenue to the east, including the three lots north of Industrial Park Drive and excluding the parcel south of CVTC, is part of Neillsville Tax Increment Financing District #2 (TID #2). TID #2 was amended in 2006 to include the OEM parcel and for additional public improvements. To support the development of the OEM facility, the City also used a WDOT Transportation Economic Assistance Grant for turn-lane improvements on USH 10. TIF financing was used to help construct OEM Avenue. The City has approached the Town of Pine Valley to encourage the paving of OEM Avenue from the edge of the City north to Ridge Road. In 2015, the City declared

# Economic Development

TID #2 as distressed and extended the life of the district to August 30, 2032. With this extension, TID #2 is projected to pay off its debt prior to 2032 based on current increment revenue. In such a case, the City could adopt an affordable housing extension that would extend TID #2 for an additional year once all debts are paid and utilize the increment revenues for that year for eligible housing-related activities.

## **Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District #3**

In 2006, the City of Neillsville also established TID #3 which is shown on Map 12. TID #3 is a 69-acre mixed-use TID with about 32 acres designated for commercial, 11 acres for single-family residential, and 11 acres for multi-family residential. Project costs financed through TID #3 include road and utility improvements. The development agreement executed for TID #3 requires the developer to cover any gaps between the tax revenues and debt service on the TID-financed projects. Some commercial and residential development has occurred within TID #3 since 2006. TID #3 is scheduled to terminate at the end of its statutory-maximum life in 2026 and is currently projected. If the City cannot pay off its project costs within TID #3's normal twenty-year life, its life could be extended an additional three years if approved by the Joint Review Board and if the Wisconsin Department of Revenue is notified at least one year before the date on which the TID is required to terminate. If it continues to cash flow, TID #3 is available a potential candidate for an affordable housing extension once all debts are paid.

	<b>TID Type</b>	<b>creation date</b>	<b>current max. life</b>	<b>2020 TID Value Increment</b>	<b>2020 Tax Increment</b>
<b>TID #2</b>	Industrial	8/30/1999	8/30/2032 (extended)	\$3,461,400	\$84,234
<b>TID #3</b>	Mixed Use	8/22/2006	8/22/2026	\$3,075,500	\$75,239

The above table summarizes the dates and increment for the two existing tax increment financing districts (TIDs). Both TIDs have a 15-year maximum expenditure period from the creation date during which the project plan could be amended and new project costs incurred. The expenditure period for TID #2 has expired, while the period for TID #3 ends on 8/22/2021. The value increment reflects new taxable development within the TID since its creation and generates the tax increment. The tax increment is the amount of revenue received from taxable property within the TID in 2020 and is used to pay the TID's debts. The value increment is also important since a new TID cannot be created or a TID amended if the equalized value of the TID's taxable property as of January 1 (of the creation or amendment year) and the value increment of all existing TIDs in the City exceed 12% of the City's total equalized value. As of 2020, the value increment of TID #2 and TID #3 represents 4.62% of the City's total equalized value, well below the 12% statutory limit.

## **9.3 Desired Business and Industries**

Like most communities in Clark County, the City of Neillsville would welcome most economic opportunities that do not sacrifice community character or add a disproportionate level of City services per taxes gained. A diversified mix of many smaller and some large businesses and industry is desired in order to have a healthy, resilient local economy.

Some specific types of desired business and industry identified during the planning process include those with good pay and benefits, manufacturing, and specialty shops for downtown. Businesses that use a large amount of water would be considered on a case-by-case basis as water availability allows. Other categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the City of Neillsville are identified later within the City's economic goals and objectives.

# Economic Development

The City's website includes a business development section with information on the industrial park, available buildings, and business development contacts in order to attract desired economic development to the City. Similarly, the Chamber's website includes information which would be helpful to business re-locations.

A few additional considerations:

- Regarding retail businesses, the surplus/leakage data in Appendix D may offer some opportunities.
- Section 9.5 includes a comparison of Neillsville's downtown business mix to other Wisconsin communities of similar size.
- Other plan elements also reference desired businesses or suggest business opportunities. For example, more construction contractors, nursing care, and child care services are needed, while there are opportunities to grow local outdoor recreation-base tourism and cultural/heritage tourism.
- In particular, target business investment within the supply chains of existing major employers and industry clusters. Top clusters for the Neillsville zip code include Production Technology & Heavy Machinery, Automotive-Custom Roll Forming, Local Government Services, Education & Training, and Health Services.<sup>3</sup>
- The 2020 ***Economic Impact Study for the planned Marshfield Medical Center-Neillsville Campus*** explores industry clusters and local economic needs, with the following recommendations:
  - It is vital to keep the MMC-N hospital and clinic facility in the community and continue to ensure convenient access to quality health care services for area residents and businesses. (p. 56)
  - There is significant retail leakage that could offer retail opportunities with additional market demand from new visitors or employees, but additional hotel rooms may be most needed. Further explore the need for additional hotel rooms or the feasibility of a new hotel. (p. 52, 56)
  - Create an ad hoc team to work with landowners of properties that will be vacated by businesses relocating to the MMC-N Campus to foster and promote appropriate redevelopment or adaptive reuse. (p. 58)
  - Strengthen community connectivity, enhance the U.S. Highway 10/River Road intersection as a community gateway, and embrace the Black River. (p. 58)



<sup>3</sup> EMSI Industry Cluster Identification for Neillsville Zip Code, Q2 2021 data set prepared by WCWRPC.

## Economic Development

- Plan for potential land use change, including engaging the Town of Pine Valley in discussions and utilizing TIF to support new development.
- Encourage partnerships between educational institutions and employers to explore programming that supports and enhances the area's health care cluster and needed workforce. These partnerships should be expanded beyond the scope of the MMC-N study to include other top industry clusters, especially in the manufacturing sector.
- Continue efforts to enhance local quality of quality of life and make the Neillsville area a great place to live, work, play, and invest.

### 9.4 Opportunities for the Use of Environmentally Contaminated Sites

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) urge the clean-up of environmentally contaminated commercial or industrial sites to utilize the lands for more productive uses. According to the WDNR's Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System there are three basic types of environmentally contaminated sites in Clark County: Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST), Environment Repair Program (ERP) sites, and Spills.

As of April 2021, there are one open and seven closed ERP sites, 30 closed spill sites, and 31 closed LUST sites with a Neillsville zip code, though not all of these are located in the City. These sites should be further evaluated for possible clean-up and redevelopment. An example of the clean-up and redevelopment of a site can be seen in the vacant Century Castings (formerly Neillsville Foundry site in the City's northeast corner) which was cleaned-up and converted to the City Ice Arena.

During the plan update process, the City's Plan Commission identified no sites within the City requiring remediation action which should be addressed in the plan.

### 9.5 Downtown Neillsville

Downtowns present a key economic opportunity in economic development. Downtowns provide a head start for many communities planning for sensible growth. They use land efficiently and already have public infrastructure such as streets and utilities. Downtown densities also efficiently utilize infrastructure and improvements. Downtowns are by nature compact developments and provide many infill opportunities. They are "center focused" with a mixture of uses. Downtowns often have existing transportation options in place, such as sidewalks and bicycle access, and are typically pedestrian friendly. Finally, they convey the character and history of the community, celebrating the community's unique sense of place. Consequently, keeping a downtown economically viable is a very important part of an economic strategy.

As detailed in Section 9.7 Placemaking on page 121, the City has conducted initiatives to help identify the strengths and weaknesses of downtown Neillsville and identify opportunities to make Neillsville an even better place. To better understand the composition of downtown Neillsville, an inventory of downtown parcels and buildings was prepared by the Neillsville Improvement Corporation (NIC) in 2015. Per the inventory results, there are 124 parcels within the downtown, although some buildings and uses utilize multiple parcels. Buildings within downtown Neillsville are primarily used for service and retail uses. Close to 15% of the commercial buildings in downtown were identified as being "empty" with three commercial lots identified as being vacant; these three lots may have potential for infill development.



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A dynamic and diverse mix of business types is essential to creating a community where people can live, work, and play. Not only does a diverse mix of smaller businesses make a local economy more resilient to larger changes in the overall economy, but they are also important to attracting residents and families.

A December 2019 report titled *Downtown Economic Vitality and Business Mix in Small Wisconsin Communities*, prepared by Jon Wolfrath of the University of Wisconsin – Madison, provides business data for small communities, defined as having a population of 2,500 to 10,000 persons. The study collected business data from several communities in Wisconsin and then calculated a “median business mix” for small communities. While the City of Neillsville’s population is slightly less than that which is defined in this study, it can still provide some useful data for comparing and analyzing the City’s downtown industry mix.

NAICS Industry (NAICS code)	Neillsville Downtown (2015 Inventory)	Neillsville Downtown (2015 Inventory) Percent	Small Cities Median (2019 UWEX)	Small Cities Percent (2019 UWEX)
Agric/Forestry/Fish/Hunt (11)	0	0%	0	0%
Mining (21)	0	0%	0	0%
Utilities (22)	0	0%	0	0%
Construction (23)	4	6%	4	6%
Manufacturing (31-33)	2	3%	3	5%
Wholesale Trade (42)	0	0%	1	2%
Retail Trade (44-45)	11	18%	9	14%
Transportation / Warehouse (48-49)	1	2%	1	2%
Information (51)	1	2%	1	2%
Finance / Insurance (52)	4	6%	5	8%
Real Estate/Rent/Leasing (53)	3	5%	3	5%
Prof/Scientific/Tech Service (54)	6	10%	4	6%
Mgmt of Comp/Enterprises (55)	0	0%	0	0%
Admin/Support/Waste Mgmt (56)	0	0%	1	2%
Educational Services (61)	1	2%	2	3%
HealthCare / Social Assist (62)	6	10%	5	8%
Arts/Entertainment/Rec (71)	0	0%	1	2%
Accommodation/Food Service (72)	9	15%	6	10%
Other Service excl Pub Admin (81)	11	18%	10	16%
Public Administration (92)	3	5%	4	6%
Unclassified Establishments	0	0%	3	5%

Some conclusions can be drawn from this high-level business industry mix comparison between Downtown Neillsville and the median number of businesses per industry. The City of Neillsville’s downtown industry mix, based on the 2015 data, is very similar to that found in the downtown of an average “small city”. The City should continue to promote diversification of business industries and look for opportunities to attract uses to help make downtown a destination, and those that compliment and contribute to downtown’s sense of place.



# Economic Development

The 2020 parcel data for the City shows that close to 30% of parcels within downtown are owned by an individual(s) with a mailing address located outside of the Neillsville zip-code of 54456. The Plan Commission discussed that while local ownership is important, more important is how these buildings are maintained and managed as well as how active business owners are within the community.

## 9.6 Community Marketing and Branding

A community brand is not just a logo or tagline, but is a unique story or message that reflects the community's culture and desired image and reputation. A good brand will differentiate Neillsville from other communities. The brand is not only used for marketing, but can be a source of community pride that can be reflected in activities, park amenities, wayfinding systems, and other things the community does. Different places within a community (e.g., downtown, a park) can have its own unique brand, if it is compatible with the community's "umbrella" brand message.

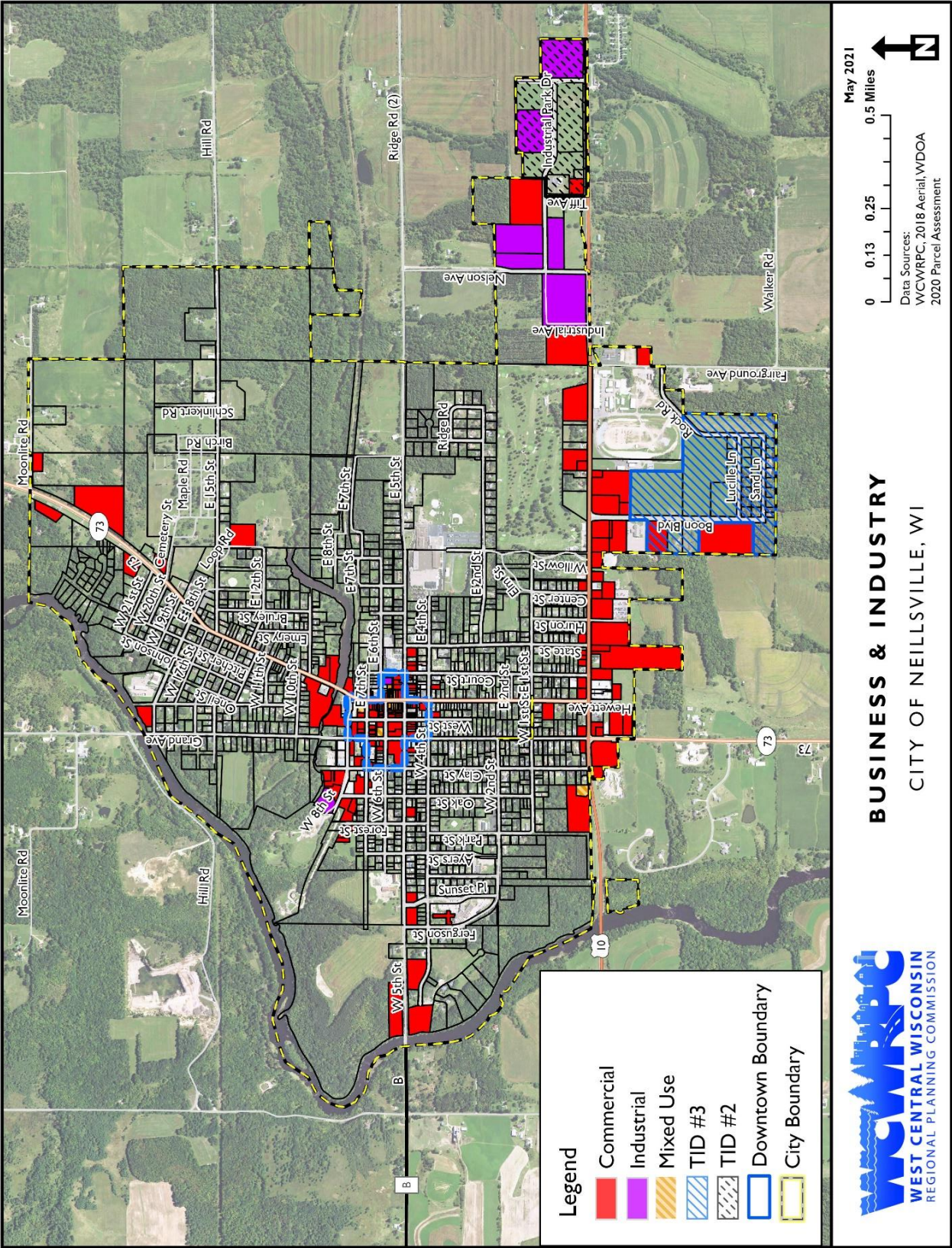
As noted in Section 2.3, the community lacks a cohesive community brand and marketing strategy. The City of Neillsville should look for opportunities to set themselves apart from other communities – help people know what to expect when they visit the City and capitalize on the City's competitive advantages over other communities.

Community (or Place) Branding	
What is a community brand?	What elements are included in a brand? How might we express our brand?
<p>Your brand is the image and message that you are communicating about your community or place to your audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The experience people have when they come into contact with your community.</li> <li>• It is your desired reputation; what you want people to say when you are not around.</li> <li>• The competitive and distinctive identity that differentiates your community.</li> <li>• A brand is a promise!</li> </ul>	<p><u>Visual</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• logos or graphics</li> <li>• color schemes</li> <li>• place changes (e.g., murals, landscaping)</li> </ul> <p><u>Verbal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• taglines or slogans</li> <li>• marketing messaging</li> <li>• marketing materials &amp; promotions</li> <li>• letterhead, webpage, &amp; social media</li> </ul> <p><u>Physical or Place Changes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• signage and wayfinding</li> <li>• amenities, things to do, &amp; other placemaking</li> </ul> <p><u>Behavioral</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activities, events, and social offerings</li> <li>• "community culture" &amp; how we do business</li> </ul>
<b>Avoid these Branding Pitfalls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't be too broad, too general, or cliché! Be definitive.</li> <li>• Be authentic, real, and relevant.</li> <li>• Make a splash to get attention! Don't play it too safe or be too predictable.</li> <li>• Lack of champions or ownership. Not everyone may agree with the brand, but the community must embrace the brand. You can always re-brand down the road if needed.</li> <li>• Be ready to deliver on your promise. Exceed expectations "after the sale."</li> </ul>



# Economic Development

Map 12 Neillsville Industry and Businesses





# Economic Development

## 9.7 Placemaking

### WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?

Placemaking is turning a neighborhood, downtown, or community from a place you can't wait to get through to one you never want to leave. Placemaking capitalizes on local assets, inspirations, and potential (as defined by those who live, work, and play in a particular place) to create and manage good public spaces. The result is a common vision and strategy, beginning with small-scale doable improvements that can immediately bring benefits to public spaces and the people who use them.

Placemaking is about improving the quality of life of residents. People choose to live in, shop in, and invest in places that offer attractive amenities, social and business networks, and opportunities for a vibrant, thriving lifestyle.

### FOUR KEY ATTRIBUTES OF A SUCCESSFUL PLACE

The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) has identified four key attributes that successful places have in common:

1. **Access & Linkages** – They are accessible and have connections to other places.
2. **Uses & Activities** – People use the space and are engaged in activities there.
3. **Comfort & Image** – The space is comfortable and has a good image.
4. **Sociability** – It is a sociable place – one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit.

PPS developed the following Place Diagram as a tool to help people in judging any place, good or bad, by using the four key attributes of a successful place.



# Economic Development

## NEILLSVILLE PLACEMAKING EFFORTS

There are a variety of tools, strategies, and programs that communities can employ to assist with Placemaking efforts. The City of Neillsville, working with various partners, has undertaken a few different efforts to strengthen the City's position in creating a vibrant community and undertaking efforts to revitalize downtown Neillsville.

### **Neillsville Improvement Corporation Placemaking Project**

In 2014-2015 the Neillsville Improvement Corporation (NIC) initiated a community-wide placemaking exercise to create projects that would enhance the City's public spaces, making people want to visit and stay longer. There were six public meetings in which attendees could submit and discuss potential project ideas. Participants focused on specific improvements at five specific public nodes throughout the City.

*Node 1: WCCN / Chatty Belle / East Entrance:*

*Node 2: Gazebo / Jail Museum / Historic Downtown*

*Node 3: Arboretum / Highway 10 trailhead / West entrance to the City*

*Node 4: North Entry*

*Node 5: South Entry*

Since this initiative, the NIC and other community partners have taken up and implemented several of the project ideas but continued progress and momentum is needed to continue to position Neillsville as a prime location for people to live, work, and play.

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

The Connect Communities program is designed to provide training and networking for communities or organizations working on revitalization topics. In 2015 the City of Neillsville was accepted into the program, with the goal of gaining training and resources to improve marketing new commercial uses for unused buildings, helping business owners boost activity and profitability, and creating branding campaigns to promote retail promotions, special events, and create a stronger positive image of downtown as an appealing place to shop, visit and invest in business.

The City's one year progress report from 2016 highlights the following downtown improvements:

- Neillsville Improvement Corporation made an investment for informational kiosks.
- One building owner refurbished 6 apartments and was preparing to refurbish 2 commercial spaces.
- Private foundation put a new roof on the city center gazebo.
- Additional private and public investment in the downtown.

# Economic Development

## NEILLSVILLE PLACEMAKING EFFORTS (CONT.)

### **UW Extension First Impressions Program**

The First Impressions community exchange program was designed to help communities learn about their strengths and shortcomings through the eyes of first-time visitors. Under the program, volunteer teams undertake unannounced visits, record observations, and give constructive feedback to the exchange community. In 2017 Neillsville was paired up with Fennimore, WI to undertake these visits.

#### Noted Strengths:

- Banners and flower planters
- Legible and well-placed directional signage
- Appearance of downtown is clear, signs are noticeable and easy to read
- Nice variety of businesses in downtown
- Highway 10 business district was clean, maintained, and left a better impression that the historic district

#### Noted Shortcomings / Opportunities:

- Landscaping blocking the welcome sign
- Condition of the Historic Merchants Hotel
- Quality of buildings, specifically in the downtown historic district – the report notes that there is a lot of character, downtown has great potential, and a simply coat of paint would have a big impact
- While Highground Memorial is not technically within the City boundary, the City should identify opportunities to better connect with the Memorial
- Brand and market the community – what is Neillsville “known for”?
- Opportunities to improve community entrances – visibility of signage, etc.

## MAKING NEILLSVILLE AN EVEN BETTER PLACE

The results and findings from the placemaking activities described above present opportunities and future initiatives that the City can undertake to make it an even better place to live, work and play. One way to get a quick start to implementing the City's revitalization efforts is to focus on lighter, quicker, cheaper (LQC) projects and activities that can be accomplished fast and won't “break the bank”. The community should work with local organizations, including the school, to implement LQC ideas. The City should also recognize and celebrate successes in accomplishing some of the LQC items as it can build momentum to undertake larger-scale projects.



# Economic Development

## 9.8 Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The goals, objectives, and policies in this section are split into three categories: (1) overall economic development; (2) downtown, and (3) marketing and branding.

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the City is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the City can use to aid in making land use decisions. As explained in previous element, policies suggest decision-making guidance, while recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete.

### **Overall Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

***Goal: Maintain, enhance, and continue to diversify the economy consistent with other community goals and objectives in order to provide a stable economic base.***

#### ***Objectives***

1. Economic development strategies should support existing businesses and promote a diversity of industry and business types and sizes, including small business development strategies, promoting high-tech infrastructure, and the marketing of the City's industrial park.
2. Retain and provide new opportunities for local employment. The City's economy should be diversified to retain and attract young people to stay or move back to the City.
3. Work with local businesses, Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC), and other partners to attract, develop, and maintain an available workforce with the skills needed by existing and desired businesses.
4. Maintain and support agriculture as a strong component of the local economy through related agricultural service industries.
5. Allow home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding area.
6. Increase community involvement, where appropriate, in supporting economic development activities taken by the Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Neillsville Area Chamber of Commerce, Neillsville Improvement Corporation, and other local economic development groups in the area. The City will support and empower these organizations to take a leadership role in the implementation of the economic development policies and recommendations in this plan.
7. Strive to ensure all of the stakeholders and interest groups are working cooperatively toward shared goals. Initially focus on smaller projects (those that are lighter, quicker, cheaper (LQC) and build on the momentum of these accomplishments and successes over time.

# Economic Development

8. Promote quality and sustainable economic development along the Highway corridor.
9. Continually pursue and evaluate the need for more industrial land, infrastructure, broadband Internet service, and other services and utilities to meet the needs of existing and future businesses who require such facilities and services.
10. Maintain basic levels of negotiations with new business and industry as a means to address local needs.
11. Increase efforts to pursue funds or grants which promote development or the maintenance of historic features.
12. Maintain adequate pedestrian areas and aesthetic features which encourage consumer activity and community character within business districts.
13. Increase opportunities for small business development and growth by providing adequate areas zoned for commercial development and professional offices.
14. Maintain and improve communication with local businesses to determine labor shortages and/or needs.
15. Develop strategies that promote business retention, expansion and recruitment.
16. Maintain and improve communication with local established businesses to help meet and address future expansion and facility needs.
17. The City recognizes that the goals and objectives of many other plan elements are crucial to the economic success of the community.

## Overall Policies

1. Future development proposals shall address impacts to the physical environment.
2. The need for certain types of commercial development along major highways should be recognized and accommodated. These types of development may include, but are not limited to: auto/truck/implement sales, hotels/motels, service stations, restaurants, and farm-related businesses.
3. The City of Neillsville shall continue to use tax incremental financing (TIF) as a tool for redevelopment, infrastructure, and workforce and other housing needs identified in the housing element.
4. The City of Neillsville will emphasize and continue to build upon its unique character, historical assets, the area's outdoor recreational amenities, and its high quality of life in its efforts to attract skilled workers, investments, and tourism dollars to the community, while retaining our young people and the next generation of entrepreneurs.
5. The City of Neillsville will work with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin Department of Work Force Development, and the Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau to find ways to improve wages and attract a diversified mix of appropriate new employers and businesses to the City.
6. The City of Neillsville will work with the Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau, Momentum West, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin Department of Work Force Development, and other appropriate state agencies to attract employers of management and professional workers, and to retain those workers.

## Economic Development

7. The City of Neillsville will promote cooperation between the Neillsville School District, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, and local employers to educate and train a skilled labor force and local entrepreneurs to meet current and anticipated business demands and encourage more training locally.
8. The City of Neillsville will work with Clark County and other stakeholders to improve and market the Clark County Fairgrounds.
9. The City of Neillsville will continue to provide a description of planned infrastructure improvements which support economic development projects to West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission for inclusion within the Region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as a recommended pre-requisite for Federal Economic Development Administration grant dollars.
10. To the extent reasonably possible, the business park should be shovel-ready and able to accommodate a range of desirable industrial development.

### Overall Recommendations

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the City's policies, and, therefore, will help the City fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

1. The City Economic Development Commission should review and establish a general timeline or action plan for the recommendations within this plan element (short-term)
2. Support the Neillsville Improvement Corporation's and Chamber of Commerce's efforts to bring organizations and volunteers together to collaborate and enhance the community based on the findings and recommendations of the First Impressions and Placemaking exercises. (ongoing)
3. Consider and potentially act on the recommendations of the 2020 ***Economic Impact Study for the planned Marshfield Medical Center-Neillsville Campus***, such as conducting a hotel study and using cluster/supply chain analysis to guide workforce development and business recruitment strategies. This could include conducting a workforce analysis that identifies the skill sets required by existing (or desired) major employers/clusters/supply chains, then develop related training and recruitment strategies.
4. Continue to invest in needed Industrial Park infrastructure and expand the Industrial Park to allow for the attraction of larger manufacturing, warehousing, or other business development with opportunities to subdivide larger lots if needed. (short-term; ongoing)
5. Annually review the status of the City's current TIF Districts and amend if necessary. (ongoing; as needed)
6. Further evaluate the mix of uses, pedestrian access, signage, and aesthetics within the U.S. Highway 10 corridor to promote appropriate infill and strengthen the attractiveness of the highway commercial district to visitors and potential business investors.
7. Work with the Neillsville Area Chamber of Commerce and the Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau to build on the Connect Communities programming to proactively identify entrepreneurs and struggling small businesses, then connect them with technical resources and mentor support to help improve operations, identify target markets, develop opportunities for growth and expansion, and assist with business transition.

# Economic Development

8. The City Economic Development Commission should periodically meet with the City's largest employers to discuss their plans, needs, and partnership opportunities. (short-term, then ongoing)
9. Work with major local employers to survey their employees to obtain insights and opinions on housing needs, child care needs, purchasing trends, education/training needs, employee retention, knowledge and use of the City's recreational facilities and services, and their general impression on Neillsville as a place to live and shop. If possible, the survey or its results may also serve as a marketing piece. (short-term)
10. Investigate the need for physical incubator space and/or an incubator program to help start-up companies.
11. Implement those policies and recommendations of other plan elements that support the local economy, such as improving the housing market, providing a strong infrastructure, enhancing outdoor recreational amenities, expanding child care availability, preserving and sharing local history, and collaborating with other private and intergovernmental partners.

## **Downtown Neillsville Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

***Goal: Downtown Neillsville will incorporate and embrace the elements of a 'good place' with strong access & linkages, a variety of things to do to draw in different people and interests, clean, safe, and inviting spaces where people want to spend time, and a welcoming environment that promotes a sense of pride and ownership.***

### **Objectives**

1. Foster and maintain an intact, economically vibrant downtown business district. Downtown Neillsville will provide a branded, focal point and community gathering place for the City with a pedestrian- and family-oriented design achieved through structural rehabilitation, marketing, infrastructure improvements, and by encouraging small business development, community services, mixed uses, and specialized retail businesses.

### **Downtown Policies**

1. Revitalize the downtown through placemaking, marketing, and supportive efforts that: beautify, unify, and welcomes visitors; increases the visibility of downtown; seek and retain businesses; and nurtures the downtown's role as the community's central gathering place.
2. The City of Neillsville will work to ensure the vitality of its neighborhoods surrounding the downtown.
3. Improve the appearance of vacant storefronts; keep storefronts filled, even using temporary displays and pop-up retail or services.
4. Update and improve building facades. Maintain communication with downtown landowners to share building maintenance resources and address vacant buildings to prevent deterioration.
5. Strive to maintain a unified, two-story façade wall with commercial uses on the first floor and residential uses on the second floor in Neillsville's historic downtown. Encourage higher density, multi-family, and senior housing within and nearby the downtown district, which is compatible with and complimentary to the primary economic and service functions of the downtown area.

# Economic Development

6. Related to the previous policy, keep the core downtown intact and vibrant as a functioning, walkable, and inviting retail and service center with a dense development pattern of commercial and vertical mixed uses. For the larger downtown area outside this core, a broader mix of commercial, residential, and public uses may be appropriate.
7. Allow for higher density housing development within and nearby the downtown but carefully consider the potential, cumulative long-term impacts when siting or permitting re-use so the function, linkages, and traditional character of the downtown as a pedestrian-friendly commercial area is maintained.

## Downtown Vertical Mixed Use



*The majority of downtown buildings should be mixed use, with ground-floor retail and service uses and upper-floor office and residential uses. This combination optimizes parking facilities and keeps downtowns in use 24 hours a day. Source: Gould Evans Associates*

*source: Walker, Philip. "Downtown Planning for Smaller and Midsized Communities". American Planning Association, 2009.*

## Downtown Recommendations

1. Continue to put the Connect Communities lessons and resources into action. Consider the feasibility of establishing a certified Main Street Program in the future. Investigate the establishment of a downtown Business Improvement District (BID) or Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) to fund improvements, provide façade matching funds, for marketing endeavors, or other similar activities. (ongoing; as needed)
2. Promote the use of the Regional Business Fund's Façade Loan Program to maintain or renovate downtown facades. Strongly encourage any proposed façade repairs or construction to be consistent with the City's downtown design guidelines and the historical context of the downtown historical district. (ongoing)
3. Use design, wayfinding, branding, programming, and land use controls to unify and better distinguish the core downtown area. Promote the infill and continuity of commercial and governmental uses in the downtown. (ongoing; as needed)
4. Improve the appearance of vacant storefronts by keeping empty storefronts filled. Undertake strategies such as decorating and lighting the storefront windows or vacant buildings while they are waiting to attract new tenants. (ongoing; as needed)
5. The City should identify potential resources and/or assist property owners and tenants with building improvements through financial, education, incentives, technical, assistance, etc. (ongoing; as needed)



## Economic Development

6. Create a downtown “image” plan. A coordinated plan for downtown landscaping, lighting, sidewalk treatments, façade treatments, and signage is needed to tie-together the downtown area through common amenities, visual cues, and aesthetics under the City’s shared theme or brand.
7. Attract new businesses that meet the desires of the market. Identify any supply/demand gaps and niche opportunities in the current retail or service market. (ongoing; as needed)
8. Provide more uses and activities centered around seniors and youth. (ongoing; as needed)
9. Use programming, placemaking, and events to encourage community activity in downtown year-round, even during winter months.(ongoing)
10. Instill community pride through beautification. As recommended in Section 8, bring volunteers together to cleanup and maintain public spaces within the community. (ongoing)
11. Special attention and support should be given to the attraction of a unique retail anchor, which has the potential of enticing large numbers of tourists and residents to the downtown area. Examples of communities with anchors include The Wood Shed (Amish goods) in Augusta or The Norske Nook (pies/food) in Osseo. In lieu of an established anchor business, unique themed attractions (e.g., Trollway in Mount Horeb) or events (e.g., regular farmer’s markets) can also be used to help draw visitors and residents to the downtown.
12. Create and maintain strong destinations or anchors within the downtown, with physical and visual linkages or connections between these key locations. Fountain Park and the proposed trailhead can serve as an anchor on the north end, which could be enhanced by the redevelopment of the Merchant Hotel; the Gazebo (Sniteman Town Square) and Library anchor the south end. The County Courthouse and the CART Center are other key destinations for which strong multi-modal connectivity and linkages would be valuable.

### **Community Marketing & Branding Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

***Goal: The City of Neillsville will market the City’s numerous assets as an opportunity to attract new businesses, residents, and visitors and grow the local and regional economy.***

#### ***Objectives***

1. Set Neillsville apart from other communities and make it a unique place that attracts visitors.
2. Capitalize on and market the City’s outdoor recreation and attractions of the area.
3. Promote and enhance historic or heritage tourism. Utilize and promote the City’s historically significant amenities to attract businesses, industry, and visitors/tourism to the City.
4. Distinguish and market/promote features unique to the community in order to strengthen marketability and create a unique community identity within the City.

### **Community Marketing & Branding Policies**

1. The City of Neillsville will coordinate with the Neillsville Area Chamber of Commerce to co-market the community’s assets, reach out and support existing businesses, and welcome new businesses to the community.
  - Utilize the public kiosks at Sniteman Town Square, at Chatty Belle, and by Historical Marker on Highway 10 to promote the City’s economic development efforts.

# Economic Development

- Continue to promote local businesses and encourage area residents and businesses to patronize businesses within the City, including marketing the downtown to Courthouse employees.

## Community Marketing & Branding Recommendations

1. Work with community members and economic development partners to agree upon a shared community brand that is unique to the City of Neillsville, reflects the City's culture and desired impact and reputation, and can be used to market and promote the City. Build your brand on something that exemplifies and differentiates the community. Then, develop a marketing strategy and outreach tools based on the brand. (short-term)
2. Ensure that the industrial park is "shovel ready" for a variety of development opportunities from a land, infrastructure, and regulatory perspective. Explore a mix of incentive packages. Use a mix of tools to pro-actively market the developable lots and available services within the City's industrial park. Demonstrate that the City is a shovel-ready, willing partner. (short-term; ongoing)
3. Work with partners to better promote and market the many opportunities within the City to live, work and play to business investors, entrepreneurs, and potential workforce. Develop more proactive marketing tools to attract industrial park, entrepreneurial, and downtown investment. (short-term)
4. Support and encourage regular events in the downtown area to increase visibility and to draw patrons into the area.

## 9.9 Economic Development Partners and Programs

There are a variety of local, regional, and statewide economic development programs, partners, and tools available to municipalities to assist them with supporting existing businesses and recruiting new businesses. In addition, there are programs available for individual businesses to assist in startup and expansion. The City relies greatly on local partners (e.g., Neillsville Area Chamber of Commerce and Clark County EDC) to take a lead role in economic development and marketing for the community. Appendix E includes a description of the primary county, regional, State, and Federal resources that can assist the City of Neillsville with its economic development efforts. This is not intended to be a complete list, but rather the most likely tools to be used by Neillsville. Some past critical partners include:

Neillsville Area Chamber of Commerce  
Clark County Economic Development Corporation  
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission/Regional Business Fund, Inc.  
State & Federal Agencies (WEDC, WDOT, USDA, EDA)  
Neillsville School District  
Local Businesses, Utilities, Realtors, and Entrepreneurs

In addition to these partners and resources, a variety of programs and tools are available to locally pursue economic development that aligns with these strategies, such as tax increment financing (TIF), business improvement districts (BID), Main Street programming, tax abatement, low-interest business loans, workforce development programs, and business incubators. Effectively using such tools often requires an investment by the community to provide resources such as staff to organize and manage these tools, foster partnerships, and secure and manage funding. A limited amount of technical assistance is available from the State, County, WCWRPC, and other organizations.

# 10. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

# Intergovernmental Cooperation

## 10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Advances in technology and improved mobility have resulted in the faster and easier movement of people, money, goods, ideas, and other resources across jurisdictions. Likewise, budget constraints are encouraging many municipalities to explore partnerships and collaborative efforts to provide services more efficiently. Many issues cross intergovernmental boundaries, affecting more than one community or governmental unit. And the decisions, plans, and strategies of one community can impact neighboring jurisdictions. Through intergovernmental cooperation, communities can anticipate potential conflicts in plans and policies in order to identify potential solutions to mitigate such conflicts. Governmental units may also identify opportunities for cost-sharing, competitive bidding, and other strategies to leverage available resources to everyone's benefit.

Per the requirements of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning legislation, this element of the Comprehensive Plan includes a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions. It will also identify existing and potential conflicts between the City of Neillsville and other governmental units and should include processes to resolve such conflicts. The Statutes also require the adopted plan to be distributed to adjacent and overlapping jurisdictions. However, these other jurisdictions do not approve a community's plan. There is no requirement that a community's plan must be consistent with the plans or policies of any other governmental unit or regional plan, or vice-versa.

### Intergovernmental Cooperation Benefits

There are many reasons intergovernmental cooperation makes sense. The following are some examples:

1. **Cost savings** – Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Cooperation can enable some communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly.
2. **Address regional issues** – By communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues which are regional in nature.
3. **Early identification of issues** – Cooperation enables jurisdictions to identify and resolve potential conflicts at an early stage, before affected interests have established rigid positions, before the political stakes have been raised, and before issues have become conflicts or crises.
4. **Reduced litigation** – Communities that cooperate are able to resolve issues before they become mired in litigation. Reducing the possibility of costly litigation can save a community money, as well as the disappointment and frustration of unwanted outcomes.
5. **Consistency** – Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.
6. **Predictability** – Jurisdictions that cooperate provide greater predictability to residents, developers, businesses, and others. Lack of predictability can result in lost time, money, and opportunity.
7. **Understanding** – As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.

# Intergovernmental Cooperation

8. **Trust** – Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions.
9. **History of success** – When jurisdictions cooperate successfully in one area, the success creates positive feelings and an expectation that other intergovernmental issues can be resolved as well.
10. **Service to citizens** – The biggest beneficiaries of intergovernmental cooperation are citizens for whom government was created in the first place. They may not understand, or even care about, the intricacies of a particular intergovernmental issue, but all Wisconsin residents can appreciate their benefits, such as costs savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

This element provides information regarding existing plans or agreements between the community and other jurisdictions, agencies, or groups. In addition, this section identifies existing County plans, plans of neighboring jurisdictions, and intergovernmental statutes and programs.

## 10.1 Existing Conditions and Context

The City of Neillsville is surrounded on all sides by the Town of Pine Valley. Since 2010, population in the Town has remained relatively constant, with a 2020 State population estimate of 1,160, a growth of only three persons since 2010. Enhancing the relationship of the City with the Town and other overlapping jurisdictions can and will advance dialogue and actions necessary to ready the City for future changes in land use and growth pressures. The Town of Pine Valley's 2009 comprehensive plan includes a number of intergovernmental issues and strategies pertaining to the City of Neillsville:

1. Issue: The relationship with the City of Neillsville can be adversarial at times due to extra-territorial plat review and the loss of tax base due to annexation.
2. Strategy: Maintain communication with the City of Neillsville on growth and intergovernmental issues, including the relationship established under the City/Town water system agreement.
3. Strategy: Work cooperatively with adjacent municipalities and Clark County when mutually beneficial opportunities for cost-sharing for needed projects arise.
4. Strategy: Continue to coordinate with other local governmental units in the area, as well as local emergency response personnel and officials, to maintain an efficient and effective emergency response system.

The low population density of Clark County, combined with growing budget demands to do more with less, has presented interesting challenges for communities to deliver services in a cost-effective manner. The United Communities of Clark County (UCCC) is an intergovernmental success story which uses cooperation to deal with these challenges head-on.

UCCC is a partnership of incorporated communities in Clark County, which began meeting in December 2002. UCCC member communities include the Cities of Abbotsford, Colby, Greenwood, Loyal, Neillsville, Stanley, Thorp, and Owen and the Villages of Curtiss, Dorchester, Granton, and Withee. UCCC successes include working together to explore the potential sharing of public works equipment, perform studies or testing, coordinate road maintenance work, provide emergency services and mutual aid support, and joint project bidding to obtain better bids or leverage resources.



# Intergovernmental Cooperation

## 10.2 Existing Partnerships, Agreements, and Intergovernmental Plans

### **City of Neillsville/Town of Pine Valley Water System Agreement**

The agreement allowed the City to construct and maintain water extension lines and related services in the Town and allows any property owner (in the town) of land that abuts the water extension from the municipal wells to the City to connect to the City water system and may not be deprived of the use. The agreement was later amended to allow the City to levy special assessments and special charges for work and improvements upon the property of the property owners who use the water extension lines and service improvements in the Town. The Town agrees the special assessment shall be a lien against the property and the fee shall be collected for the City by the Town Treasurer. The agreement went into effect in August of 1996 and remains in effect until the City no longer has any water extension lines and services located in the jurisdiction of the Town.

### **United Community of Clark County Waste Services Agreement**

The City of Neillsville, in coordination with the United Communities of Clark County (UCCC), has continued to jointly bid and contract for garbage and recycling services. As a result of this bidding process with the UCCC, Advanced Disposal was selected to continue to provide curbside garbage and recycling services in Neillsville with a contract period ending in 2024. The UCCC group continues to meet monthly and is pursuing additional solutions to regional public service issues.

### **Emergency Services Agreements**

Agreements are in place for emergency medical services (EMS), fire protection, 9-1-1 communications, and hazardous materials response as previously mentioned in the Utilities and Community Facilities element. Mutual aid for additional support is also available if needed. Emergency management, hazardous materials planning/reporting, and hazard mitigation planning is performed in conjunction with Clark County Emergency Management.

### **Relationships with Other Governmental Units**

#### **School Districts**

The City of Neillsville is served by the Neillsville Area School District. Faced with declining enrollments and budgets, the need to update facilities, and the expectation to maintain a high level of education standards, the school districts of Clark County have stepped up discussions to address tough issues. The sharing of programs between neighboring school districts have worked in the past. For example, Neillsville and Granton have teamed up for cooperative football and softball teams. Other opportunities for cooperation include working with the school districts to anticipate future growth, facility, and busing needs. In addition, school districts often provide recreation facilities for field and court sports. The District and City has executed a shared space agreement for cost sharing of certain public recreational costs, such as the City Recreational Director's salary. The Utilities & Community Facilities and Parks & Outdoor Recreation Plan elements further discuss the relationship between the City and the Neillsville Area School District.

# Intergovernmental Cooperation

## Adjacent Local Governments

### Clark County

The City of Neillsville has coordinated with Clark County on a variety of planning and programming activities, such as outdoor recreation planning, natural hazards mitigation planning, and transportation planning for road maintenance and improvements. Potential opportunities for cooperation include continuing to communicate with the County to develop a mutually beneficial implementation program to ensure orderly and cost-effective land use planning. Other opportunities include utilization of the Clark County Housing Authority to provide low interest loans to qualifying applicants and cooperation with the Clark County Highway Department on road maintenance and construction.

### Surrounding Communities

The City of Neillsville is bordered by the Town of Pine Valley. The City of Neillsville has opportunities to coordinate with Town to capture opportunities and address potential conflicts as summarized later in the section.

Wisconsin Statute allows extraterritorial plat review authority within 1.5 miles of the City boundary; the City has authorized this review. Map 13 at the end of this Chapter generally shows the 1.5 mile boundary that the City has for extraterritorial review.

## Regional Coordination

### West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)

Clark County is a member of the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. There are nine regional planning commissions (RPCs) that represent 67 of 72 Wisconsin counties. RPCs are designed to offer local planning assistance and support to county and municipal governments; WCWRPC's role is advisory, not regulatory. Typical functions of an RPC include, but are not limited to: comprehensive, intergovernmental planning; transportation planning and programming; water quality planning; collecting and analyzing data; conducting studies; sewer service area planning; economic development planning and grant writing; and meeting area wide requirements so local jurisdictions can receive federal grants.



The WCWRPC has assisted Clark County and the City of Neillsville with numerous housing and public facility infrastructure grants and a variety of planning efforts.

## State Agencies

The relationship of the City with various agencies through planning includes, but is not limited to the following:

### Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) – Division of Intergovernmental Relations

As per its webpage, “[t]he Division of Intergovernmental Relations provides a broad array of services to the public and state, local and tribal governments. It supports counties, municipalities, citizens and businesses by providing support services in land use planning, land information and records modernization, municipal boundary review, plat review, demography and coastal management programs.”

The Division administers the state’s comprehensive planning grant program and includes a library of completed comprehensive plans throughout Wisconsin at its website. The Division also includes the

# Intergovernmental Cooperation

State's Municipal Boundary Review agency which regulates the transition of unincorporated lands to city or village status through municipal annexation, incorporation, consolidation, or cooperative boundary agreement. State review of subdivision plats also occurs within the Division. The Division's Demographic Services Center also provides population and demographic estimates and projections for planning purposes.

To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services through greater intergovernmental cooperation, the Wisconsin Partnership initiative is also administered through the Division. State government can offer its public sector partners access to procurement contracts, technologies, grants and other resources that can either reduce costs or expand the range of available options.

## Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT)

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation maintains several plans with statewide policies and recommendations regarding various aspects of transportation. Plan recommendations were consulted and incorporated into the comprehensive plan where applicable. WDOT plans and programs are discussed previously in the Transportation element.

## Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is responsible for implementing the laws of the state and, where applicable, the laws of the federal government that protect and enhance the natural resources of the state. It is the one agency charged with full responsibility for coordinating the many disciplines and programs necessary to provide a clean environment and a full range of outdoor recreation opportunities for Wisconsin citizens and visitors.



Opportunities to work collaboratively with the WDNR are numerous as the department maintains programs for shoreland management, stormwater, public water supply, solid waste management, recycling, dam permitting, outdoor recreation, natural resource protection,

forestry, and much more.

## Other State Agencies

In addition to the above, many of State departments and agencies provide services and data important to the City, including but not limited to:

1. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
2. Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
3. Wisconsin Public Service Commission
4. Wisconsin Department of Revenue
5. Wisconsin Department of Health Services
6. Wisconsin Historical Society

City staff and officials also participate in groups such as a City Clerks and Mayors Group and stay informed of information by groups such as the League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

# Intergovernmental Cooperation

## 10.3 Intergovernmental Issues and Opportunities

### Opportunities

In addition to the previously described partnerships, numerous opportunities for service or program administration exist for cooperation with other units of government. Several of the key opportunities are:

Opportunity	Other Governmental Unit Assistance
1. Reduce cost for providing services through working with neighboring communities and the County for such items as road maintenance, fire and emergency service, police protection, solid waste and recycling, local parks, etc.	Town of Pine Valley United Community of Clark County group Clark County Board of Supervisors Clark County Department Staff
5. Update and amend City of Neillsville comprehensive plan and/or ordinances when applicable.	Clark County Planning & Zoning Department Clark County Economic Develop. Corp. West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)
6. Cooperative efforts to reduce phosphorus loading and improve water quality within the Black River watershed	Town governments within the watershed Clark County Land Conservation Department Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
7. Use of tax increment financing to support needed housing, commercial, and industrial development that benefits all taxing jurisdictions.	Overlying taxing jurisdictions as part of the Joint Review Board (County, CVTC, School District) WCWRPC

The policies and recommendations within the other plan elements mention additional intergovernmental opportunities to coordinate with State, County, and area towns to achieve the City's goals, such as the advertising of housing programs, highway corridor planning, joint marketing of the area's outdoor recreational amenities, and strengthening the area's economy.

### Potential Conflicts and Resolutions

Several potential conflicts may develop through the course of the planning period. Potential conflicts can be most effectively addressed in a "pro-active" fashion. In other words, pursuing opportunities will often avoid future conflicts. Thus several of the potential conflicts identified may be similar to the opportunities discussed earlier.

# Intergovernmental Cooperation

Potential conflicts and the process to resolve the conflicts are summarized as follows:

Potential Conflict	Process to Resolve
1. Potential land use compatibility and planning concerns regarding properties adjacent to or near the City's boundary.	Meet with Pine Valley officials to encourage local land use planning in a coordinated and cooperative manner.
2. Improvements and extension of roadways (e.g., OEM Drive) and other utilities beyond the City's boundaries.	Review and provide comments on any draft comprehensive plans developed by the Town of Pine Valley and Clark County.  Maintain open dialogue with the Town of Pine Valley to share each community's concerns and explore opportunities for cost-sharing and activities which mutually benefit both communities. Approach the Town on the potential creation of a cooperative boundary agreement or plan for anticipated growth areas.

## **Intergovernmental Trends and Outlook**

The following intergovernmental trends are anticipated during the planning period.

1. Intergovernmental cooperation will increase as state, county, and local budgets become more restrictive and partnerships are pursued.
2. Clark County school districts will face increased challenges to maintain expected educational standards in the face of declining enrollments and budgets.
3. The sharing of employees, equipment, and facilities will increase locally to meet demand at reduced costs.

## **10.4 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the City is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the City can use to aid in making land use decisions.



# Intergovernmental Cooperation

**Goal: *Establish mutually beneficial intergovernmental relations with other units of government.***

## **Objectives**

1. Identify alternative solutions to existing or potential land use, administration or policy conflicts that may hinder intergovernmental cooperation.
2. Maintain efforts to continue working relationships with neighboring communities and the County to provide efficient and cost effective emergency services, street maintenance, and other services when appropriate.
3. Maintain efforts to continue cooperation and coordination with adjacent municipalities with respect to long-range planning and land use controls.
4. Maintain efforts to continue communication to the public regarding the announcement of meetings, activities, development projects, programs and issues.
5. Maintain efforts to continue communication with the Clark County Board of Supervisors regarding local issues, concerns, desires and successes.

**Goal: *Coordinate and communicate planning activities with other communities in the County, and state and federal agencies to ensure efficient use of resources; and to provide for increased certainty between all levels of government, developers and landowners.***

## **Objectives**

1. Maintain participation in the United Communities of Clark County organization to encourage discussion and action on area issues and mutually beneficial opportunities.
2. Maintain participation with the League of Municipalities and other municipal organizations.
3. Maintain constructive relationships with the various levels of government and private organizations which have a vested interest in the protection and conservation of land and water resources.
4. Pursue cooperative agreements regarding boundary agreements, annexation, and growth management between neighboring communities.

**Goal: *Seek opportunities to enhance the provision of coordinated public services and facilities such as police, fire, emergency rescue, waste management, transportation systems (e.g., roads, bike/pedestrian routes, transit, etc...), parks and recreation with other units of government.***

## **Objectives**

1. Utilize opportunities for joint equipment ownership with neighboring communities for road maintenance and emergency rescue equipment.
2. Utilize the use of bulk purchasing arrangements with neighboring local governments for the purchase of such things as road salt, fuel, road work supplies and machinery to lower the unit cost of materials and supplies.
3. Explore creating ad-hoc committees with appropriate governmental entities to study opportunities to coordinate activities and reduce costs.

# Intergovernmental Cooperation

## Policies

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

1. The City of Neillsville will have intergovernmental coordination with appropriate governmental entities in its future planning.
2. Strengthen the relationship with the Town of Pine Valley and planning for development in the Town near the City’s border. Maintain regular, open communications with the Town of Pine Valley to discuss potential opportunities and proactively address potential conflicts.

## Recommendations

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the City’s policies, and therefore will help the City fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives. Most of the following support ongoing or continuing actions.

1. Implement the recommendations involving intergovernmental cooperation found in the other elements of this plan.
2. Participate in opportunities, such as public forums and workshops, to exchange information and increase public understanding and acceptance of innovative planning tools, programs and regulatory procedures. (on-going/as needed)
3. Meet with Clark County Department staff and neighboring community officials to explore opportunities for the cooperative administration of services and programs. (on-going/as needed)
4. Continue to pay annual dues to the United Communities of Clark County (UCCC) to maintain membership and participation. (on-going/as needed)
5. Meet with the Clark County Land Conservation and Wisconsin DNR to discuss options and a potential approach to addressing water quality and phosphorus loading issues within the Black River watershed. (on-going/as needed)
4. Maintain the intergovernmental agreement with the School District of Neillsville for the shared use of recreational facilities in accordance with the 2011 Open Gym Act (Wis.Stat. §895.523). (on-going/as needed)
5. Approach the Town of Pine Valley officials to discuss and explore:
  - a) Any needs, cooperative opportunities, or agreements regarding services, such as road maintenance, emergency services, utilities, trail networks, and other programming. (short-term)
  - b) Land use and growth, including growth in the MMC-N campus area, the importance of expanding the industrial park, the City’s extra-territorial jurisdiction, and the potential for cooperative boundary planning. (short-term)

# Intergovernmental Cooperation

## **10.5 Intergovernmental Plans and Programs**

Numerous Federal, State, regional, local, and private plans and programs exist that assist with intergovernmental cooperation, many of which are summarized in Appendix E.







# 11. LAND USE



# Land Use

## 11. Land Use

This element provides important background data and defines future needs related to land use. This land use element must be utilized in conjunction with the other plan elements to guide to future growth and development within the City of Neillsville.

Defining appropriate land use involves more than making ecological and economical choices. It is also about retaining values, lifestyles, cultural assets, and community character. The planning of future land uses is sometimes perceived as an intrusion on the rights of private property owners. The actual purpose of this activity is to protect rights of the individuals and to give landowners, citizens, and local communities the opportunity to define their own destiny. Many rural Wisconsin communities are facing problems due to unplanned growth: degradation of the natural environment, a loss of community character, traffic congestion, inefficient sprawling development, and increasing infrastructure and maintenance costs. By giving communities the opportunity to define the way they wish to grow and by developing a “vision” to reach that target, the magnitude of such concerns can be avoided or mitigated.

As required, this element contains a listing of the amount, type, and intensity of existing uses of land and discusses opportunities for redevelopment within the City. This section will analyze existing trends in the supply, demand, and price of land and contains a future land use map that identifies the community’s vision for future land uses.

### 11.1 Existing Land Use

Table 11 summarizes the existing land use within the City of Neillsville.

**Table 11 City of Neillsville Land Use**

Existing Land Use	# of Parcels	% Parcels	Total Acres	% Acres
Agricultural	9	0.6%	223	14.2%
Commercial	150	10.1%	131	8.5%
Forest	14	0.9%	186	11.9%
Golf Course	1	0.1%	64	4.1%
Industrial	8	0.5%	40	2.6%
Institutional & Government	86	5.8%	192	12.3%
Mixed Use	16	1.1%	2	0.1%
Park, Open Space & Outdoor Recreation	35	2.3%	108	6.9%
Residential	948	63.5%	404	25.8%
Residential (3+ units)	8	0.5%	9	0.5%
Undeveloped or Vacant	217	14.5%	206	13.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,492</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,566</b>	<b>100%</b>

source: WI State Cartographer's Office, Wisconsin Land Info. Program,  
City of Neillsville and WCWRPC

# Land Use

Map 14 shows existing Land Use in the City while Map 15 focuses in on Downtown Neillsville. The table and maps were based on 2020 assessment and parcel GIS data, aerial imagery, and slightly modified by the Plan Commission due to local knowledge of the land uses.

The City of Neillsville not only acts as a center of commerce, service, and cultural resources for surrounding agricultural and recreation areas, but also serves the function of county seat. Hence, the City's land use pattern is indicative of those functions.

For the land uses in Table 11, Map 14, and Map 15:

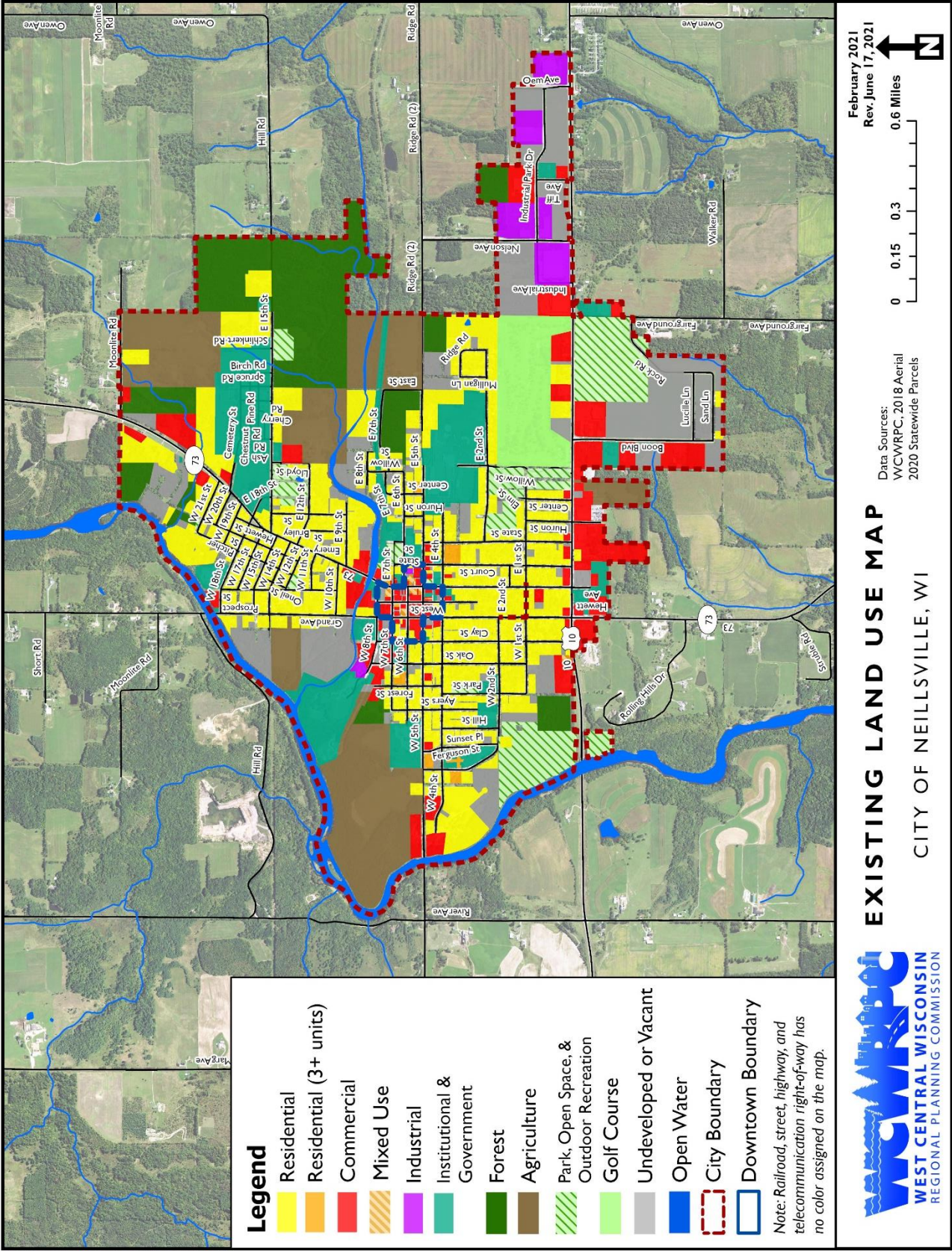
- Existing use was determined on a parcel-by-parcel basis; parcels were not split.
- The existing land uses within the City are based on the predominant assessed land use by parcel from GIS data obtained from the State of Wisconsin parcel database, aerial imagery review, and comments of the draft map by the City Plan Commission and Economic Development Commission.
- Generally, for parcels less than five acres with multiple assessment classifications, the most intensive land use is shown as the predominant use. For example, a commercial parcel may largely be undeveloped. The exception is for mixed use parcels that typically have buildings with both commercial and residential uses, such as traditional vertical mixed use that is common in historic central business districts.
- Generally, for parcels greater than five acres with multiple assessment classifications, the assessed use with the most acreage is shown as the predominant use. A parcel may have other uses that have lower amounts of acreage. For example, a large agricultural parcel may mostly be in cropland, but can include a residential home or farmstead.

Generally, the pattern of land use in the City of Neillsville can be described as balanced. About 50 percent of the land area is developed in intensive type land uses (i.e., residential, commercial, industrial, governmental/institutional). The City of Neillsville contains two primary commercial districts—the traditional downtown and the USH 10 corridor. Industrial activity is located primarily in the City's industrial park also located along USH 10. Residential development occurs in older established neighborhoods on both the north and south sides of the City as well as within a new residential subdivision on the City's south side. Major greenspace areas include the Neillsville Country Club, located along USH 10, and the Listeman Arboretum located along the Black River.



Land Use

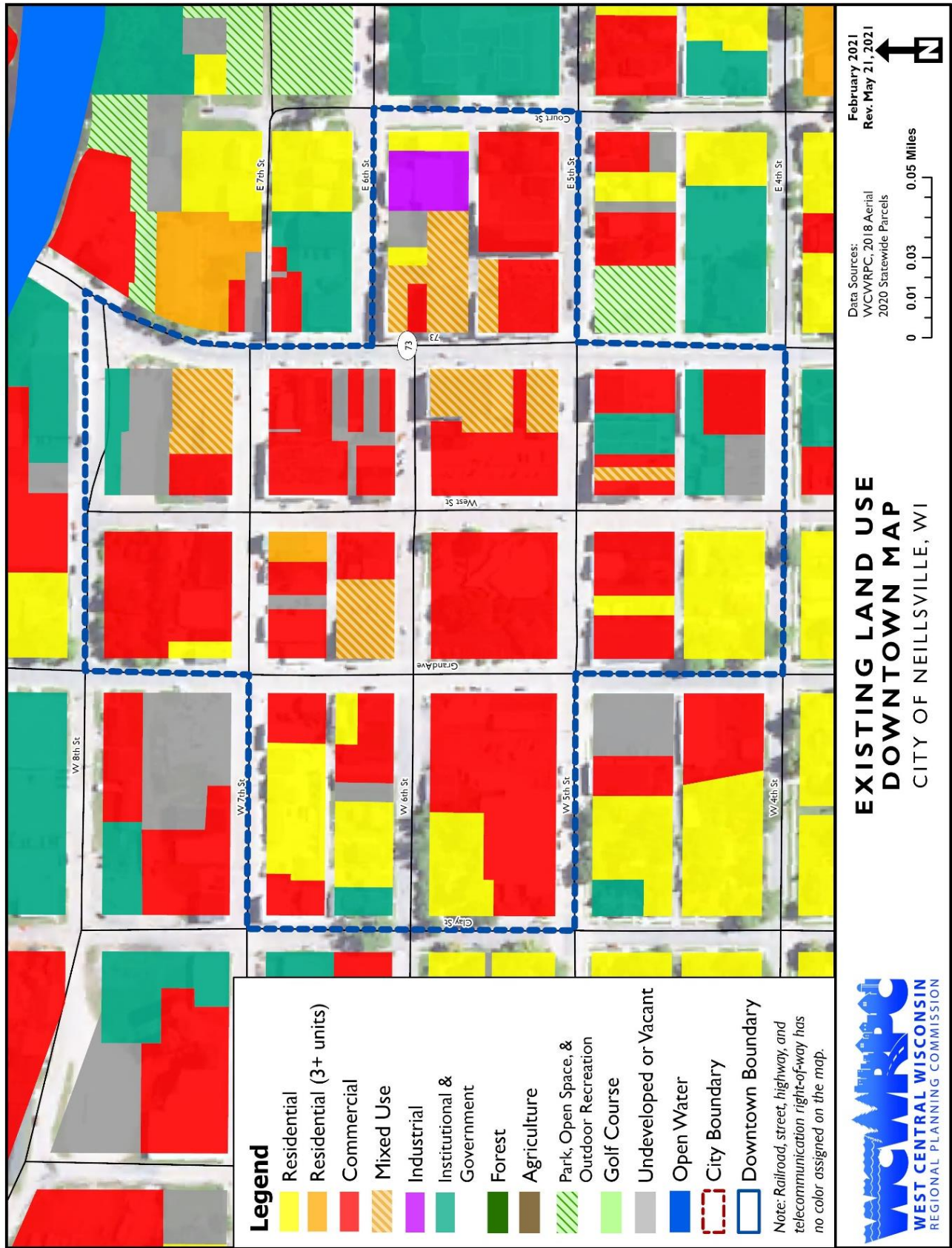
Map 14 City of Neillsville Existing Land Use





Land Use

Map 15 Downtown City of Neillsville Existing Land Use



# Land Use

Table 12 provides a comparison of the assessed land use in the City in 2010 and 2020 from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue based on land use tax categories. This table does not include unassessed or exempt properties, such as those owned by governmental units, churches, or non-profits.

**Table 12 Land Use Acreage and Assessed Value Per Acre, City of Neillsville, 2010 and 2020**

	Agricultural	Forest	Ag. Forest	Undeveloped	Residential	Commercial	Manufacturing	Other	Total
<b>2010</b>									
# Parcels	3	10	0	2	1,135	208	9	0	1,367
# Improved	0	0	0	0	925	154	8	0	1,087
Acres	72	169	0	1	145	240	43	0	670
Land Value per Acre	\$144	\$2,134	-	\$30,000	\$79,186	\$18,275	\$4,884	-	\$24,595
Improv. Value per Imp. Parcel	-	-	-	-	\$57,097	\$144,669	\$884,438	-	\$71,558
<b>2020</b>									
# Parcels	10	8	9	10	1,119	201	9	0	1,366
# Improved	0	0	0	0	932	162	8	0	1,102
Acres	102	116	97	81	499	241	43	0	1,179
Land Value per Acre	\$119	\$2,148	\$1,019	\$1,098	\$22,540	\$25,708	\$7,772	-	\$15,459
Improv. Value per Imp. Parcel	-	-	-	-	\$65,068	\$188,623	\$904,250	-	\$99,938
<b>Difference</b>									
# Parcels	+7	-2	+9	+8	-16	-7	0	0	-1
# Improved	0	0	0	0	+7	+8	0	0	+15
Acres	+30	-53	+97	+80	+354	+1	0	0	+509
Land Value per Acre	-\$25	+\$14	+\$1,019	-\$28,902	-\$56,646	+\$7,433	-\$2,888	-	-\$9,136
Improv. Value per Imp. Parcel	-	-	-	-	+\$7,971	-\$126,046	+\$19,812	-	+\$28,380

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

**Notes:**

- Between 2010 & 2011, the City experienced a 331-acre increase in assessed residential property and a 431-acre increase in total assessed acres.
- The above values do not include unassessed or exempt properties, such as those owned by governmental units, churches, or non-profits.
- Agricultural land is primarily classified and assessed based on its actual, predominant use (use value), and not its market value. For instance, active farmland that is planned for commercial or residential use will be assessed as "Agricultural." Undeveloped land (e.g., poorly drained, ponds, depleted gravel pits, fallow tillable land, incapable of commercial forest) and "Ag Forest" is typically assessed at 50% of its full value. "Other" includes farm buildings and improvements, including the farm operator's residence. Sand mines and processing facilities will be classified as "Manufacturing" once your assessor receives the official DOR letter.



# Land Use

The Wisconsin Real Estate Class Definitions for each land use classification in the table is summarized below:

- Agricultural – Land exclusive of buildings and improvements that is devoted primarily to agricultural use as defined by rule. Agricultural land is primarily classified and assessed based on its actual, predominant use (use value), and not its market value. For instance, active farmland that is planned for commercial or residential use will be assessed as “Agricultural.”
- Forest – Land is covered by dense stands of trees or land that is producing or capable of producing commercial forest products. This can include acreage under the Managed Forest Law for which tax credits are provided to a participating landowner.
- Agricultural Forest – This is productive forest land contiguous to assessed agricultural land under the same ownership.
- Undeveloped – defined as bog, marsh, lowland brush, and uncultivated land zoned as shoreland or other nonproductive lands not otherwise classified. Approximately 81 acres of land in the City of Neillsville are classified as undeveloped. Undeveloped land (e.g., poorly drained, ponds, depleted gravel pits, fallow tillable land, incapable of commercial forest) and “Ag Forest” are typically assessed at 50% of its full value.
- Residential – Any parcel or part of a parcel of untilled land that is not suitable for the production of row crops on which a dwelling or other form of human abode is located.
- Commercial – Properties where the predominant use is the selling of merchandise or a service. For Table 12, this includes rental residential (apartments), though efforts were made to identify and classify rental housing as residential in the existing land use map.
- Manufacturing – Property consists of all property used for manufacturing, assembling, processing, fabricating, and making or milling tangible personal property for profit. It also includes establishments engaged in assembling component parts of manufactured products as well as mineral extraction and sand mining operations. All manufacturing property is assessed by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue.
- Other – Comprised of several land uses including transportation corridors, utility corridors, dwellings and land for the farm operator’s children, parents, or grandparents, etc.

Based on this data, the following are the most notable existing land use conditions and trends in the City as of January 1, 2020:

- In 2020 over 82% of the parcels, but only about 42% of the acreage, in the City was assessed as residential. These totals do not include additional residential on the second floor of commercial buildings downtown or part of a home-based business on a parcel assessed commercial. Some apartment units and mobile home lots assessed commercial may also be “missing” from the residential numbers.
- Per the 2020 Assessment Report, about 84% of residential-assessed parcels are improved, leaving about 187 unimproved residential parcels, some of which would be available for infill over time. However, some of these parcels have development limitations or the current landowner is maintaining it as open space with no intent to sell. The existing land use map and table shows far fewer unimproved residential parcels.
- As reflected by the existing land use map, commercial parcels are a diverse mix of lot sizes, including many smaller parcels concentrated downtown and scattered larger lots along Highway 10.

# Land Use

- Manufacturing parcels and acreage has remained stable from 2010 to 2020 with just 3.5% of the City's acreage assessed as manufacturing.
- Agricultural and undeveloped lands, together, constitute about 15.5% of the community's total land base with forest and agricultural forest constituting another 18%, according to the 2020 DOR Assessment Report.

## 11.2 Supply, Demand, and Price Trends of Land

Several factors have influenced the way in which land use change and development has occurred in the City of Neillsville as well as Clark county. These factors are a combination of market/economic forces, public infrastructure, personal desires, and natural amenities (topography, vegetation, water resources). Most notably:

- **Demographic Trends** – As discussed in Section 3, the area's population is aging, which has implications for housing demand. Further, commuting times have been increasing, demonstrating that the workforce is willing to travel further to between their home, place of employment, retailers, and entertainment. Given such mobility, the quality of life offered in a community becomes an increasingly important factor when determining where a household chooses to live.
- **Economic Trends** – As the agricultural economy has changed over the past fifty years and the number of family farms significantly decreased, the economic functions of rural communities have also changed, especially impacting historic downtowns. As a result, the types of services available in small communities have changed, with retail often increasingly replaced by larger chain stores (e.g., Menards, Walmart) in larger communities. Increasing commuter-sheds and the emergence of e-Commerce have also impacted these economic trends. Since the late 1980s, the value of and price paid for land within the region has seen a steady increase. This increase is not expected to slow, except for minor dips related to the national economy.
- **Public Infrastructure** – Public infrastructure, especially transportation and water and sewer utilities network, contributes to the overall development pattern of the City as the network provides access to buildable land. In particular, Highway 10 has driven the development of a highway commercial district within the City of Neillsville.
- **Proximity** – Growth pressure from urban areas is expected to continue over the next 20 years, though likely at a slower pace compared to the 1990's and early 2000's.
- **Public Facilities** – The presence of certain industries or facilities can shape and influence land use change.
- **Natural Amenities** – The City of Neillsville is home to many outdoor recreational opportunities. Such natural features and open spaces make the community more attractive but, in some cases, can also pose barriers to development.

Two indicators of a dynamic economy and potentially changing land use patterns are land sales and prices. These two indicators show a demand to convert undeveloped or under-developed land to more intensive uses such as residential, commercial, or industrial. In turn, additional community services may be needed to support this change.

Table 12 allows a comparison of assessed acreage over time for some insights into land supply and demand trends. Assessment information can also help indicate land prices; however, this information

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has certain limitations due to assessment methods, timing, and whether a particular assessor has completely established current fair-market value comparables for a given community. The State of Wisconsin attempts to equalize values so communities whose assessments are in different years will have assessments that are fair. Eventually all assessments are supposed to reflect fully equalized, fair-market value of property.

The Great Recession and housing market collapse during the late 2000s are undoubtedly reflected in these numbers, especially for the residential and commercial parcels, given that Wisconsin generally lagged behind the Nation in its recovery. Throughout the region, many homes were foreclosed upon and some new homes sat empty for extended periods. Today, the housing market appears to be rebounding and is quite strong while affordability of housing is a challenge nationwide. The housing market was previously discussed further in Section 3.

## 11.3 Barriers to Development and Land Use Conflicts

Section 2.3 and previous elements of this plan identify various conditions and potential land use conflicts that may pose physical, infrastructure, or policy barriers to development within the City of Neillsville, including:

- As discussed in Section 3, there is unmet housing demand. Related, workforce availability with the skills desired by businesses and industry is an ongoing challenge in the region and a barrier to economic development.
- As discussed in Section 7, the surface waters and environmental sensitive areas are the most significant physical barrier to development in certain areas that must be considered when identifying growth areas and considering new development within the City. Map 11 in Section 7 identifies the environmentally sensitive areas within the City, including slope, areas of wetland, and 100-year floodplain area, which significantly reduce the acreage within the City available for development. In addition, an area previously platted on the City's northwest side has not developed to date in part due to the shallow depth to bedrock/
- As discussed in Section 9, there are a lack of lots available within the City for industrial development, including any large industrial or warehousing business.
- As discussed in Section 10, intergovernmental conflicts regarding annexation and growth have the potential to arise in the future.
- The City Plan Commission did not identify any specific regulatory or policy barriers that are restricting development within the community. Instead, the Plan Commission recognized that more could be done to market and encourage development opportunities.

The most significant barriers to development in the City of Neillsville are natural, rather than manmade. The Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources element identifies potential barriers to building site development within the City, including floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes. Such limitations do not halt development from occurring, but may suggest or require special action or expense for construction or to mitigate potential impacts (e.g., careful siting, no basement, sump pumps).

As discussed previously, most of the City could be classified as having productive agricultural soils. However, farmland preservation within the City limits is not a specific goal. No specific cultural features or sites were identified which would pose additional development barriers, though preserving historic

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buildings is important to the City. The City reviewed and considered these barriers to building site development when updating this land use element.

Utilities and community facilities can also pose development limitations, or be used to guide development. The status of the City's utilities and community facilities was discussed previously in the Utilities and Community Facilities element and no significant development barriers related to municipal utilities or services were identified, except that municipal utilities would need to be extended in some areas for development, such as the area northeast of the Cemetery. The City reviewed and considered public utilities and facilities when updating this land use element.

## 11.4 Opportunities for Infill or Redevelopment

The City Plan Commission and Economic Development Commission identified the following primary opportunities for infill, adaptive reuse, or redevelopment:

- Former hospital and Sunset Gardens Assisted Living Facility
- Former Neillsville Care & Rehabilitation Nursing Home near former hospital
- Former Russell's of Neillsville building on 8<sup>th</sup> Street
- Former Merchant Hotel at corner of USH 10 and 7<sup>th</sup> Street
- Former Gordy's grocery store on USH 10
- various downtown commercial vacancies
- scattered residential lots

## 11.5 Projected Land Use Supply and Demand

The use of land is the most important factor in managing the future growth of any community. Land use trends suggest what changes are occurring regarding type, location, and intensity of land uses over time. It is such changes that should be managed in a manner that is beneficial to the community and environment.

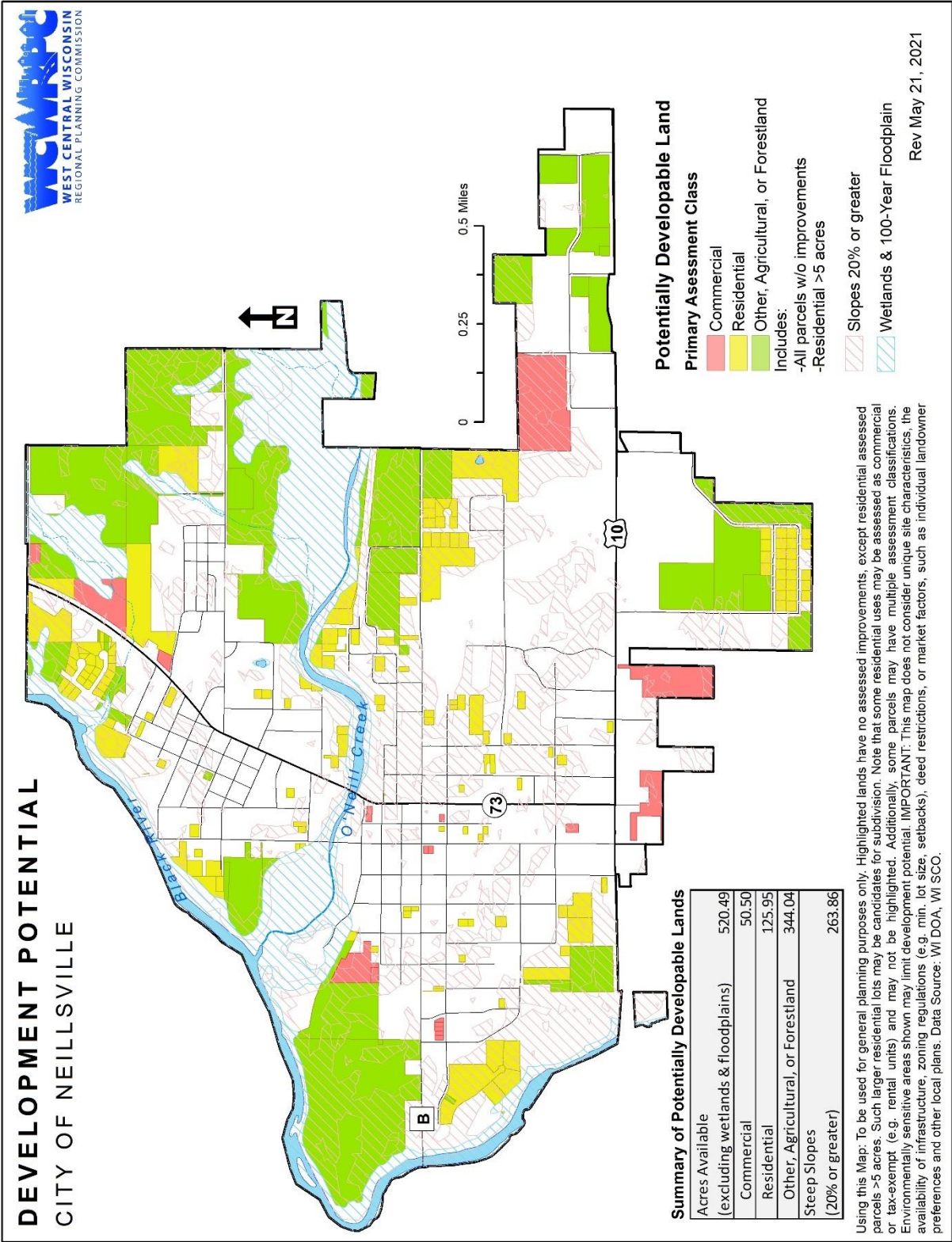
Map 16 was prepared to help assess potential development land within the City, including infill opportunities on residential-assessed parcels more than 5 acres in size. Keep in mind that in some cases a lot could be owned by an adjacent homeowner and used as part of their primary residence making it unavailable for building. Additionally, there may be other constraints, such as environmentally sensitive areas, development restrictions (i.e. conservation easement), landowner willingness to sell, or lack of infrastructure availability, that can make development of these parcels not feasible, at least in the foreseeable future.

That said, the data provides a starting point for the City to consider its available land supply. Based on this general analysis, there are about 520 acres within the City that are potentially developable. The actual available acreage is likely significantly lower due to market factors and environmental constraints.



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Map 16 City of Neillsville Development Potential





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Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law requires that the land use element of every comprehensive plan include 20-year projections, in 5-year increments of future residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial land uses for the community. Future land use activities and their resulting change to the landscape over the next 20-year period are difficult to predict. Changes in the local or national economy, natural disasters, and the overall change in year-round residents are some of the factors that can influence how land use activities may change in the future.

Table 13 below provides projections for the total acreage that will be utilized by residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural land uses through the year 2040 for the City of Neillsville. The population projections in the second column are based on the alternative low-growth projections prepared for the City in Table 2. The estimated housing units in the third column were taken from the estimates prepared in Table 7; see Section 3.2 for details and qualifiers of these projections. The 2020 acreage estimates in the first row are the same as estimates from the existing land use table and map in Section 11.1.

**Table 13 City of Neillsville Projected Land Use Demand, 2020 - 2040**

Year	Population	Renter/Owner Housing Units Needed	Residential (acres)	Commercial & Mixed Use (acres)	Industrial (acres)	Agriculture (acres)
2020	2,362	39-46 / 70-75	413	133	40	409
2025	2,394 (+32)	5 / 10	+48	+5	+200	-0
2030	2,426 (+32)	9 / 19	+6.5	+5	+0	-20
2035	2,458 (+32)	5 / 11	+3.5	+5	+10	-0
2040	2,490 (+32)	10 / 19	+6.7	+5	+0	-20
<b>Difference</b>	<b>+128</b>	<b>68-75 / 129-134</b>	<b>+64.7</b>	<b>+20</b>	<b>+210</b>	<b>-40</b>

The above is one picture of what may occur, and the future will largely be determined by population changes and the manner in which the City guides, attracts, and manages growth. Given this uncertainty, these projections should be used for general planning purposes only.

Opportunities for residential, commercial, and industrial infill and redevelopment exist within the City. Residential lots are available in a number of areas, including TID #3, though there will likely be increasing demand for multi-family housing and senior housing options. Commercial infill and redevelopment opportunities are available downtown and along USH 10. The City's industrial park has available lots for development, though the existing lots may not be adequate in size to meet need should a very large or transportation-heavy industry be proposed.

The following spatial assumptions were used to develop the land use projections in Table 13:

**Residential:** Section 3.2 included projections of needed rental and owner housing units through 2040 based on current "pent-up" demand, projected population growth, the desired mix of renter-to-owner units, projected household size, and other factors. While the 2020 residential acreage demand in the previous table reflects current residential acreage, it does not accommodate the 2020 housing units needed. To account for this, the 2025 residential acreage demand is based on the total 2020 and 2025 housing units needed, or a total of 44 - 51 rental units and 70-85 owner units. Based on past and anticipated residential densities the following additional assumptions were used to project residential land use:

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- Renter units – Projected rental acreage is based on an average of one rental unit per 0.2 acres, plus an additional 15% in acreage demand to accommodate infrastructure, common spaces, and market factors.
- Owner units – based on the housing projections an additional 70-75 owner units are needed by 2040. It is assumed that these will be developed as standard low-density residential lots of 0.4 acres, based on current residential development patterns within the City. An additional 15% in acreage demand is also included to accommodate infrastructure, common spaces, and market factors.

**Commercial:** From 2010 to 2020 the City saw a slight decrease in assess commercial acreage. Existing average commercial lot sizes does not offer good insight into future growth since many of the City's existing commercial parcels are smaller lots (e.g., downtown retail or services), while much of the future commercial demand is expected to be on larger parcels along Highway 10. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented some challenges for commercial users, but overall, it is expected that commercial development will increase over time within the community, especially if the City achieves its population growth goals.

The City has commercial vacancies in both downtown and Highway 10 (former Gordy's grocery store) that offer some commercial and adaptive reuse opportunities. Despite the slight decrease in commercial acreage over the last ten years, there are commercial growth opportunities especially along the Highway 10 corridor especially for specialty services and larger developments. It is likely that existing vacant sites may not accommodate the size needed by these users. For the growth assumptions in Table 13, the projections provide for an additional commercial demand of 5 acres every 5 years to accommodate additional commercial growth in the City. In comparison, the Super 8 hotel adjacent to Highway 10 is approximately 2.5 acres while Russel's (former Shopko) sits on a 4.5 acre site.

**Industrial:** Shown previously on the existing land use map are 8 parcels within the City used for industrial land uses on approximately 40 acres, or about a 5 acres average lot size. From 2010 to 2020, assessed manufacturing acreage within the City remained consistent with 9 parcels totaling 43 acres. Projecting industrial development is a challenge since such growth is often slow in smaller, rural communities and the land needs of different manufacturers can vary significantly. Economic development contacts within the region suggest that larger industrial or business park lots are often desirable when attracting new development – it is easier for developers to subdivide land as opposed to assembling parcels. When it relates to size, the bigger the better. The Chippewa County Business Park Feasibility Study completed in 2019 identified that "...having a shovel-ready site of over 200 acres could be a competitive advantage in this region." The growth assumptions in Table 13 suggest an additional 200 acres be provided for industrial uses; while the Neillsville Industrial Park has some sites available, it does not have room to accommodate a large industrial user. Additionally, the demand

# Land Use

projections assume an additional 5 acres will be needed every 10 years, which can likely be accommodated by the current vacancies within the Park.

**Agriculture:** Generally, agricultural lands within the City limits are likely to be developed over time as the private marketplace and development limitations allow. As more development occurs, agricultural acreage within the City will decrease.

Approximately 135 acres land currently used for agriculture are planned for future residential development. Two existing agricultural areas that are planned for future residential development include 1) approximately 50 acres on the far northeast corner of the City adjacent to Moonlite Road and 2) approximately 85 acres on the west side of the City along the River. It is anticipated that approximately 1/3 of this land area, or 40 acres, would be developed over the next 20 years to accommodate residential growth. This would provide additional residential opportunities beyond those that are available through existing platted residential lots and infill opportunities. It is estimated that these 40 acres could provide approximately 50 residential lots.

## **Land Use Trends and Outlook**

Changes in land use are not isolated. They are related to changes in population, housing, transportation, community services, agriculture, natural resources, and economic development. The following land use trends, largely unchanged from the City's 2013 Comprehensive Plan, are likely to impact the City of Neillsville, unless significant local action is taken to modify or address these trends:

### **Housing, Population, and Land Use**

- Overall, most of the Clark County population growth will continue to occur in towns while village and city populations are expected to stay relatively stable or even decrease in some incorporated communities. As discussed in Section 3, it is the City's goal to contradict this trend and grow its population.
- The number of persons per household will continue to decrease requiring more housing units and more land to accommodate the County's growing population.
- The County's river fronts, woodlands, and highland areas will be desired as residential and seasonal use building sites and subdivisions.

### **Transportation and Land Use**

- USH 10 will continue to be a significant force in attracting additional commercial development. A realignment of USH 10 in the Neillsville is not anticipated within the next 25 years. As the City's most travelled roadway, the USH 10 corridor is the City's predominant highway commercial area.
- Major highway intersections will continue to be targeted for commercial and industrial development.
- There is an increasing emphasis on walkable communities and multi-modal transportation connectivity.

# Land Use

## Community Services and Land Use

- County and local government administration of land use regulations will increase in response to a growing population and the need to provide this service at a lower cost and higher level of efficiency. Federal and state mandates and regulations will also continue to impact local services and utility requirements, though the exact nature of these changes is difficult to predict.
- Parks and outdoor recreation will continue to be an important part of local quality of life and tourism opportunity in Clark County.

## Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Land Use

- The sale of forested, open, and agricultural lands for conversion to private recreational use will continue.
- Agriculture will maintain a strong presence in Clark County. There will likely be a decreasing number of total farms, but increasing numbers of large farms. The demand for corn for feed and ethanol will continue to increase sale and rental prices for farmland and the conversion of some marginal lands to cropland.
- The Amish and Mennonite cultures will maintain a strong presence in Clark County and continue to keep small to medium size farms in productive use.

## Economic Development and Land Use

- The types of businesses and industry attracted to the County will continue to be agriculturally based or related, while Neillsville should maintain a strong manufacturing base.
- Residential and highway corridor development will continue in order to accommodate those who commute to employment centers in Wood, Marathon, Eau Claire, and Chippewa Counties.
- As many residents turn to highway commercial areas and larger regional commerce centers (e.g., Eau Claire, Wausau) for shopping and services, traditional downtown business districts will continue to struggle with issues of vacancies and physical building deterioration if concerted efforts are not made to find a long-term economic role/niche and to build upon opportunities that make downtowns unique, vibrant places and destinations.

## 11.6 Preferred Future Land Use Plan

The future land use map is one of the primary components of the comprehensive plan that should be used as a guide for local officials when considering future development within the community. Furthermore, developers and residents should understand the future land use map is intended to direct development to certain areas where facilities and services are available and where land uses are compatible with one another. As a decision-making tool, it is important that it be regarded as general in nature and should not be used for site-specific decisions. It is for this reason that only general locations for various land uses are shown on the map. The map is long-range and will need to be reevaluated periodically to ensure that it remains consistent with changing trends and conditions. The City should utilize this map when acting on zoning decisions, amendments to the City's zoning map, and for other land-use decision making. Concurrent review of Map 17 and the City's zoning map will ensure consistency between planning and zoning decisions. Zoning decisions must be consistent with the City's comprehensive plan.

# Land Use

It is important to remember that Map 17 is not a zoning map. The future land use map is a longer-term vision of how the City may develop, while zoning can be used to guide and phase growth in an incremental and efficient manner. Differences in definitions may also exist and compatible uses may be allowed within a zoning district (e.g., certain commercial may be allowed in industrial areas). In short, some differences between the preferred future land use plan map and the zoning map will exist, though the plan and zoning ordinance may still be deemed consistent.

The preferred future land use map has been developed based on the existing and future land use assumptions, a review of demographic and background data, trends in land use over the past several years, the efficient provision of municipal services, and the community's desires for future development as reflected by the vision, goals, and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan update. The City does not assume that all areas depicted on the FLUP map will develop during the next 20 years.

In comparing the future land use map to the previous land use projections, it must be remembered that many areas within the City have some development limitations, such as steep slopes and wetlands. Development potential would be further decreased by any needed streets, stormwater management facilities, neighborhood parks, etc. In addition, allowances and flexibility must be made for the market, which greatly influences land availability and demand; some landowners may be unwilling to sell, while available land characteristics may not meet all development needs. For such reasons, the acreages in the future land use map must meet or exceed the previous land use projections for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Map 11 in section 7.2 shows the environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) in the City. Functionally, the future land use map and ESA map should be used in tandem and the ESAs should be considered as an overlay of the future land use map. This approach will serve as a reminder that even though the map indicates an area may be designed for residential, commercial, etc., additional limitations to development can exist. Encroachment on ESAs should be avoided if possible, and development in some areas may require study prior to approval or special mitigation action to prevent or limit undesired impacts.

## **Land Use Classifications**

The following land use classifications are descriptions used to define areas within the City that are desired to generally be of consistent character, use, and identity as reflected in the preferred future land use map (Map 17). These are not zoning districts, though potentially related districts are noted.

### **Residential**

The RESIDENTIAL classification is designed to include existing and planned residential uses. Low-impact, home-based commercial activities and institutional uses (e.g., churches, schools, group homes, clinics) may be appropriate in these areas.

Planned residential expansions will primarily occur through new individual lots and smaller subdivisions, though opportunities for infill exist. Densities will be regulated by the City's zoning ordinance and consistent with the densities of the surrounding neighborhoods. Single-family residential neighborhoods should contain some form of buffering between the residences and incompatible land uses such as more intensive commercial or industrial development. Proposed multi-family development should include adequate greenspace, parking, service access, and refuse collection facilities.

*Potential Zoning Districts: R1 – One-Family Residential District, R2 – Two-Family Residential District, R3 – Multiple Family Residential District*



# Land Use

## Commercial

The COMMERCIAL classification is designed to include existing and planned general commercial development that is auto-oriented, involves large amounts of shipping, or is marketed to highway travelers. It also is designed to include existing and planned neighborhood commercial development that is more appropriate adjacent to residential areas. In addition, all commercial areas should be designed to be accessible by walking and biking.

*Potential Zoning Districts: CL – Local Commercial District, CG – General Commercial District, CH – Commercial Highway District*

## Mixed Use

The MIXED USE category includes a variety of housing units, types and densities along with neighborhood-scale retail businesses and offices, with a mixture of these uses within the same building. Downtown mixed use is typically vertical with commercial on the ground floor and residential above; structures are set close to the sidewalk with doors and windows facing the street. Outside of downtown, the mixed use may be more diverse in form and site layout and may include higher density residential, assisted living, and group homes that are compatible with the neighborhood context.

*Potential Zoning Districts: CG - General Commercial District, CH – Commercial Highway (by Conditional Use), Planned Unit Development (by Conditional Use)*

## Industrial

The INDUSTRIAL classification is designed to include existing and planned industrial development. The industrial classification allows uses such as indoor manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, and distribution. Planned industrial areas or parks subject to building and site design, landscaping, signage and outdoor storage provisions are encouraged. New industrial development should occur exclusively in the industrial classification. Industrial development could occur on a variety of lot sizes but should be concentrated whenever possible to minimize land use conflict. Proper access by industries to and from major traffic routes should be provided. Industrial development should also maintain adequate off-road employee parking, loading and unloading facilities. Where necessary, proper screening or buffering should be used to shield from adjacent non-industrial uses. Certain commercial uses (e.g., equipment sales and repair, office, research, self-storage buildings, public services) may also be appropriate for industrial areas, such as in the case of the Industrial Park.

*Potential Zoning Districts: IL – Light Industrial District, IG – General Industrial District*

## Institutional & Government

The INSTITUTIONAL classification is designed to accommodate the Correctional Institution.

*Potential Zoning District: R1 – One-Family Residential District, R2 – Two-Family Residential District*

## Agriculture, Forest, and Private Open Space

The AGRICULTURAL, FOREST, and PRIVATE OPEN SPACE classification is designed to accommodate agricultural and forest activities as well as private open space that may remain undeveloped due to environmental or other development constraints.

*Potential Zoning Districts: Conservancy District, Urban Transitional District*

## Park, Open Space & Outdoor Recreation

The PARK, OPEN SPACE & OUTDOOR RECREATION classification is designed to accommodate public park and outdoor recreational spaces.

*Potential Zoning District: Conservancy District*

# Land Use

## Preferred Future Land Use Map

The City of Neillsville's desired pattern of future land use is depicted by the arrangement of its previously described preferred land use classifications. These classifications have been mapped to identify areas of similar and preferred character, use, and density. The classification arrangement as shown on Map 17 establishes the City's vision and intent for future land use.

In an attempt to implement the City of Neillsville Preferred Land Use Map, the City should utilize Map 17 when acting on zoning decisions, amendments to the City's zoning map, and for other land-use decision making. The review of and the City's zoning map concurrently will ensure consistency between planning and zoning decisions. Zoning decisions must be consistent with the City's comprehensive plan.

**Table 14 City of Neillsville Preferred Future Land Use**

Land Use Classification	Acres
Residential	668
Commercial	167
Mixed-Use	9
Industrial	75
Institutional & Government	191
Agriculture, Forest, and Private Open Space	284
Park, Open Space & Outdoor Recreation	108
Golf Course	64
<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>1,566</b>

Comparing the above acreages to the previous projections in Table 13, it is important to remember that just because land is shown or designated as a preferred land use type, this does not require or guarantee that vacant or undeveloped land will be developed. A number of additional things are particularly notable:

- While the residential acreage in the future land use map is about 220 acres more than the 20-year projected need, this "cushion" may not be sufficient due to a number of factors:
  - 100% of the 668 acres is not developable due to environmental constraints such as those identified in Map 16 and Section 7.
  - About 235 of the 668 acres is concentrated in four areas—far west side north of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, north-northeast of the cemetery, the Boon subdivision on the south side, and a 21-acre parcel on the northwest side of the Industrial Park. It is not guaranteed that all of these areas will be available for development. And, should a new larger subdivision be proposed, there may be a need for a neighborhood park, stormwater management improvements, or other public infrastructure, which would reduce the residential acreage.
  - The preferred land use map includes many smaller, vacant lots that are theoretically available for infill, but in many cases the landowners may not be interested in selling (e.g., an empty lot adjacent to a landowner's home).

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- The preferred commercial acreage (167 acres) is only slightly more than the projected commercial acreage demand (154 acres). This allows a limited amount of market flexibility.
- The preferred land use map only shows 75 acres of available industrial land, which is significantly less than the 210 acres in the project demand table.

## **Potential Future Growth Areas**

The City projects that the existing developable land within the City will not fully meet projected market demands, especially for industrial development and potentially for residential and commercial growth. As such, some incorporation through a boundary agreement or annexation in the future is likely.

The potential growth areas on the preferred land use map (Map 17) generally show those areas in which such incorporation or annexation could best occur in an efficient and desirable fashion based on existing land use goals, growth trends, and infrastructure availability. The growth areas shown on the map are very generalized and do not represent firm boundaries and there is not an expectation that all growth areas will become part of the City and developed within the 20-year planning period. Further, the growth areas were identified without consultation with the landowners in these areas and are for generally planning purposes only; inclusion of the growth areas on the map are not an initiation of an annexation or boundary agreement.

The potential growth area to the west extends across the Black River and encompasses the new MMC-N Campus. In the past, the Black River was a physical barrier to new development. As noted in the 2020 ***Economic Impact Study for the planned Marshfield Medical Center-Neillsville Campus***, the new Campus does provide opportunities for the community with potential land use ramifications, including:

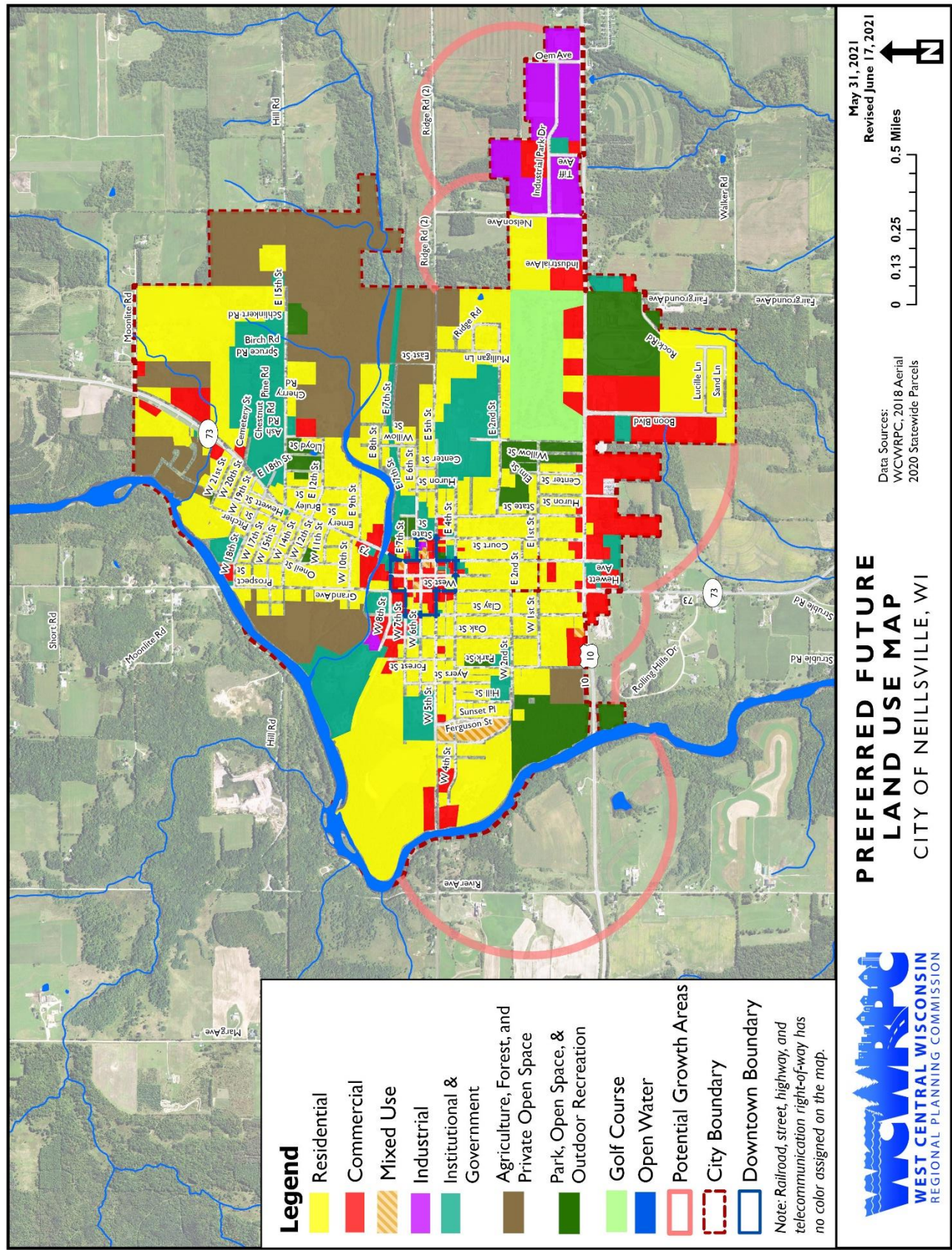
- The MMC-N Campus and available infrastructure makes this area more attractive for possible future development. (p. 52, 56 of the Study)
- The Campus also provides opportunities to strengthen community connectivity, enhance the U.S. Highway 10/River Road intersection as a community gateway, and enables to community to more fully embrace the Black River as a “river city”. (p. 58 of the Study)

The Study also discusses encouraging communication with the Town of Pine Valley to avoid potential land use conflicts (p. 55, 60 of the Study).



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Map 17 City of Neillsville Preferred Future Land Use Map





Land Use

Map 18 City of Neillsville Preferred Future Land Use Map - Downtown





# Land Use

## **Downtown Revitalization**

Downtowns present a key economic opportunity in economic development. Downtowns provide a head start for many communities planning for sensible growth. They use land efficiently and already have public infrastructure such as streets and utilities. Downtown densities also efficiently utilize infrastructure and improvements. Downtowns are by nature compact developments and provide many infill opportunities. They are “center focused” with a mixture of uses. Downtowns often have existing transportation options in place, such as sidewalks and bicycle access, and are typically pedestrian friendly. Finally, they convey the character and history of the community, celebrating the community’s unique sense of place. Consequently, keeping a downtown economically viable is often an important part of an economic strategy.

The benefits of investing in the downtown:

- People are interested in communities which have a variety of events and entertainment venues that make it a vibrant place.
- The vibrancy of the downtown draws new businesses and can be used by existing businesses to attract employees.
- The downtown can benefit from the economies of scale by providing a variety of businesses and services close to where people work.
- Existing buildings may provide a business incubator space for entrepreneurial businesses.
- Utilization and improvements downtown contribute to community pride and a sense of place.
- An active downtown keeps the money spent at the business circulating in the local economy.
- Utilization of downtown buildings keeps them on the tax rolls.
- Downtown Neillsville is vital to the community’s identity and sense-of-place.

Some tools to consider in promoting a vibrant downtown (low administrative costs):

- Generate and maintain a list of available properties.
- Provide a handout that addresses the steps for development (permits needed, etc.).
- Create an overlay zoning district with regulations specific to downtown development. Allow for vertical mixed use and other compatible planned development.
- Use an “A-Street” and “B-Street” approach to focus downtown land uses and streetscape efforts. An A-Street should have a continuous, uninterrupted, and attractive pedestrian appeal; this is your primary walkable, retail and service corridor. A B-Street is typically less intact and more auto-oriented and would include uses such as parking



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lots, repair shops, large discount retailers, etc. Linkages between A-Streets and B-Streets are still important.

- Create a handout that describes some of the main elements of how to make an infill or new project blend into the community – if enforcement is possible, make an ordinance with these elements.
- Create a handout available with the different resources available (i.e. WEDC, Wisconsin Small Business Development Center, UW-Madison Extension, National Trust for Historic Preservation, State of Wisconsin Historical Society).
- Create an identity or brand for the downtown or development area, then reinforce and market this brand.
- Recruit local volunteers to work on creating or administering tools.
- Partner with the local chamber of commerce, or Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau to maximize resources.

Additional potential revitalization tools:

- Write ordinances which include the elements for infill and new project design.
- Continue to utilize the historic preservation ordinance and committee.
- Apply for grants (CDBG) or tax credits (historic, affordable housing, economic development).
- Neillsville Improvement Corporation's efforts.
- Create a BID (Business Improvement District).
- Utilize a revolving loan fund.

## 11.7 Community Character and Design

“Community Character” is often used to describe the way a community or place looks, feels and functions. A community's character is a function of the relationship between the built environment, natural environment, and the people who live, work and play in a community.

Neillsville's character is unique and diverse, including its historic downtown, cultural events, and scenic natural features. As Neillsville continues to evolve, it is important to preserve and enhance the positive aspects of the community. A vision for community character and design can guide future development, creating functional, aesthetically appealing, and people-oriented places. Character and design are a key facet of placemaking, which is discussed at length in Section 9.

Several elements contribute to the creation of community character, including:

- Geographic Context – A key element to the character of Neillsville is its setting along the Black River. Preserving and enhancing this asset should be considered when undertaking development.

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- Architecture & form – Where possible, infill and new development within the downtown should complement and contribute to the City's character. This includes being sensitive to architectural themes, colors, roof pitches, styles, and other architectural elements.
- Connectivity – creating an interconnected transportation network that provides opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle activity is essential for a strong downtown core.
- Building location, size, and scale – consistent building setbacks and an attractive “public realm” that is at a pedestrian scale can help improve the downtown character.
- Streetscape – the use of public furnishings, including public art, landscaping, signage, benches, lighting, etc. can provide a sense of pride and public investment in a community and help unify the community image.
- Community Branding – How you implement your community brand through messaging, places, and behaviors can also influence your community character. Look for opportunity to placemake your brand. See the related discussion in Section 9.



To create and maintain a desired “character image” for Neillsville, the City may want to consider setting some basic standards related to these character design elements and review them through land use and site plan review.

Example Development Design Standards could include:

- Use of trees, shrubbery, greenery, or local, native species for landscaping and screening.
- Smaller-sized buildings instead of a large single big box store or mall complex.
- Smaller parking areas that are less visible from the main roadway and are “broken-up” through landscaping. Large parking areas and extensive hardscape between the main roadway and the commercial buildings should be avoided.
- More master planning and coordination in the planning or adjacent businesses with some cohesion in design, signage, and other site amenities (e.g., lighting, landscaping). However, a development where the majority of the buildings have too much uniformity and no individual character is not preferred.
- Quality architectural design reflecting a more traditional or natural aesthetic in character with the community. Building designs that are essentially “boxes”, such as pre-fabricated metal structures with straight-line or flat roofs, should be discouraged.



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- Site planning should carefully consider internal vehicle and pedestrian circulation systems, in addition to encouraging connections and linkages to adjacent properties and train systems.
- Site lighting and lighting of signage should be carefully planned. Glare and obtrusive light should be controlled and limited with dark sky friendly best practices encouraged.



Unlike the subdivision in this picture, the Plan Commission stated a preference that new residential subdivisions be more varied and walkable with a strong sense of place.

Such concepts can also be extended to new residential development, for which standards could be integrated into the subdivision ordinance.

Minor subdivisions and residential infill should be consistent and compatible with the existing neighborhood setting to the extent reasonably possible. For major residential subdivisions, the City Plan Commission desired that the new housing developments be attractive and well designed with a character that is distinctive and varied. Such new development should bring neighbors together in a neighborhood that is safe, inviting, and walkable with amenities for persons of all areas.

## 11.8 Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

**Goal:** *Provide for a compatible mix of land uses within the community in a manner that meets the housing, economic development, cultural, and other community goals of this plan.*

### Objectives

1. Focus new areas of growth within or near existing areas of development where adequate public facilities and services exist or are planned.
2. Identify preferred land use areas which contain areas of similar features and functions to avoid future land use conflicts.
3. Utilize the existing road network to accommodate most future development.
4. Maintain basic design standards to protect and promote the character of the City.



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5. Utilize buffering as a tool to separate incompatible land uses.
6. Ensure all land owners have equitable options for proposing land use change.
7. Analyze land use trends and potential land use conflicts that may impact development or redevelopment.
8. Promote efficient development and “urban infill” to the extent possible. That is, encourage future development in areas where urban services are already in place (with adequate capacity) or are planned for installation in the near future.
9. Encourage the clustering of commercial uses in existing and new shopping areas in order to maximize consumer convenience and enhance traffic safety and flow.
10. Preserve and protect land uses adjacent to existing community parks and playgrounds.

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the City is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the City can use to aid in making land use decisions.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

## Policies

1. Residential development should be allowed only in those areas designated for residential development on the Neillsville Preferred Future Land Use Plan Map (Map 17), with the possible exception of the downtown commercial district if it is compatible with and fosters the City’s downtown revitalization and land use goals and objectives.
2. The City Zoning Ordinance shall provide for a variety of housing types, including single family, duplex, multiple family, and manufactured homes.
3. New residential development shall have adequate public utilities and improved streets, sidewalks, and curb and gutter at a cost to the developer/subdivider.
4. Subdivision regulations shall be maintained and enforced to insure that public utilities, streets, sidewalks, curbs, and gutter are constructed to specific standards at a cost to the developer/subdivider.
5. Residential neighborhoods should have some form of buffering between residences and conflicting or incompatible land uses such as commercial or industrial businesses.
6. Proposed commercial and industrial development in the community should be evaluated in terms of economic, fiscal, and environmental impacts. Developments which display projects costs in excess of benefits, either economically or environmentally, shall be discouraged.
7. Future commercial and industrial development shall occur in those areas designated commercial and industrial, respectively, by the preferred future land use plan map.

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8. Encourage housing development within and nearby the downtown district, but carefully consider the potential, cumulative long-term impacts when siting or permitting re-use. Maintain physical connections and linkages between downtown businesses which promote pedestrian travel and generally discourage the adaptive re-use of first floor commercial structures downtown to non-commercial uses.
9. Strive to retain historical buildings in Neillsville's downtown district when feasible. Encourage use of the design guidelines found in *Downtowns of Clark County* for renovation, rehabilitation, and infill projects. Continue to administer and enforce the City's historic preservation ordinance.
10. The number of access points to commercial uses from major roads shall be minimized.
11. Spot commercial zoning should be discouraged so that the commercial districts, as designated by the Preferred Land Use Map, are utilized to their fullest potential.
12. Variances should only be granted for applications that meet the following standards, as provided under Wisconsin statute and case law: 1) unnecessary hardship that is not self-created; 2) due to conditions unique to the property; and 3) no harm to public interests.
13. Each governmental and institutional land development proposal shall be studied individually, recognizing the specific function associated with each type, to insure that it will be compatible with surrounding land uses.
14. Vacant land parcels that have access to a full range of public facilities, or could be economically provided with such facilities, shall be given first priority when urban development is considered. Second priority areas to be considered for development would involve vacant land that has been targeted for development or where public monies have been invested.
15. Land development shall occur in an orderly procedure, according to a systematic plan to meet the needs of the City and its residents in the most economical and efficient manner.
16. The City of Neillsville will support retaining the courthouse as a center of activity in the City.
17. The City of Neillsville will identify appropriate areas for expanding residential areas of the City with every comprehensive plan update.
18. Encourage development within the City's tax incremental financing districts which is consistent or compatible with the projected development identified in each TID's project plan. Areas zoned for industrial use within a TID must remain zoned for industrial use for the life of the TID.



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19. Infill and new development shall consider the context of their surroundings and should generally be consistent and compatible in use and design with existing, neighboring development.



## Recommendations

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the City's policies, and therefore will help the City fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

1. Review and amend the City zoning ordinance and zoning map to be consistent with the Preferred Future Land Use Map (Map 17) to ensure land use compatibility, to guide and manage growth, and to provide adequate land for housing, commercial, and industrial development. In particular, the land use projections in this plan element suggest a need for additional residential and industrial lands. (short-term)
2. The City should continue to exercise its extraterritorial plat review authority to protect its borders from unplanned development and encourage an efficient development pattern, especially within potential growth areas. (ongoing)
3. Review zoning and subdivision regulations to explore and potentially codify use and design standards for existing and planned residential and commercial development as suggested in the housing, economic development, and land use elements. (short-term)
4. As needed, review and update the zoning ordinance for consistency with any State legislative or case law changes, in particular regarding conditional use permit standards/process, substandard parcels, and shoreland/wetland zoning. (as needed)
5. Consider adoption of an official map to designate precise right-of-way lines for potential future streets as well as site boundaries for other qualifying public uses, if known. (short-term)
6. As needed, update any sign regulations for consistency with recent case law, most notably *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* (2015) for content neutrality. (short-term; ongoing)
7. Support continued enforcement of the City of Neillsville land-use and building regulations, including the enforcement of building maintenance and increased educational efforts on



## Land Use

adopted regulations for residents, community officials, and the business community. (ongoing/as needed)

8. As recommended in the Intergovernmental Cooperation element, approach the Town of Pine Valley to engage in a discussion on the potential adoption of a cooperative boundary agreement to allow for industrial park expansion and address other potential growth areas. Consider inquiries from landowners who approach the City with annexation requests, especially for growth areas identified in this plan element. (short-term; ongoing)



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## 11.9 Current Land Use Plans, Programs, and Regulations

Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001 states that beginning on January 1, 2010, if a local governmental unit enacts or amends any of the following ordinances, those ordinances shall be consistent with (i.e., furthers and not contradicts) the objectives, goals, and policies of that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan: official mapping, zoning, subdivision regulations, shoreland zoning or shoreland-wetland zoning.

While the Comprehensive Plan is adopted by ordinance, it provides guidance for decision-making and is not a regulation. Overall, zoning ordinances and other land use regulations should be based on a land use or comprehensive plan in order to be effective and protect the public interest, while encouraging consistent, informed decision-making in a manner that is not arbitrary. The development of a comprehensive plan for the City of Neillsville provides the Plan Commission with a document upon which the community has provided input and stated desires regarding future land use decisions for the community.

### Current City Zoning Districts

The City's Zoning Ordinance (see Chapter 10 Land Use Regulations), provides for the following districts:

R-1	Single-Family Residential
R-2	Two-Family Residential
R-3	Multiple Family Residential
CL	Local Commercial
CG	General Commercial
CH	Commercial Highway
IL	Light Industrial
IG	General Industrial
	Conservancy
	Urban Transitional

The City's Code of Ordinances is available online with a link at <https://neillsville-wi.com/ordinances/> and include City regulations on subjects such as:

- public safety, finance, and government
- streets and sidewalks
- public utilities, including municipal sewer and water
- various offenses and public nuisances
- building code, minimum housing code, and fair housing code
- parks and recreation
- zoning code, including floodplain zoning and shoreland-wetland zoning
- subdivision and platting regulations

# 12. IMPLEMENTATION

# Implementation

## 12. Implementation

This element provides guidance for implementing and realizing the plan vision, goals, and objectives described in the previous chapters. As change is inevitable, the Comprehensive Plan must also be a “living,” dynamic document that considers or allows for change in the community; the plan may need to be amended to appropriately reflect such changing issues, opportunities, needs, trends, or shared goals.

### 12.1 Action Plan

The City of Neillsville’s Comprehensive Plan is intended to help guide land use, policy, and programmatic decisions within the City. The plan is an expression of the City’s wishes and desires and provides a series of policies and recommendations for assisting the community in attaining its visions, goals, and objectives. The plan is not an attempt to predict the future, but rather an attempt to document the community’s values and philosophies that citizens of the City of Neillsville share.

This section does not identify a timeline of programs and specific action to be completed. Instead, suggested timelines for implementation are included with the action-oriented recommendations in Sections 3 through 11. For example, the housing, transportation, and land use elements include recommended actions regarding zoning, subdivision regulations, and official mapping, rather than repeating these recommendations and tools here.

Typically, each recommendation has been assigned one or more of the following suggested timelines:

- **short-term** (1-5 year action)
- **ongoing/as needed** (supports continuing the program or action on an ongoing or as needed basis)
- **unassigned** (no suggested timeline suggests that this may be a long-term action or requires further research)

The following elements have additional suggested timelines:

- Sections 4 and 5 identify short-term and long-term street improvement, utility, and community facility/services projects and actions.
- Section 6 includes a more detailed action plan for outdoor recreational improvements.

#### Plan Commission Powers & Duties

- ♦ in general, promote comprehensive planning in the City
- ♦ prepare and recommend to the City Council the Comprehensive Plan and ordinances & programs to implement the Plan (and any amendments)
- ♦ hold hearings and make administrative determinations, if delegated by ordinance
- ♦ review referred proposals for recommendation to the City Council

#### Referrals to Plan Commission

By statute, the City Council must refer the following to the Plan Commission for recommendation:

- location and architectural design of any public building
- location of any statue or memorial
- location, alteration, abandonment, sale, acquisition, or lease of land for parks, streets, airports, parking, or other public grounds
- location, extension, abandonment, or authorization for any public utility
- all subdivision plats for which the City has jurisdiction
- location, character & extent or acquisition, lease, or sale of lands for public or semipublic housing, slum clearance, relief of congestion, or vacation camps for children.
- proposed ordinances, amendments, or appeals of any ordinance pursuant to section 62.23 of State Statutes (e.g., zoning, official mapping) and land divisions
- other matters as specified by State statute (e.g., proposed business improvement districts, group homes)

# Implementation

These timelines suggest potential priorities, but may be subject to available resources. Potential resources or partners are often included in the policy recommendation and may also be identified in Appendix E. Some policies may require exploration or additional feasibility study, which may result in additional longer-term actions or ongoing decision-making guidance in the future. Prior to implementation, the City will consider and reassess each action item to further determine if the plan recommendation is still in the best interests of the community. Changing conditions in the community as well as Federal or State policy may necessitate an addition or modification to the implementation approach or timelines.

The responsibility for implementation of the action plan may be delegated at the discretion of the City Council. In addition, State statutes require Plan Commission review and recommendation on a range of activities prior to City Board approval or adoption (*see box on previous page*). Some policy recommendations noted in the plan may also be initiated by City staff, community members, or other partners; it is a community plan.

The Neillsville Plan Commission, City Council, and citizens in reviewing all proposals pertaining to development in the City of Neillsville should utilize the Comprehensive Plan. Proposals should be examined to determine whether they are consistent with community wishes and desires as expressed in the plan as a whole. As part of the review, consideration of the plan is necessary with particular attention given to the goals, objectives, and policies. Where the impact of a proposed development is minimal, the evaluation may simply be a determination of whether or not the plan provides relevant direction and whether the requested action is in conformance with the plan. Development proposals with significant potential impacts will require a more detailed analysis in order to determine consistency.

## 12.2 Community Engagement, Public Participation, and Civil Discourse

Citizens and local officials should be made aware of the vision and goals of the community as expressed in the comprehensive plan. By having a shared vision and continuing to reinforce this vision through speech and action, community leaders and City staff can demonstrate unity, rather than reinforcing perceptions of an adversarial government. While there may be differences in how a policy is interpreted or a program implemented, keeping in mind that the community is working together towards a shared vision and goals can help foster civil discourse. Likewise, it is important that public outreach, engagement, and discussion occurs in a civil manner that is open, inviting, and equitable to all residents.

Just as citizen involvement is an important step required throughout the planning process, it is also an essential implementation tool, fosters transparency in government, and can help prevent rumors or mistrust. The more participation, the more ownership among residents and businesses that the plan or any implementation tool will likely receive. However, this can require more effort than a public hearing required before an ordinance can be adopted. This begins by keeping residents informed through the City's website, social media, news releases, etc.

A number of the plan elements include recommendations regarding volunteerism and community engagement, in particular the Historic & Cultural Resources element and the placemaking discussion in the Economic Development element. There are more intensive civic governance models and training programs available should the City wish to obtain assistance in nurturing an informed, empowered, and active citizenry. Training workshops are also available for elected officials and community leaders in civil discourse, conducting meetings, and public engagement techniques. Some municipalities have adopted civility guidelines or rules of conduct for meetings and elected officials.



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## 12.3 Plan Integration and Consistency

The City of Neillsville Comprehensive Plan has an important role as a guide and determinant for future action and policy decision in the community. All development proposals and capital expenditures should be reviewed against the conclusions, vision, goals, and policies of the Plan for consistency. When the City is requested to comment on proposed policy changes at a county, regional, State or Federal level, the Plan can provide important guidance to City officials. To promote consistency across jurisdictional boundaries, the City of Neillsville encourages early dialog between all adjoining and overlapping jurisdictions (towns and counties) as they develop or revise their comprehensive plans and ordinances. Where inconsistencies are identified and a resolution cannot be reached, future actions can be developed to bring the parties together to address their concerns.

The elements of this Comprehensive Plan are also internally consistent. As a result of the Comprehensive Plan being developed in a coordinated and simultaneous effort, the planning process has ensured that the development and review of each element is consistent with the others; and based on that analysis, there are no known inconsistencies between the planning elements. There is much overlap in issues and policy between many of the elements. A review of all Plan data, analysis and conclusions, and of Plan goals and policies has been performed to ensure consistency. As the Plan developed, major consistent themes emerged which moved the Plan toward consistent conclusions and compatible approaches to solving identified problems among the elements. Any future plan amendments should be evaluated for consistency with the overall Comprehensive Plan.

## 12.4 Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

Any plan is subject to the passage of time possibly making its policies and recommendations obsolete. The City of Neillsville Plan Commission is responsible for monitoring changing conditions and plan implementation to evaluate progress and whether a plan amendment or update is needed. The Plan Commission will conduct a Comprehensive Plan Annual Review as described in the text box on the following page. The Plan Commission will report its findings of each annual review to the City Council.

## 12.5 Plan Amendments and Updates

Evaluating the Comprehensive Plan is an ongoing process and will, at some time, lead to the realization that the plan requires updating and amendments. Plan amendments are typically relatively minor changes or additions to plan maps or text as deemed necessary and appropriate, often involving a limited geographic area or to address a single issue, policy, or program. Plan amendments can occur without needing to update all data, maps, service descriptions, etc., as long as the Comprehensive Plan remains internally consistent.

Plan updates are typically a more substantial re-write of the text involving major revisions to multiple plan sections, including updating of plan goals, data, tables, services, and maps. A plan amendment can be completed in a matter of months compared to a plan update that often requires a year or more. State Comprehensive Planning Law requires that a comprehensive plan be updated at least every ten years.

The time that elapses between the completion of the plan and the need to amend the plan depend greatly on evolving issues, trends, and land use conditions. Plan amendments are typically triggered

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by City Council request, plan monitoring/evaluation by the Plan Commission, or a proposed land use change by a petitioner. Frequent plan amendments and updates should be avoided.

Prior to a plan amendment, a proposed project should be evaluated for consistency with the City of Neillsville Comprehensive Plan as a whole as well as other pertinent community plans. The proposal should not contradict the objectives, goals, and policies of the plan, or else additional plan changes must be considered. There should be a clear public need for the proposed change or that unanticipated circumstances have resulted in a need for the change. The proposed change should also not result in substantial adverse impacts to the community, nearby properties, or the character of the area. The City may require the petitioner(s) to prepare reports or fund other studies prior to a decision on amending the Comprehensive Plan.

Statutorily, plan amendments and plan updates have the same minimum public participation and adoption requirements, though updates often involve greater opportunities of public input at the discretion of the community. To ensure residents are involved in plan amendments, the following process and protocol should be followed to allow public involvement and comment. The City of Neillsville Plan Commission shall undertake a review of the plan and shall consider necessary amendment(s) to the plan resulting from property owner requests, changes to social and economic conditions, new opportunities, or unanticipated conflicts. Upon the Plan Commission review, recommended changes to the plan shall be forwarded to the City Council. The City of Neillsville City Council shall call a public hearing to afford property owners time to review and comment on recommended plan changes. A public hearing shall be advertised in accordance with the City's public meeting notice procedures. Based on public input, Plan Commission recommendations, and other facts, the City Council will then formally act on the recommended amendment(s).

## **The Comprehensive Plan as an effective management and decision-making tool.**

The following plan monitoring process is recommended to encourage implementation of this Plan, track progress, and promote consistency in decision-making.

Each fall, the Plan Commission will perform an annual review of the plan that includes:

- an opportunity for public comment;
- track progress on actionable plan recommendations and identify any related resource needs;
- evaluate consistency of any recent trends or decisions with the plan's vision and goals and the future land use map;
- identify and make recommendations regarding any conflicts or emerging trends that may be inconsistent with the plan vision, goals, policies, and future land use map;
- determine if a plan amendment or update is needed; and,
- provide a brief report on progress, key findings, and any recommended actions to the City Council for consideration.

The City may desire to create a tracking form or other reporting format to consistently monitor plan progress over time. This approach could potentially be expanded to include the recommendations of other City plans.

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## 12.6 Implementation Goals, Policies, and Objectives

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

***Goal: Require consistency between and integration of the comprehensive plan recommendations and local ordinances.***

### **Objectives**

1. Require that administration, enforcement and implementation of land use regulations are consistent with the City's comprehensive plan.
2. Conduct reviews of the comprehensive plan for consistency with the goals, objectives, maps, policies and programs contained within and amend as appropriate.
3. The City Plan Commission shall regularly review the performance of the comprehensive plan and its implementation.

### **Policies**

1. The comprehensive plan shall be updated every 10 years, but may be amended more frequently if needed.
2. The City of Neillsville shall update its zoning and subdivision code to promote appropriate and cost effective patterns of development.
3. The comprehensive plan developed by the City of Neillsville, unique to the City of Neillsville, shall be implemented by the City of Neillsville, and may not be amended or removed except by action of the City of Neillsville.
4. Prior to implementation, the policies and recommendations in this plan should be evaluated for consistency and potential conflicts with other City goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations.
5. Use partnerships and planning to leverage resources and maximize grant funding opportunities.
6. Continue to use the Clark County Press and other local media to keep residents informed and actively involved in City planning and activities. Look for opportunities to involve residents in plan implementation and progress evaluation.
7. The Comprehensive Plan is a plan for the entire community. While the Plan Commission has a certain statutory relationship to the Comprehensive Plan, it is not the expectation that the Plan Commission is responsible for implementing all policies and recommendations in the Plan; plan implementation requires support and partnerships from throughout the community.

# Implementation

## Recommendations

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the City should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the City's policies, and therefore will help the City fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

1. Implement those policies and recommendations found in the other elements of the City of Neillsville Year 2033 Comprehensive Plan as resources and priorities allow. (ongoing)
2. Key City staff and officials should sign-up for or maintain participation in the e-mail lists, grant announcements, and other informational networks of partner and resource organizations, such as United Communities of Clark County and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. (ongoing)
3. The City Council and Plan Commission supports providing educational opportunities to elected officials, City staff, community leaders, interested volunteers, and the details of this Comprehensive Plan and progress in its implementation, including the orientation of new Council members to the plan. (ongoing/as needed)

## Appendix A

## Appendix A: Public Participation Plan

RESOLUTION NO. 609**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES FOR THE  
UPDATE OF THE CITY OF NEILLSVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**WHEREAS,** the City of Neillsville has decided to update its comprehensive plan under the authority and procedures of §62.23 (3) and §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes; and

**WHEREAS,** §66.1001 (4) (a), Wisconsin Statutes, requires that the governing body of the local governmental unit adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation at every stage of comprehensive plan preparation, and that such written procedures provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended comprehensive elements, an opportunity for the public to submit written comments on the comprehensive plan, and a process for the local governing body to respond to such comments; and

**WHEREAS,** the agreement between the City of Neillsville and its hired planning consultant is consistent with and furthers the mechanisms identified within the *Public Participation Procedures for the City of Neillsville Comprehensive Plan Update* to foster public participation, ensure wide distribution of draft plan materials, and provide opportunities for written comments on draft plan materials; and

**WHEREAS,** the City of Neillsville believes that regular, meaningful public involvement in the plan development process is important to assure that the resulting plan meets the wishes and expectations of the public.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the City Council of the City of Neillsville hereby ordain and resolve as follows: to approve the written procedures included in *Public Participation Procedures for the City of Neillsville Comprehensive Plan Update* as its public participation procedures meeting the requirements of §66.1001 (4) (a), Wisconsin Statutes.

Dated this 9th day of February, 2021.



Diane L. Murphy  
Diane L. Murphy, Mayor

Rex R. Roehl  
Rex R. Roehl, Clerk



# Appendix A

## Public Participation Procedures for the City of Neillsville Comprehensive Plan Update

### INTRODUCTION

§66.1001 (4) (a), Wisconsin Statutes, requires that the governing body of the local governmental unit adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, at every stage of comprehensive plan preparation, and that such written procedures provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended comprehensive elements, an opportunity for the public to submit written comments on the comprehensive plan, and a process for the local governing body to respond to such comments.

The City of Neillsville City Council recognizes the need for an open and active public participation process to foster a strong community commitment to the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan to guide the community's future growth and development. To ensure that the public has an opportunity to be involved in every stage of the update of the Comprehensive Plan, the City identifies the following actions to promote an active public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing the plan.

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

- The City has a duly appointed Plan Commission pursuant with §66.23 (1) and/or §60.62 (4), Wisconsin Statutes. The City has also duly appointed an Economic Development Commission and intends that the working meetings for the update of the Comprehensive Plan be joint meetings of the Plan Commission and the Economic Development Commission in order to foster greater input and coordination into the Plan's update.
- All meetings of the governing body of the local governmental unit (City Council) are open to the public and are officially posted to notify the public as required by law.
- All Plan Commission and Economic Development Commission meetings (singularly or held jointly) regarding the update of the Comprehensive Plan will be open to the public and officially posted to notify the public as required by law. Opportunities for public comment will be provided during the plan update meetings.
- As part of the plan update, the results of the December 2012 public opinion survey will be considered and discussed. This survey was completed as part of the City's 2013 Comprehensive Plan update.
- The City Council will receive periodic reports from the Plan Commission during the update of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Prior to the required public hearing, the governmental units of adjacent or overlapping jurisdiction will be notified of the community's undertaking of the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan and their input sought on intergovernmental issues and cooperation.
- Draft copies of the Comprehensive Plan will be available at City Hall, on the City website, and at the Neillsville Public Library during regular hours for the public to review.
- A joint Plan Commission and City Council Public Hearing will be conducted on the recommended Comprehensive Plan update prior to Plan Commission recommendation and the governing body enacting the plan by ordinance. The Public Hearing will be preceded by Class 1 notice under Chapter 985, Wisconsin Statutes, published at least 30 days before the hearing is held. Additional notice will be provided to non-metallic mining interests pursuant to §66.1001 (4) (e), Wisconsin Statutes. The public will be invited to comment and submit written comments.
- The City Council will consider and respond to written comments regarding the plan update before enacting it by ordinance.
- The adopted Comprehensive Plan update will be distributed to:
  1. Every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the local governmental unit.
  2. The clerk of every local governmental unit that is adjacent to the local governmental unit which is the subject of the plan.
  3. The Wisconsin Department of Administration on behalf of the Wisconsin Land Council
  5. The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.
  6. The Neillsville Public Library.
- The City Plan Commission, with City Council approval, may implement additional public participation activities as deemed appropriate, practicable, and needed.

# Appendix B

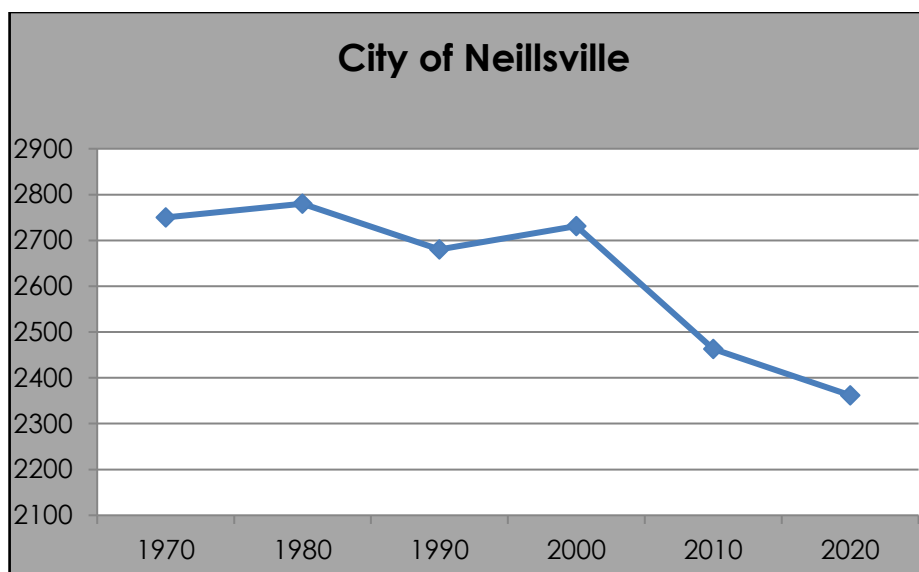
## Appendix B: Background Information and Data

This section highlights some of the key background information and data used by the City of Neillsville Plan Commission during the update of the City's comprehensive plan. Additional data, forecasts/projections, and related discussion can be found in the plan text.

### Population and Demographics

**2020 WDOA Official Population Estimate:** 2,362 residents

#### City of Neillsville Population Change, 1970 – 2020



City officials were unable to identify a specific reason for the 9.8% population decrease from 2000 to 2010, except, perhaps, closures at Sunburst and in manufacturing. This drop has driven estimates and projections for the City's population since 2010.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1970 – 2010; Wisconsin DOA Estimate for 2020

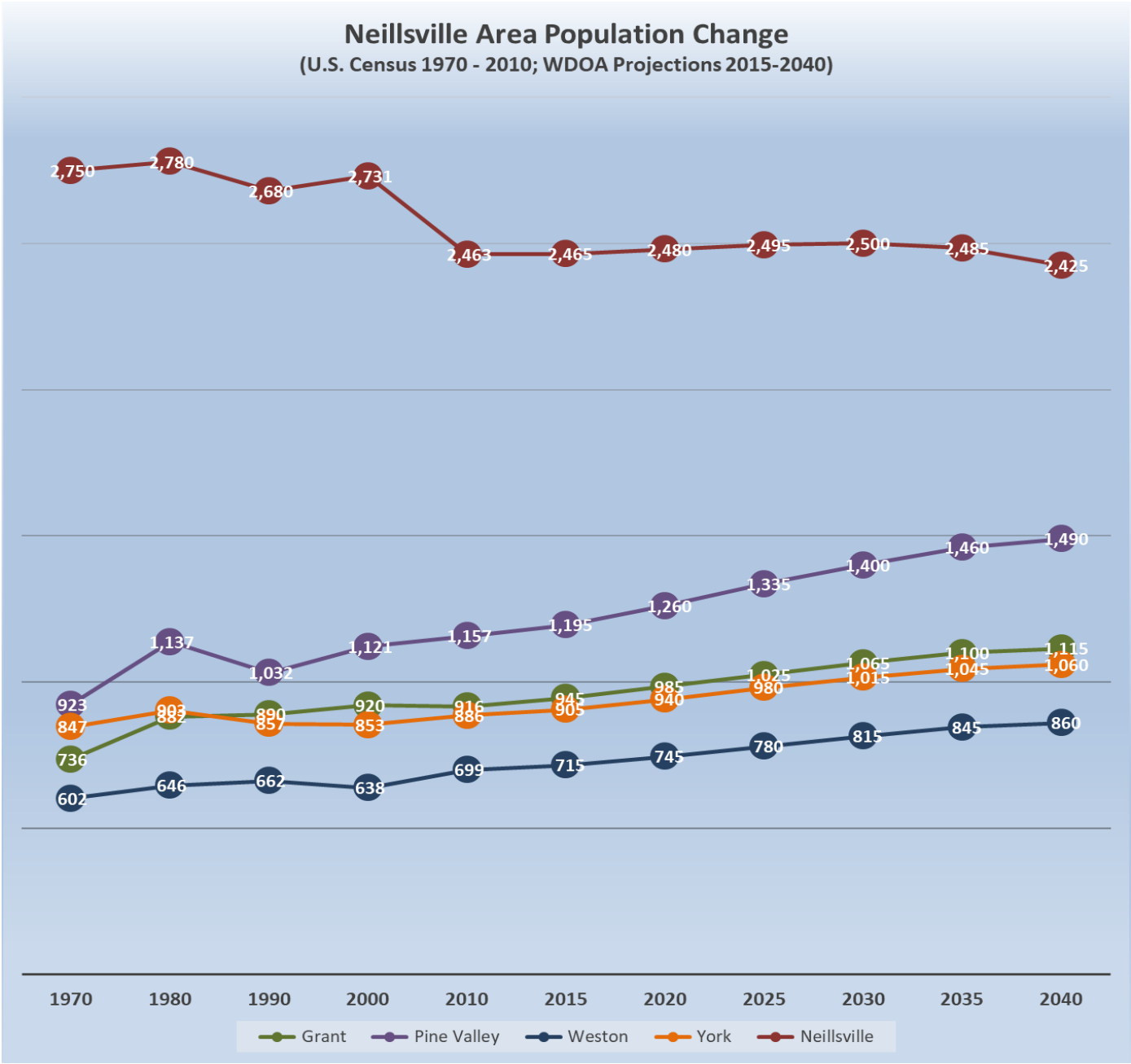
#### Population by Age, City of Neillsville, 2000, 2010, & 2019

Age (years)	2000		2010		2019		% Change 2000-2019
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	
Under 5	158	5.8	143	5.8	140	6.0	-11.4
5 to 19	606	22.2	465	18.9	297	12.8	-51.0
20 to 44	778	28.5	664	27.0	593	25.5	-23.8
45 to 64	512	18.7	608	24.7	718	30.9	40.2
65+	677	24.8	583	23.7	575	24.8	-15.1
Total	2,731		2,463		2,323		-14.9
Median Age	40.3 (County – 35.9)		43.6 (County – 37.2)		49.9 (County – 37.4)		9.6 years

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 & 2010, American Community Survey 2015-2019

Appendix B

Population Estimates & Projections for the Neillsville Area, 1970-2020



Note: Recent estimates for all of the above have lagged behind the WDOA projections prepared in 2013.

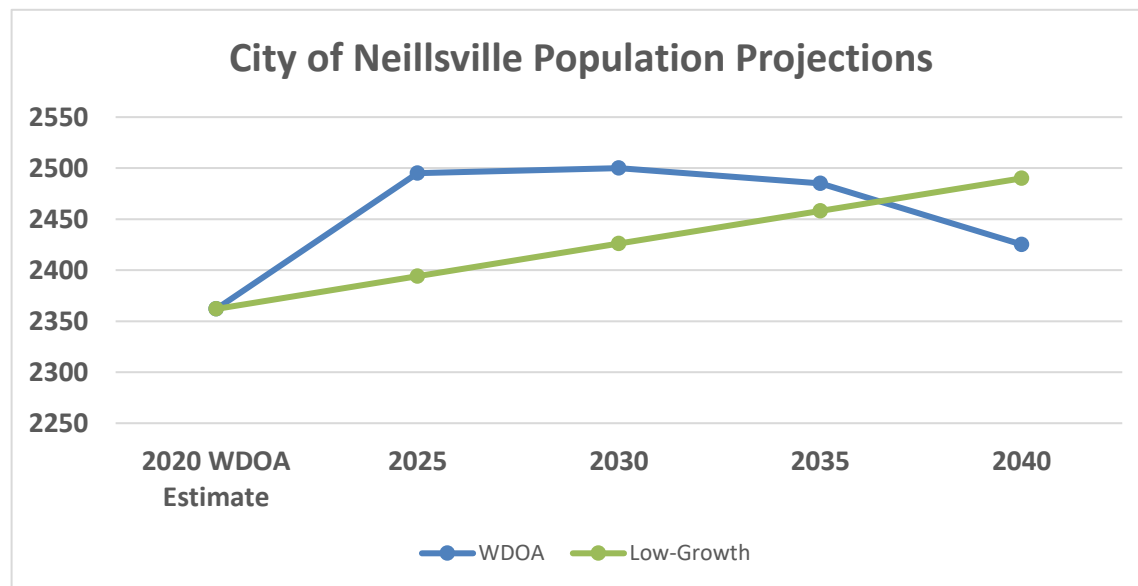
	2018 WDOA Est.
Grant	937
Pine Valley	1,172
Weston	699
York	876
Neillsville	2,399

# Appendix B

## Population Estimates & Projections for the City of Neillsville, 2000-2045

	2000 Census	2010 Census	2015 Proj.	2020 Est.	2020 Proj.	2025 Proj.	2030 Proj.	2035 Proj.	2040 Proj.	2045 Proj.	2020 Est. - 2040 change
<b>WisDOA Population Projections (2015-2040)</b>											
Total Population	2,731	2,463	2,465	2,362	2,480	2,495	2,500	2,485	2,425		
Population Change		-268	-2		+15	+15	+5	-15	-60		-38
% Population Change		-9.8	+0.08		+0.61	+0.60	+0.20	-0.60	-2.41		-1.54
<b>Alternative Low-Growth Population Projections (2025-2045)<sup>4</sup></b>											
Total Population				2,362		2,394	2,426	2,458	2,490	2,520	
Population Change						+32	+32	+32	+32	+30	+158
% Population Change											

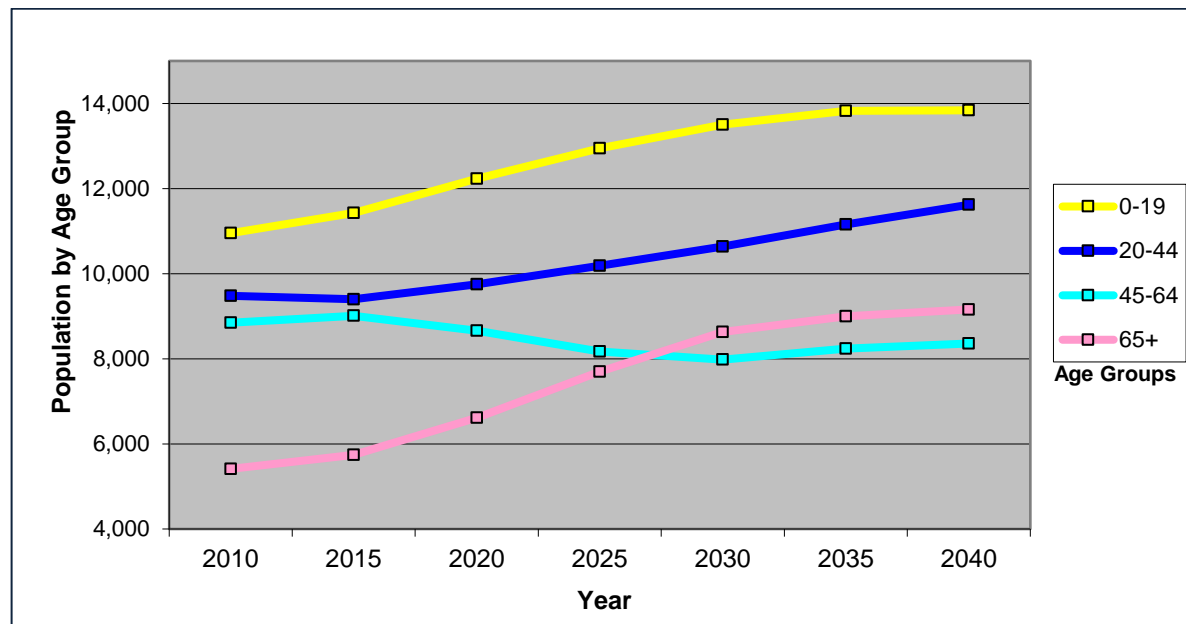
Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Final Municipal Population Projections, 2013, WCWRPC Alternative Projections



<sup>4</sup> As will be shown later, nearly 1,900 workers commute to the City for their primary job but live elsewhere, perhaps in part due to the City's tight housing market. The Alternative Low-Growth Projection assumes the City attracts just 4% of this current workforce (75 workers) and their families (2.1 persons per household) distributed evenly between 2020 to 2045.

## Appendix B

### WisDOA Population Projections, Clark County, 2010-2040



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Final Population Projections, 2014

## Education, Income, and Employment

### Educational Attainment of Persons Age 25 & Older City of Neillsville, 2019

Attainment Level	Number	Percent of Total
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	59	3.3
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade to 12 Grade, No Diploma	130	7.2
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	732	40.4
Some College, No Degree	368	20.3
Associate Degree	214	11.8
Bachelor's Degree	201	11.1
Graduate or Professional Degree	107	5.9
<b>TOTAL PERSONS 25 AND OVER</b>	<b>1,811</b>	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

- Educational attainment of City residents has been improving with 89.5 percent of residents over 25 years of age in 2019 (ACS 5-year estimates<sup>5</sup>) having at least attained a high school diploma as compared to 83.4 percent in 2010 and 76.8 percent in 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Many of the 2019 economic estimates are based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates which can have fairly significant margins of error.



## Appendix B

### Median Household Income, 2010-2019

	2010	2019	% change
City of Neillsville	\$34,331	\$44,718	30.3%
Town of Pine Valley	\$46,875	\$61,528	31.3%
Clark County	\$42,777	\$54,012	26.3%
Wisconsin	\$49,001	\$61,747	26.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 & 2015-2019 American Community Survey

- Local socio-economic characteristics should be considered when applying the above numbers. For example, the City's relatively lower median income can be in part explained by its aging population. In 2019, City households with a householder age 65 and older had a median household income of \$27,125. In comparison, City households consisting of families with their own children had a median of \$66,070.
- In 2019, 10.1 percent of persons and 3.2 percent of families in the City of Neillsville were below the poverty level at some time in the previous 12 months. This is compared to 12.1 percent and 8.2 percent, respectively, for Clark County as a whole.

### Unemployment Rate, 2000 & 2019

	2000		2019	
	Employed	Unemployment Rate	Employed	Unemployment Rate
City of Neillsville	1,235	4.2%	1,034	2.5%
Clark County	16,566	4.1%	16,043	2.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

### Means of Transportation to Work for City of Neillsville Workers 16 Years & Over, 2019

Primary Means of Transportation	Percent of Workers
Car, Truck, or Van – Drove Alone	80.6
Car, Truck, or Van - Carpooled	7.5
Public Transportation (excluding taxi)	0.0
Walked	4.0
Bicycle	0.0
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other	1.0
Worked at home	6.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

- Of employed residents in the City of Neillsville, mean travel time to work was 20.8 minutes in 2019.

### Place of Work for City of Neillsville Residents, 2019

Place of Work	Percent of Workers
Worked in the City of Neillsville	59.3
Worked in Clark County, but outside the City	12.4
Worked outside Clark County, but in Wisconsin	26.6
Worked outside State of Wisconsin	1.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

# Appendix B

## Inflow / Outflow Analysis, City of Neillsville Residents, 2018 (Primary Job)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap



### Inflow/Outflow Job Counts (Primary Jobs)

	2018	
	Count	Share
<u>Employed in the Selection Area</u>	2,224	100.0%
<u>Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside</u>	1,872	84.2%
<u>Employed and Living in the Selection Area</u>	352	15.8%
<u>Living in the Selection Area</u>	938	100.0%
<u>Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside</u>	586	62.5%
<u>Living and Employed in the Selection Area</u>	352	37.5%

# Appendix B

## Land Use

### Land Use Acreage and Assessed Value Per Acre, City of Neillsville, 2010 and 2020

	Agricultural	Forest	Ag. Forest	Undeveloped	Residential	Commercial	Manufacturing	Other	Total
<b>2010</b>									
# Parcels	3	10	0	2	1,135	208	9	0	1,367
# Improved	0	0	0	0	925	154	8	0	1,087
Acres	72	169	0	1	145	240	43	0	670
Land Value per Acre	\$144	\$2,134	-	\$30,000	\$79,186	\$18,275	\$4,884	-	\$24,595
Improv. Value per Imp. Parcel	-	-	-	-	\$57,097	\$144,669	\$884,438	-	\$71,558
<b>2020</b>									
# Parcels	10	8	9	10	1,119	201	9	0	1,366
# Improved	0	0	0	0	932	162	8	0	1,102
Acres	102	116	97	81	499	241	43	0	1,179
Land Value per Acre	\$119	\$2,148	\$1,019	\$1,098	\$22,540	\$25,708	\$7,772	-	\$15,459
Improv. Value per Imp. Parcel	-	-	-	-	\$65,068	\$188,623	\$904,250	-	\$99,938
<b>Difference</b>									
# Parcels	+7	-2	+9	+8	-16	-7	0	0	-1
# Improved	0	0	0	0	+7	+8	0	0	+15
Acres	+30	-53	+97	+80	+354	+1	0	0	+509
Land Value per Acre	-\$25	+\$14	+\$1,019	-\$28,902	-\$56,646	+\$7,433	-\$2,888	-	-\$9,136
Improv. Value per Imp. Parcel	-	-	-	-	+\$7,971	-\$126,046	+\$19,812	-	+\$28,380

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

#### Notes:

- Between 2010 & 2011, the City experienced a 331-acre increase in assessed residential property and a 431-acre increase in total assessed acres.
- The above values do not include unassessed or exempt properties, such as those owned by governmental units, churches, or non-profits.
- Agricultural land is primarily classified and assessed based on its actual, predominant use (use value), and not its market value. For instance, active farmland that is planned for commercial or residential use will be assessed as "Agricultural." Undeveloped land (e.g., poorly drained, ponds, depleted gravel pits, fallow tillable land, incapable of commercial forest) and "Ag Forest" is typically assessed at 50% of its full value. "Other" includes farm buildings and improvements, including the farm operator's residence. Sand mines and processing facilities will be classified as "Manufacturing" once your assessor receives the official DOR letter.

## Appendix B



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## Demographic and Income Profile

Neillsville City, WI  
Neillsville City, WI (5555800)  
Geography: Place

Prepared by Esri

Summary	Census 2010	2020	2025			
Population	2,461	2,397	2,388			
Households	1,094	1,079	1,078			
Families	585	614	610			
Average Household Size	2.13	2.13	2.12			
Owner Occupied Housing Units	722	761	762			
Renter Occupied Housing Units	372	318	317			
Median Age	43.7	46.1	46.6			
Trends: 2020-2025 Annual Rate	Area	State	National			
Population	-0.08%	0.42%	0.72%			
Households	-0.02%	0.49%	0.72%			
Families	-0.13%	0.40%	0.64%			
Owner HHs	0.03%	0.49%	0.72%			
Median Household Income	0.92%	1.49%	1.60%			
Households by Income	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
<\$15,000	129	11.9%	117	10.9%		
\$15,000 - \$24,999	96	8.9%	87	8.1%		
\$25,000 - \$34,999	151	14.0%	142	13.2%		
\$35,000 - \$49,999	164	15.2%	159	14.7%		
\$50,000 - \$74,999	241	22.3%	240	22.3%		
\$75,000 - \$99,999	137	12.7%	144	13.4%		
\$100,000 - \$149,999	107	9.9%	120	11.1%		
\$150,000 - \$199,999	38	3.5%	48	4.5%		
\$200,000+	17	1.6%	21	1.9%		
Median Household Income	\$50,000		\$52,338			
Average Household Income	\$61,746		\$68,234			
Per Capita Income	\$26,818		\$29,679			
Population by Age	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0 - 4	143	5.8%	132	5.5%	129	5.4%
5 - 9	144	5.9%	139	5.8%	137	5.7%
10 - 14	156	6.3%	138	5.8%	137	5.7%
15 - 19	165	6.7%	142	5.9%	140	5.9%
20 - 24	140	5.7%	130	5.4%	123	5.2%
25 - 34	251	10.2%	252	10.5%	236	9.9%
35 - 44	273	11.1%	237	9.9%	256	10.7%
45 - 54	324	13.2%	274	11.4%	237	9.9%
55 - 64	282	11.5%	317	13.2%	296	12.4%
65 - 74	225	9.1%	301	12.5%	323	13.5%
75 - 84	206	8.4%	211	8.8%	249	10.4%
85+	152	6.2%	126	5.3%	123	5.2%
Race and Ethnicity	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	2,367	96.2%	2,244	93.6%	2,204	92.3%
Black Alone	10	0.4%	29	1.2%	37	1.5%
American Indian Alone	18	0.7%	24	1.0%	27	1.1%
Asian Alone	26	1.1%	31	1.3%	35	1.5%
Pacific Islander Alone	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	22	0.9%	27	1.1%	33	1.4%
Two or More Races	18	0.7%	42	1.8%	52	2.2%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	57	2.3%	74	3.1%	91	3.8%

Data Note: Income is expressed in current dollars.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020 and 2025.

February 09, 2021

Appendix B

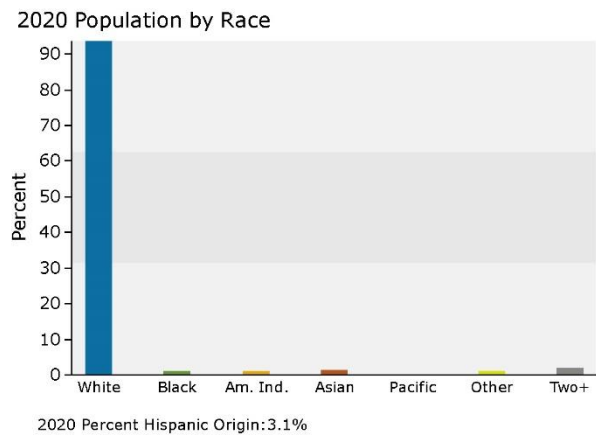
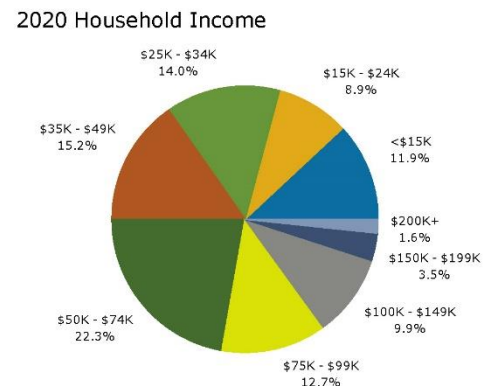
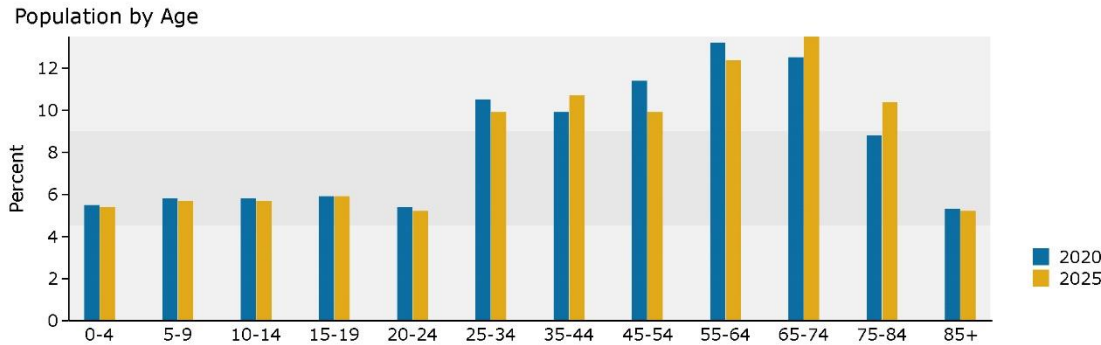
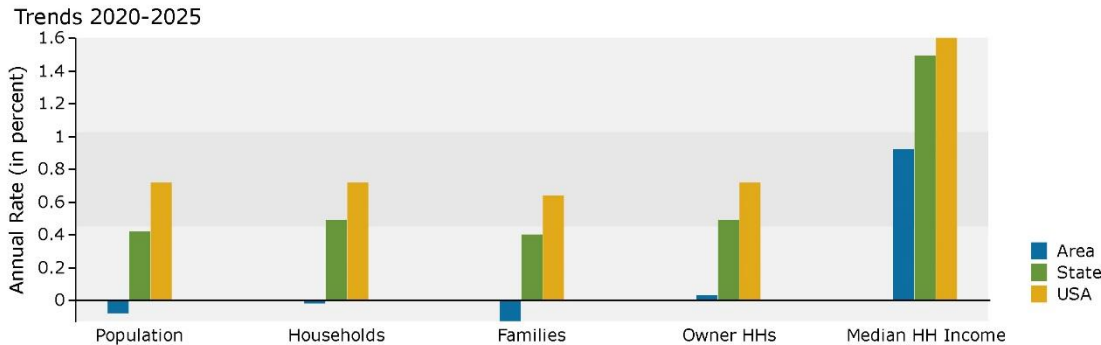


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Demographic and Income Profile

Neillsville City, WI  
Neillsville City, WI (5555800)  
Geography: Place

Prepared by Esri



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020 and 2025.

February 09, 2021



# Appendix C

## Appendix C: Housing Data

The following housing data is a supplement to the housing data provided and conditions described in the main plan document.

### Housing

#### Housing Occupancy and Tenure, City of Neillsville, 2000 - 2019

	2000	% of Total	2010	% of Total	2019	% of Total	# Change '10--'19	% Change '10--'19
Total Housing Units	1,200		1,230		1,244		14	1.1
Occupied Housing Units	1,130	94.2	1,095	89.0	1,113	89.5	18	1.6
Owner-Occupied	739	65.4	723	66.0	712	64.0	-11	-1.5
Renter-Occupied	391	34.6	372	34.0	401	36.0	29	7.8
Vacant Housing Units	70	5.8	135	11.0	131	10.5	-4	-3.0
Seasonal/Rec/Occasional Use	6	2.0	10	0.8	17	1.4	7	70.0
Average Household Size of owner-occupied unit	2.42		2.25		2.18		-.07	
Average Household Size of renter-occupied unit	1.91		1.89		1.60		-.29	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 & 2010, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

#### Units in Structure, City of Neillsville, 2010 & 2019

	2010	% of Total	2019	% of Total
1-Unit Detached	919	72.8	861	69.2
1-Unit Attached	34	2.7	40	3.2
2 Units	62	4.9	59	4.7
3 or 4 units	24	1.9	53	4.3
5 to 9 units	61	4.8	45	3.6
10 to 19 Units	33	2.6	106	8.5
20 or More Units	124	9.8	71	5.7
Mobile Home	6	0.5	9	0.7
Boat, RV, Van, Etc.	0	0.0	0	0.0
TOTAL	1,263		1,244	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010 Decennial & 2015-2019 American Community Survey

**1-Unit Attached** are housing units separated by a full floor-to-ceiling wall with separate utility meters (e.g., townhouses, duplexes).

**2 Units** are structures that have living units on separate floors (e.g., a home with a rental unit on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor).

# Appendix C

## Units by Year Built, City of Neillsville 2019

	Estimate	% of Total
Built 2010 or later	6	0.5
Built 2000 to 2009	12	1.0
Built 1990 to 1999	119	9.6
Built 1980 to 1989	102	8.2
Built 1970 to 1979	157	12.6
Built 1960 to 1969	104	8.4
Built 1950 to 1959	139	11.2
Built 1940 to 1949	177	14.2
Built 1939 or earlier	428	34.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,244</b>	

*60% of the  
housing  
stock was  
built prior to  
1960*

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

## Housing Value of Owner-Occupied Units, 2019

Less than \$50,000	\$50,000-\$99,999	\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$150,000 - \$199,999	\$200,000 - \$299,999	\$300,000 - \$499,999	\$500,000 or more	City Median Value	Clark County Median Value	State Median Value
105	356	153	71	14	9	4	\$90,500	\$127,200	\$180,600

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

## Owner-Occupied (w/mortgage) Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, 2019

Less than 15%	15.0% - 19.9%	20.0% - 24.9%	25.0% - 29.9%	30.0% - 34.9%	35.0% or more	City (with mortgages) % not affordable	Clark County (with mortgages) % not affordable
130	100	50	29	0	42	12.0%	24.5%

Note: U.S. HUD defines affordable housing as 30% or less of monthly or annual income.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

## Contract Rent (Renter Occupied Units), 2019

Less than \$500	\$500 - \$999	\$1,000 - \$1,499	\$1,500 or more	No Cash Rent	Median Contract Rent
223	156	5	0	17	\$430

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

## Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income, 2019

Less than 15%	15.0% - 19.9%	20.0% - 24.9%	25.0% - 29.9%	30.0% - 34.9%	35.0% or more	City % not affordable	Clark County % not affordable
127	23	32	61	29	105	35.3%	29.6%

Note: U.S. HUD defines affordable housing as 30% or less of monthly or annual income.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

## Appendix C

The table to the right provides a brief snapshot of the Neillsville area housing market.<sup>6</sup> Some key points are:

- Overall, Neillsville has a healthy renter-to-owner mix, with about 69% owner and 31% renter. As expected, a higher proportion of Pine Valley households own their home (79%/21% mix).
- The low vacancy rates in red reflect a tight housing market and suggest a demand exists for more units.
- Also in red are overcrowding rates higher than the State average of 3.1% of all rental units and 1% of all owner units. Overcrowding is defined by 1.01 or more persons per room.
- Over half of the assisted living units in Clark County are located within the City of Neillsville. Assisted living units are included in the rental units since occupants have a fully furnished apartment, while nursing homes are included in the group quarters and not considered a household.

2017 Census	Clark County	Town of Pine Valley	City of Neillsville
Population	33,923	1,400	2,165
Population in Rental Units	6,600	288	1,582
Population in Owner Units	27,323	1,112	583
Population in Group Quarters	590	0	137
Households, excluding group quarters	12,755	544	1,058
Avg. Household Size	2.7	2.6	2.1
Renter Avg. Household Size	2.3	2.6	1.7
Owner Avg. Household Size	2.8	2.6	2.2
Housing Units, excluding seasonal	13,866	578	1,208
Rental Units	3,041	122	373
Owner Units	10,825	456	835
Occupied Units	12,755	544	1,058
Renter-Occupied Units	2,834	112	348
Owner-Occupied Units	9,921	432	710
Vacant Units for Rent, excludes seasonal	165	10	12
2017 Rental Vacancy Rate	5.4%	8.2%	3.2%
Rental Vacancy Rate Standard <sup>[1]</sup>	5-7%		
Vacant Units for Sale, excludes seasonal	200	0	12
2017 Homeowner Vacancy Rate	2.0%	0.0%	1.7%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate Standard <sup>[2]</sup>	2-2.5%		
% of Overcrowded Units – Renter Occup.	4.6%	0.0%	5.5%
% of Overcrowded Units – Owner Occup.	3.4%	3.0%	2.8%
Seasonal & Other Vacant Units <sup>[3]</sup>	2,002	44	137
Licensed Assisted Living Units	130 @ 25	0	71 @ 7

The table on the following page estimates existing and projected housing demand for Neillsville and Pine Valley combined, with the following assumptions:

- The 2017 estimate is from the U.S. Census and is largely driven by the difference in 2017 vacancy rates and the healthy vacancy-rate standards.
- Future demand is based on WDOA population and household projections with a small factor added for market flexibility;
- The current owner-to-rental mix for each municipality;
- The additional rental and owner units needed are in addition to the 2017 vacant units shown in the previous table above.

<sup>6</sup> Housing table notes: (1) & (2) healthy vacancy rate standards are from *Florida, Richard. Vacancy: America's Other Housing Crisis. July 2018.* For owner housing, Florida's vacancy rate standard was expanded by WCWRPC from 2% to 2%-2.5% in order to accommodate additional market flexibility, given the County's relatively small population size. (3) Includes seasonal, recreational, or occasional use as well as sold and rented, but not occupied and other vacant units that are not currently on the market.

## Appendix C

- Additional units are included in 2017 as an adjustment in order to reduce overcrowding to state levels.
- The 2020 estimate does not include any new construction or demolition that has occurred since 2017; adjust these numbers accordingly as needed.
- For this preliminary analysis, the group quarters projection is the difference between the total population and the population in households. Given the area's aging population, the demand for group quarters (nursing care) and rental units (downsizing, accessory dwelling units, assisted living) is expected to increase.

### Neillsville & Pine Valley Housing Demand Projections

	2017	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Net
Total Population	3,565	3,740	3,830	3,900	3,945	3,915	350
Total Households, excluding group quarters	1,602	1,588	1,624	1,656	1,682	1,681	79
Change in Total Households	--	-14	36	32	26	-1	--
Change in Rental Households	--	1	8	7	5	-3	18
Change in Owner Households	--	-15	28	25	21	2	61
Additional Rental Units Needed	16-23	1	8	7	5	0	37-44
Additional Owner Units Needed	46-54	0	29	26	21	2	124-132
Total Additional Housing Units Needed	62-77	1	37	33	27	2	161-176
Population in Group Quarters	137	136	141	152	166	178	41

The larger number of units needed in 2017 reflects an existing “pent-up” demand for rental and owner units, perhaps reflecting little new housing growth over the last decade. But there are also some discrepancies between the 2017 Census numbers and the WDOA projections that may not be clarified until after the 2020 decennial census. For example, the 2017 Census estimate for Pine Valley’s population (1,400) is already equal to the WDOA’s population projection for the Town in 2030 and much higher than the WDOA’s 2018 official estimate of 1,172. Due to such uncertainties, the above demand projections may over-estimate the current “pent-up” demand, while the 2020-2030 projections may be under-estimated. The longer-term projections (2035 & 2040) are largely a reflection of the area’s aging population, but continued long-term growth could still be possible with available job opportunities and a high quality of life.

On the following page are renter and owner housing gap analyses for Pine Valley and Neillsville combined. The tables compare the number of households by income range to the number of units that are affordable (25% of household income) for each income range or price point. These tables do not indicate demand, but provide insight into housing supply and affordability as well as opportunities to shift the market. The Owner Housing table shows that there is a positive balance of owner units valued at less than \$35,000 but there may be households in the \$50,000+ income ranges that could potentially afford more for their housing. This could be due to factors such as a deteriorating housing stock that is driving down housing values and/or a lack of owner units available in the \$125k+ ranges. Similarly, the Renter Housing table also suggests a potential deficit of rental units in the upper ranges (\$550+/mo); some of these renter households may be interested in a higher-quality rental units, while others may be saving towards the eventual purchase of a starter home, thereby decreasing overall rental demand.

# Appendix C

Neillsville & Pine Valley Owner Housing Gap Analysis					
Household Income Ranges	Number of Owner Households	% of Owner Households	Affordable Owner Range	Number of Owner Units	Balance
Less than \$25,000	187	16%	\$0-\$59,999	221	34
\$25,000 to \$34,999	128	11%	\$60,000-\$89,999	298	170
\$35,000 to \$49,999	210	18%	\$90,000-\$124,999	202	-8
\$50,000 to \$74,999	324	28%	\$125,000-\$199,999	268	-56
\$75,000 to \$99,999	153	13%	\$200,000-\$249,999	54	-99
\$100,000 to \$149,999	87	8%	\$250,000-\$399,999	87	0
\$150,000 or more	53	5%	\$400,000 +	12	-41
Source: U.S. Census American Factfinder 2013-2017 5-Year Estimates					
NOTES: (i) The above affordable price points are calculated based on 2.5 times the annual household income, which accounts for the financing of the home purchase over time at about 25% of the household income. This is less than the more commonly used 30% Federal affordability standard. The additional 5% in the Federal standard allows for the payment of all other housing costs, such as real estate taxes, insurance, and utilities. (ii) The U.S. Census Bureau provides data for household incomes and house values in ranges. To calculate the "Affordable Renter Range", the household income was multiplied by 2.5. The result did not yield household income ranges that aligned perfectly with the house value ranges; these ranges were matched up as closely as possible.					

Neillsville & Pine Valley Renter Housing Gap Analysis					
Household Income Ranges	Number of Renter Households	% of Renter Households	Affordable Renter Range	Number of Renter Units	Balance
Less than \$10,000	58	13%	\$0-\$199	98	40
\$10,000 to \$14,999	68	15%	\$200-\$299	53	-15
\$15,000 to \$24,999	63	14%	\$300-\$549	173	110
\$25,000 to \$34,999	95	21%	\$550-749	70	-25
\$35,000 to \$49,999	47	10%	\$750-\$999	27	-20
\$50,000 to \$74,999	38	8%	\$1,000-\$1,499	39	1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	45	10%	\$1,500-\$1,999	0	-45
\$100,000 to \$149,999	46	10%	\$2,000-\$2,999	0	-46
\$150,000 or more	0	0%	\$3,000 to \$3,499	0	0
Source: U.S. Census American Factfinder 2013-2017 5-Year Estimates					
NOTES: (i) The above price points are calculated based on affordable contract rent at 25% of household income, which is different than the commonly used 30% Federal standard for gross rent. The additional 5% in the Federal standards allows for the payment of all other housing costs. (ii) The above includes some rental units with zero cash rent. (iii) The U.S. Census Bureau provides data for household incomes and house values in ranges. To calculate the "Affordable Renter Range", the household income was divided by 12 (months) and multiplied by 0.25. This result did not yield household income ranges that aligned perfectly with the contract rent value ranges; these ranges were matched up as closely as possible.					



## Appendix C

As part of the February 2020 *Economic Impact Study for the planned Marshfield Medical Center-Neillsville Campus*, a very brief web-based survey was distributed to MMC-N employees and Clark County Young Professionals, through their local point of contacts. A total of 142 surveys were completed: 114 MMC-N, 13 C.C. Young Professionals, and 15 Other. Key findings were:

- Just over one-half of the respondents resided in the Neillsville zip code (54456).
- 25% (35 respondents) stated that their household hopes or expects to move within the next five years if they could find their preferred housing that is affordable. Of these:
  - 69% (24) would prefer to own a single-family home on its own lot.
  - 23% (8) would prefer to rent a home or apartment.
  - 6% (2) would prefer to own a condo, townhouse, duplex, or other attached home.
- For those 25% who hoped or expected to move within the next five years:
  - 43% (15) live in the 54456 zip code.
  - 34% (12) would consider living in the 54456 zip code.
  - 23% (8) would not consider living in the 54456 zip code. The most common reasons for not considering a move to the Neillsville zip code was “A person in my household is employed elsewhere” and “I wish to live closer to friends or family.”
- It is somewhat notable that nearly half (6 of 13) of the Clark County Young Professional respondents suggested that they were hoping to move within the next five years.

While this was an informal survey with limited distribution, it does support the previous housing demand projections and suggests that the market is most interested in more traditional residential options.

Community housing interviews from 2019 reinforced the housing data findings. Comments included:

- More rental and owner units are both needed. While data and the survey suggested a higher demand in the owner market, the lack of rental housing was more frequently mentioned during interviews.
- There is little to no growth in housing units—less than 1 home per year. An incentive program for new housing is needed.
- A local realtor reported receiving multiple recent calls from individuals who work in Neillsville who are seeking rental housing.
- The average home sale in the area is about \$130,000, which many households can afford.
- Seniors desiring to downsize to smaller, quality homes or rental units are a growing part of the area housing market.
- While incomes for many households in the area are lower, the housing demand is not necessarily for more low-income units. Additional mid-range, quality units would allow the housing market to shift.

## Appendix C



## Housing Profile

Neillsville City, WI  
Neillsville City, WI (5555800)  
Geography: Place

Prepared by Esri

Population		Households	
2010 Total Population	2,461	2020 Median Household Income	\$50,000
2020 Total Population	2,397	2025 Median Household Income	\$52,338
2025 Total Population	2,388	2020-2025 Annual Rate	0.92%
2020-2025 Annual Rate	-0.08%		

Housing Units by Occupancy Status and Tenure	Census 2010		2020		2025	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	1,229	100.0%	1,231	100.0%	1,239	100.0%
Occupied	1,094	89.0%	1,079	87.7%	1,079	87.1%
Owner	722	58.7%	761	61.8%	762	61.5%
Renter	372	30.3%	318	25.8%	317	25.6%
Vacant	135	11.0%	152	12.3%	161	13.0%

Owner Occupied Housing Units by Value	2020		2025	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	762	100.0%	762	100.0%
<\$50,000	117	15.4%	109	14.3%
\$50,000-\$99,999	280	36.7%	270	35.4%
\$100,000-\$149,999	156	20.5%	153	20.1%
\$150,000-\$199,999	79	10.4%	83	10.9%
\$200,000-\$249,999	40	5.2%	44	5.8%
\$250,000-\$299,999	29	3.8%	33	4.3%
\$300,000-\$399,999	45	5.9%	53	7.0%
\$400,000-\$499,999	11	1.4%	13	1.7%
\$500,000-\$749,999	2	0.3%	2	0.3%
\$750,000-\$999,999	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
\$1,000,000-\$1,499,999	2	0.3%	2	0.3%
\$1,500,000-\$1,999,999	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$2,000,000+	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Median Value	\$97,143		\$100,654	
Average Value	\$130,643		\$136,155	

Census 2010 Housing Units	Number	Percent
Total	1,229	100.0%
In Urbanized Areas	0	0.0%
In Urban Clusters	0	0.0%
Rural Housing Units	1,229	100.0%

**Data Note:** Persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race.

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020 and 2025.

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## Appendix C



## Housing Profile

Neillsville City, WI  
Neillsville City, WI (5555800)  
Geography: Place

Prepared by Esri

Census 2010 Owner Occupied Housing Units by Mortgage Status			Number	Percent
Total			722	100.0%
Owned with a Mortgage/Loan			417	57.8%
Owned Free and Clear			305	42.2%
Census 2010 Vacant Housing Units by Status			Number	Percent
Total			135	100.0%
For Rent			59	43.7%
Rented- Not Occupied			3	2.2%
For Sale Only			25	18.5%
Sold - Not Occupied			5	3.7%
Seasonal/Recreational/Occasional Use			10	7.4%
For Migrant Workers			0	0.0%
Other Vacant			33	24.4%
Census 2010 Occupied Housing Units by Age of Householder and Home Ownership				
	Occupied Units	Owner Occupied Units		
		Number	% of Occupied	
Total	1,094	722	66.0%	
15-24	53	12	22.6%	
25-34	122	66	54.1%	
35-44	149	95	63.8%	
45-54	187	138	73.8%	
55-64	189	148	78.3%	
65-74	143	111	77.6%	
75-84	149	105	70.5%	
85+	102	47	46.1%	
Census 2010 Occupied Housing Units by Race/Ethnicity of Householder and Home Ownership				
	Occupied Units	Owner Occupied Units		
		Number	% of Occupied	
Total	1,094	722	66.0%	
White Alone	1,073	712	66.4%	
Black/African American Alone	2	0	0.0%	
American Indian/Alaska Native	3	1	33.3%	
Asian Alone	9	5	55.6%	
Pacific Islander Alone	0	0	0.0%	
Other Race Alone	4	2	50.0%	
Two or More Races	3	2	66.7%	
Hispanic Origin	12	7	58.3%	
Census 2010 Occupied Housing Units by Size and Home Ownership				
	Occupied Units	Owner Occupied Units		
		Number	% of Occupied	
Total	1,094	722	66.0%	
1-Person	463	248	53.6%	
2-Person	338	262	77.5%	
3-Person	124	90	72.6%	
4-Person	83	63	75.9%	
5-Person	55	41	74.5%	
6-Person	21	11	52.4%	
7+ Person	10	7	70.0%	
2020 Housing Affordability				
Housing Affordability Index		255		
Percent of Income for Mortgage		8.1%		

Data Note: Persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020 and 2025.

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# Appendix D

## Appendix D: Economic Data

The following economic profile is a supplement to the economic conditions described in the main plan document.

### **Civilian Labor Force and Employment**

As shown in the table below, the number of City of Neillsville residents in the labor force decreased from 2000 to 2019; unemployment also decreased. It should be noted, however, that the 2019 estimate is actually a five-year average. Employment data, especially in rural areas where agriculture, forestry, and extractive industries are a major part of the economy, can have significant seasonal and market-related employment fluctuation.

#### **Unemployment Rate, 2000 & 2019**

	2000		2019	
	Employed	Unemployment Rate	Employed	Unemployment Rate
City of Neillsville	1,235	4.2%	1,034	2.5%
Clark County	16,566	4.1%	16,043	2.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

### **Educational Attainment**

The table below displays the education attainment level of residents in the City of Neillsville that were age 25 and older in 2019. The educational attainment level of persons within a community is often an indicator of the overall income, job availability, and well-being of the community. Lower educational attainment levels can also be a hindrance to attracting certain types of businesses, typically those that require high technical skills and upper management types of positions.

#### **Educational Attainment of Persons Age 25 & Older City of Neillsville, 2019**

Attainment Level	Number	Percent of Total
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	59	3.3
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade to 12 Grade, No Diploma	130	7.2
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	732	40.4
Some College, No Degree	368	20.3
Associate Degree	214	11.8
Bachelor's Degree	201	11.1
Graduate or Professional Degree	107	5.9
TOTAL PERSONS 25 AND OVER	1,811	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

## Appendix D

### **Use Caution When Using Economic Data**

The data in this element should be used for general planning purposes and consideration of trends, but must be used cautiously and with a critical eye. Critical decisions may require additional data collection.

The data found here is taken from different sources and, sometimes, for different geographic areas. Some data sources use different definitions which may differ from each other (as well as your own definition). Further, when dealing with small samples or a single community, a single oversight during data collection (e.g., missing one business) or a change after the data is collected can make large differences. And in some cases, data may be withheld due to confidentiality.

Based on American Community Survey data, educational attainment of City residents has been improving with 89.5 percent of residents over 25 years of age in 2019 (ACS 5-year estimates<sup>7</sup>) having at least attained a high school diploma as compared to 83.4 percent in 2010 and 76.8 percent in 2000. For all of Clark County in 2019 (ACS 5-year estimates<sup>4</sup>), 82.3 percent of residents over 25 years of age had at least a high school diploma and 12.6 percent had a Bachelor's degree or higher.

### **Income**

The median household income in the City of Neillsville was \$29,969 in 2000 and in 2010 it was \$34,331 (U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 and 2010). In 2019, this number increased to \$44,718 (2015-2019 American Community Survey). Clark County median household income increased from \$42,777 in 2010 to \$54,012. For additional comparison, see the income discussion in Appendix B.

In 2019, 10.1 percent of persons and 3.2 percent of families in the City of Neillsville were below the

poverty level at some time in the previous 12 months. This is compared to 12.1 percent and 8.2 percent, respectively, for Clark County as a whole.

### **Employment by Industrial Sector**

As discussed previously in the transportation element, the majority of employed City residents (62.5%) work outside the City of Neillsville per 2018 data from the Census longitudinal survey. The employment by industry within an area illustrates the structure of the economy. Historically, the State of Wisconsin has had a high concentration of employment in manufacturing and agricultural sectors of the economy. Recent state and national trends indicate a decreasing concentration of employment in the manufacturing sector while employment within the services sector is increasing. This trend is partly attributed to the aging of the population.

The table on the following page shows the number of employed residents by industry group in the City of Neillsville. Over half of working City residents were employed in manufacturing, education, health care, or related social services.

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<sup>7</sup> Many of the 2019 economic estimates are based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates which can have fairly significant margins of error.



## Appendix D

### Employment by Industry, City of Neillsville, 2019

Industry	Number	Percent of Total
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	41	4.0
Construction	37	3.6
Manufacturing	288	27.9
Wholesale trade	0	0.0
Retail trade	145	14.0
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	38	3.7
Information	0	0.0
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	29	2.8
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	30	2.9
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	249	24.1
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	74	7.2
Other services, except public administration	50	4.8
Public administration	53	5.1
TOTAL CIVILIANS EMPLOYED, 16+ YEARS	1,034	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

The next table on the following page provides employment by industry numbers from a different source for 2010 and 2020. The table reflects the economic changes in the past 10 years with the largest change being in the Health Care and Social Assistance Industry.

In regard to the health care sector (NAICS 62) job numbers on the next two pages:

- The 2010 to 2020 decrease is largely due to a decrease in the number of reported jobs within the General Medical & Surgical Hospitals sub-sector (NAICS 6221), which peaked at about 478 in 2005. Between 2012 and 2013, this sub-sector lost 145 reported jobs, but has remained relatively stable since.
- The projected job losses in the 2031 forecasts for NAICS 62 are likely a reflection of the reported decreases within this sector (and especially NAICS 6221) over the past 10-15 years overall.

# Appendix D

## Employment by Industry, Neillsville Zip Code (54456), 2010 and 2020

NAICS Code	Description	2010 Jobs	2020 Jobs	Change	Competitive Effect	2020 L.Q.
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	0	0	0	0	0.00
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	0	0	0	0	0.00
22	Utilities	<10	<10	N/A	N/A	0.13
23	Construction	130	163	33	1	1.22
31-33	Manufacturing	307	336	29	5	1.85
42	Wholesale Trade	18	32	14	13	0.38
44-45	Retail Trade	362	354	-8	-20	1.56
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	79	230	151	119	2.51
51	Information	48	29	-19	-21	0.68
52	Finance and Insurance	43	37	-7	-12	0.38
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	<10	<10	N/A	1	0.08
54	Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	50	52	2	-11	0.33
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0	0	0	0.00
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	<10	20	>10	10	0.14
61	Educational Services (non-public)	0	0	0	0	0.00
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	639	374	-265	-397	1.24
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	43	27	-15	-21	0.72
72	Accommodation and Food Services	124	111	-13	-31	0.60
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	110	121	11	6	0.99
90	Government	419	442	23	25	1.26
99	Unclassified Industry	<10	0	N/A	-1	0.00
	Total	2,386	2,332	-53	-344	-

Source: EMSI Complete Employment, December 2020

Included for reference in the previous table are competitive effect and location quotient numbers. Competitive effect is used as part of shift-share analysis to show the number of jobs gained or lost that cannot be explained by national growth or overall changes in an industry; these numbers attempt to isolate region-specific trends. Location quotient (L.Q.) is a “snapshot in time” of how concentrated or clustered each industry is within the zip code area. In the case of Transportation and Warehousing, the area has 2.51 times more transportation and warehousing jobs compared to the national average. By delving deeper into shift share and L.Q. for different years, trends, competitive advantages, and opportunities can be identified.

# Appendix D

**Employment Forecast by Industry, Neillsville Zip Code (54456), 2031**

NAICS Code	Description	2020 Jobs	2031 Jobs	Change
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	0	0	0
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	0	0	0
22	Utilities	<10	<10	N/A
23	Construction	163	177	14
31-33	Manufacturing	336	340	4
42	Wholesale Trade	32	34	2
44-45	Retail Trade	354	314	-40
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	230	288	58
51	Information	29	25	-4
52	Finance and Insurance	37	35	-2
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	<10	<10	N/A
54	Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	52	55	3
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0	0
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	20	22	2
61	Educational Services	0	0	0
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	374	312	-62
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	27	25	-2
72	Accommodation and Food Services	111	91	-20
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	121	142	21
90	Government	442	487	45
99	Unclassified Industry	0	0	0
	Total	2,332	2,350	18

The table above shows an employment forecast of the Neillsville zip code. It is important to note that the data at the zip code level are based on samples and the future trends are estimates. Based on the figured, it is estimated that the transportation and warehousing, construction, other services and government will do well in Neillsville. Industries that are not expected to grow include retail trade, health care and social assistance, arts and entertainment and the accommodation and food services industries. It is important to note that although the City's population has been decreasing, the EMSI data forecasts a very slight increase (1 percent) in job growth over the next decade.

## Appendix D

An important feature of determining the economic health and future of Clark County and its communities is to determine the amounts and types of jobs currently available as well as making predictions for the future. The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (WDWD), Office of Economic Advisors produced employment projections in for West Central Wisconsin, which includes Barron, Clark, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, and St. Croix counties.

### Employment by Industry Projections, West Central Wisconsin, 2018 and 2028

Industry Title	2018 Employment*	2028 Projected Employment	Change (2018-2028)	
			Employment	Percent
<b>Total All Industries</b>	<b>222,885</b>	<b>235,000</b>		<b>5.48%</b>
<i>Goods-Producing</i>				
Natural Resources and Mining	4,738	4,937	199	4.20%
Construction	8,499	9,935	1,436	16.90%
Manufacturing	36,716	37,701	985	2.68%
<i>Services-Providing</i>				
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	40,223	42,442	2,219	5.52%
Information	1,607	1,558	-49	-3.05%
Financial Activities	7,112	7,360	248	3.49%
Professional and Business Services	15,662	16,725	1,063	6.79%
Education and Health Services	50,932	55,056	4,124	8.10%
Leisure and Hospitality	21,133	22,930	1,797	8.50%
Other Services (except Government)	8,380	8,629	249	2.97%
Government	11,723	11,733	10	0.09%
Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers, All Jobs	16,160	16,094	-66	-0.41%

Source: Office of Economic Advisors, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, September 2018

WDWD notes that employment is a count of jobs rather than people and includes all part- and full-time nonfarm jobs. Employment is rounded to the nearest ten, with employment less than five rounded to zero. Totals may not add-up due to rounding and some data for certain industries may be suppressed due to confidentiality. Government employment includes tribal-owned operations, which are part of Local Government employment. Information is derived using a variety of Federal data sources. It is important to note that unanticipated events may affect the accuracy of the projections.

## Appendix D

### **Leakage/Surplus Factor for Retail Businesses**

The tables on the following pages display the Leakage/Surplus Factor in the City of Neillsville by Industry Subsector and Industry Group according to the ESRI Business Analyst Online tool. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents potential retail opportunity. The factor is a measure of the relationship between the supply and demand of an industry and ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail, indicating that citizens are likely going outside the City of Neillsville for these goods or services. A negative value represents a 'surplus' of retail sales, potentially drawing in customers from outside the City.

Caution and care must be used in interpreting and applying such data; it must be compared against what you know about your community. The leakage/surplus factors are based on sampling from various sources, such as the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census of Retail Trade. In smaller communities, a small number of oversights in the sampling can have dramatic influences in the results. For instance, the exclusion of a single, large retail business in a small community can result in a sizable leakage.

As seen also in the following tables, residents are largely traveling outside of the Neillsville zip-code to shop for clothing and shoes, books and music, beer and wine, and other miscellaneous merchandise. The Neillsville area is attracting customers for automobiles, electronics & appliances, and groceries. However, in some cases, sales can be reported under a different category. For example, while the data suggests that there is a leakage in beer and wine sales, this may not necessarily be the case if these sales are occurring at a business that includes such sales under a different category, such as a grocery store or gas station.

These tables show the importance of a diversified mix of retail and services. Not only does a diverse mix of smaller business make a local economy more resilient to larger changes in the overall economy, but they are also important to attracting residents and families.



## Appendix D



## Retail MarketPlace Profile

54456 (Neillsville)  
54456 (Neillsville)  
Geography: ZIP Code

Prepared by Esri

## Summary Demographics

2020 Population	5,950
2020 Households	2,496
2020 Median Disposable Income	\$41,316
2020 Per Capita Income	\$27,554

**NOTE:** This database is in mature status. While the data are presented in current year geography, all supply- and demand-related estimates remain vintage 2017.

	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
<b>2017 Industry Summary</b>						
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$82,766,636	\$193,067,891	-\$110,301,255	-40.0	59
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$75,942,352	\$188,022,138	-\$112,079,786	-42.5	38
Total Food & Drink	722	\$6,824,284	\$5,045,753	\$1,778,531	15.0	21
<b>2017 Industry Group</b>						
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$17,810,898	\$25,820,212	-\$8,009,314	-18.4	5
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$14,156,427	\$23,435,408	-\$9,278,981	-24.7	2
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$2,369,653	\$0	\$2,369,653	100.0	0
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$1,284,818	\$2,384,804	-\$1,099,986	-30.0	3
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$2,075,216	\$1,412,979	\$662,237	19.0	4
Furniture Stores	4421	\$1,239,421	\$0	\$1,239,421	100.0	0
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$835,795	\$1,412,979	-\$577,184	-25.7	4
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$2,159,449	\$86,655,138	-\$84,495,689	-95.1	3
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$5,715,534	\$4,877,997	\$837,537	7.9	4
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$5,080,164	\$4,567,446	\$512,718	5.3	3
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$635,370	\$310,551	\$324,819	34.3	1
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$11,537,318	\$25,135,062	-\$13,597,744	-37.1	4
Grocery Stores	4451	\$10,128,103	\$24,861,480	-\$14,733,377	-42.1	3
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$830,526	\$273,582	\$556,944	50.4	1
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$578,689	\$0	\$578,689	100.0	0
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$5,018,445	\$4,877,460	\$140,985	1.4	3
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$9,576,498	\$20,954,281	-\$11,377,783	-37.3	5
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$2,582,097	\$0	\$2,582,097	100.0	0
Clothing Stores	4481	\$1,726,939	\$0	\$1,726,939	100.0	0
Shoe Stores	4482	\$390,730	\$0	\$390,730	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$464,428	\$0	\$464,428	100.0	0
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$1,725,264	\$240,211	\$1,485,053	75.6	1
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$1,470,555	\$240,211	\$1,230,344	71.9	1
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$254,709	\$0	\$254,709	100.0	0
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$12,462,181	\$6,760,086	\$5,702,095	29.7	3
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$9,287,879	\$5,004,213	\$4,283,666	30.0	1
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$3,174,302	\$1,755,873	\$1,418,429	28.8	2
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$3,057,682	\$11,288,712	-\$8,231,030	-57.4	6
Florists	4531	\$135,143	\$171,723	-\$36,580	-11.9	1
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$608,086	\$10,710,840	-\$10,102,754	-89.3	1
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$550,542	\$296,144	\$254,398	30.0	3
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$1,763,911	\$110,005	\$1,653,906	88.3	1
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$2,221,770	\$0	\$2,221,770	100.0	0
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$1,691,221	\$0	\$1,691,221	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$153,134	\$0	\$153,134	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$377,415	\$0	\$377,415	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$6,824,284	\$5,045,753	\$1,778,531	15.0	21
Special Food Services	7223	\$186,274	\$444,967	-\$258,693	-41.0	1
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$433,981	\$737,641	-\$303,660	-25.9	10
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	\$6,204,029	\$3,863,145	\$2,340,884	23.3	10

**Data Note:** Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please click the link below to view the Methodology Statement.

<http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/esri-data-retail-marketplace.pdf>

**Source:** Esri and Infogroup. Esri 2020 Updated Demographics. Esri 2017 Retail MarketPlace. ©2020 Esri. ©2017 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved.

February 12, 2021

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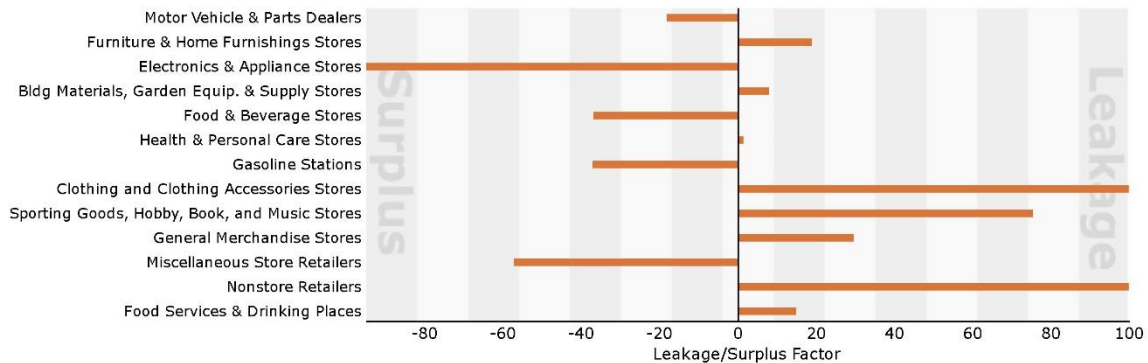


## Retail MarketPlace Profile

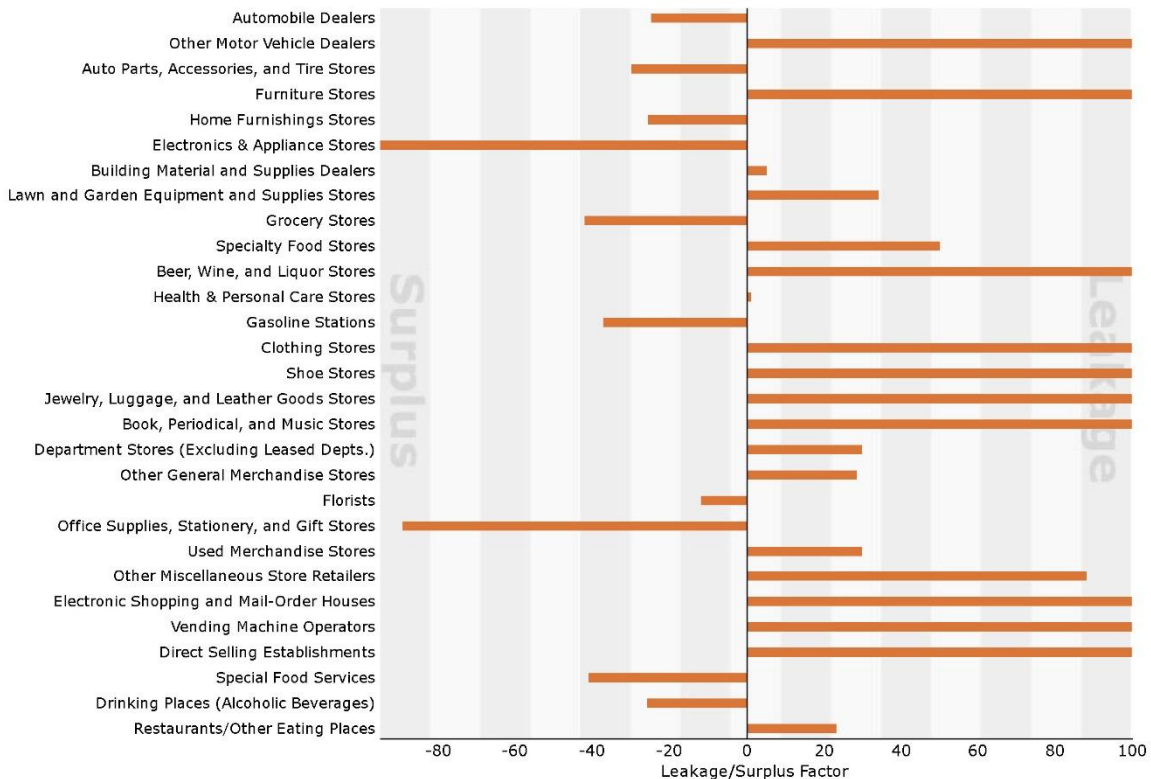
54456 (Neillsville)  
54456 (Neillsville)  
Geography: ZIP Code

Prepared by Esri

## 2017 Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector



## 2017 Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Group



Source: Esri and Infogroup. Esri 2020 Updated Demographics. Esri 2017 Retail MarketPlace. ©2020 Esri. ©2017 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved.

February 12, 2021

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Some additional, more general economic trends include:

- The “new economy” places greater emphasis on regional and global relationships and marketing. Many firms are smaller, leaner, and decentralized. Service-oriented industry is replacing manufacturing in many communities.
- High speed, broadband communication is essential to functioning in the new economy.
- Economic and land use decision-making must consider lifestyle changes and the demands of today’s households. Households are continuing to get smaller, while the area’s population is aging. An active, vibrant community with a strong sense-of-place is desired, especially among younger households.
- A 2008-2010 Gallup poll for the Knight Foundation found that there is a significant correlation between how attached people feel to where they live and the local economy. People spend time and money “where their heart is.” The study concluded that what drives people to love where they live is their perception of their community’s: (1) aesthetics; (2) social offerings; and (3) openness and how welcoming it is. Other polling shows that young talent is increasingly choosing a place to live first, then find a job. Quality of life, vibrant places, and a strong sense-of-place are increasingly important in the new economy as communities compete to attract and retain workers, entrepreneurs, businesses, and growing industries.

# Appendix E

## Appendix E: Plans and Programs

### HOUSING PLANS & PROGRAMS

While comprehensive plans must describe those programs which are available to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and projected demand, it is not assumed that the City is solely responsible for managing and providing these programs. In fact, there are a wide variety of available programs for residents at a variety of geographic and jurisdictional levels, with the most commonly used and available programs summarized here.

#### Federal Housing Programs

##### Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD is the federal agency with primary responsibility for housing programs and community development. HUD is the main repository of resources for housing programs in Wisconsin. HUD provides funding for state developed programs through HOME and other initiatives. It also funds the Continuum of Care for Homeless Families initiative, and provides Section 8 vouchers, which assist low-income families in finding affordable housing. The Wisconsin HUD office is located in Milwaukee and can be contacted at (414) 297-3214.

##### Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

HOME is a federal housing program to support the provision of low-cost housing. A variety of affordable housing activities may be supported by federal HOME awards including down payment assistance to homebuyers, rental rehabilitation, weatherization-related repairs, accessibility improvements and rental housing development.

The HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD) program is administered by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. These programs provide funds to eligible housing development organizations (homeownership and rental) and local governments (homeownership only) for the acquisition, rehabilitation, and new construction of owner-occupied and rental housing for low-income households in non-entitlement areas. In addition, the HOME Owner-Occupied Housing Loan program is administered by WHEDA.

##### Rural Development, Rural Housing Service - United States Department of Agriculture (USDA-RD)

USDA provides a variety of housing and community development programs for rural areas, generally available in areas with populations of 10,000 or less. It provides support for rental housing development, direct and guaranteed mortgage loans for home buyers, and support for self-help and cooperative housing development. For more information visit its website at [rurdev.usda.gov](http://rurdev.usda.gov).

#### State Housing Programs

##### Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Housing Program

The Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for housing, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, provides grants to general purpose units of local government for housing programs which principally benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) households. The CDBG program is a federally funded program through the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Small Cities CDBG Program. CDBG funds can be used for various housing and neighborhood revitalization activities including housing rehabilitation, acquisition, relocation, demolition of dilapidated structures, and handicap accessibility improvements. The

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maximum grant to an applicant is \$500,000. Approximately 15 communities are awarded funds yearly in Wisconsin. For more information on this program contact the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

### Historic Home Owner's Tax Credits

A 25 percent Wisconsin investment tax credit is available for people who rehabilitate historic or non-income-producing personal residences, and who apply for and receive project approval before beginning physical work on their projects. This program is administered by the Wisconsin Historical Society.

### Homeless Programs

The Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations administers programs specifically designed to help homeless people:

- State Shelter Subsidy Grant (SSSG) Program: provides up to one-half of an emergency homeless shelter's program operating budget. Eligible applicants are a county or municipal governing body or agency, an Indian Tribal government, a community action agency, or other private not-for-profit or non-profit organization.
- Housing Opportunities for Persons With Aids (HOPWA): This federal program is designed to provide eligible applicants with resources and incentives to devise long-term comprehensive strategies for meeting the housing needs of persons with AIDS or related diseases. Funds are distributed through a competitive process.
- HUD Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program: Funds may be used for homelessness prevention, essential services, rehabilitation of shelters, and operating costs.
- Transitional Housing Program (THP): Eligible applicants propose to operate transitional programs for formerly homeless individuals and families. Funds may be used for housing costs, education and vocational training, transportation, day care, or other costs needed to assist participants in sustaining self-sufficiency.
- Interest Bearing Real Estate Trust Account Program (IBRETA): Real estate brokers establish interest bearing real estate trust accounts for the deposit of all down payments, earnest money deposits and other trust funds received by the broker and related to the conveyance of real estate. Interest is remitted to the WDOA. Proceeds augment existing homeless programs.

### Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

A variety of affordable housing activities may be supported by federal HOME awards including down payment assistance for home buyers, rental rehabilitation, weatherization related repairs, accessibility improvements and rental housing development. Approximately \$13 million is awarded annually. The program is administered by the Wisconsin Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR).

### Home Safety Act

A new Wisconsin law requires the state's Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) be enforced in all municipalities. This includes the necessity to have new construction inspected for compliance with the UDC, the statewide building code for one- and two-family dwellings built since June 1, 1980. The Home Safety Act signed into law by Governor Doyle on December 3, 2003 includes important changes to the enabling statutes for the UDC. The changes were effective as of December 18, 2003.



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### Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI)

Local sponsors compete for \$2.6 million in state grants annually to reduce the housing costs of low-income renters or home buyers. Eligible applicants include local units of government, American Indian tribes or bands in Wisconsin, housing authorities and non-profit housing organizations. Eligible activities are emergency rental aid, home buying down payment assistance, homeless prevention efforts, and related housing initiatives. The HCRI is administered by the Wisconsin Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR).

### Property Tax Deferred Loan Program (PTDL)

This state program provides loans to low- and moderate-income elderly homeowners to help pay local property taxes so that the elderly can afford to stay in their homes. To be eligible, individuals must be at least 65 years old with a spouse that is at least 60 years old, unless one is disabled.

### Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations

The Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations provides housing assistance to benefit low- and moderate-income households through the Bureau of Housing. It offers state-funded housing grants or loans through local organizations, coordinates its housing programs with those of other state and local housing agencies, helps develop state housing plans and policies, and provides training and technical assistance. The Division channels federal housing funds to local authorities and organizations and administers federal funds for the homeless.

### Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority serves Wisconsin residents and communities by working with others to provide creative financing resources and information to stimulate and preserve affordable housing, small business and agribusiness.

### Wisconsin Rural Development, Rural Housing Service

The mission of the Rural Housing Service is to enhance the quality of life of rural people through the creation of safe, affordable, housing where people can live, work, and prosper as part of a community. The Wisconsin Rural Housing Service offers housing preservation grants, loans and grants for farm labor housing, loans and grants for home improvement and repair, loans for financing housing site development, loans for home purchase or construction, loans on apartment buildings, and self-help technical assistance grants. For further information visit the web-site at: [rurdev.usda.gov/wi/index.html](http://rurdev.usda.gov/wi/index.html).

### Wisconsin Weatherization Assistance Programs

The Department of Administration-Division of Energy provides weatherization assistance for units occupied by low-income persons. This service is provided through the three community action programs operating in the region. It is also notable that many residential properties which are being sold for conversion to rental units also have to meet state-minimum energy conservation standards at the time of ownership transfer.

## **Regional Housing Programs**

### Regional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Program

The Regional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Program for West Central Wisconsin (inclusive of Polk County) is administered by the Chippewa County Housing Authority. The funds are used to assist Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) homeowners in bringing their homes up to safe and sanitary conditions through the provision of no-interest, deferred payment loans. A separate program component provides homebuyers with no-interest, deferred payment loans for

## Appendix E

closing costs and downpayments. Repayment is made at the point that the homeowner no longer occupies the property. The 2020 grant funding can also be used for housing acquisition, reconstruction and demolition. Although not currently used in this way, other eligible uses include small neighborhood public facility projects, assistance to developers creating low- and moderate-income rental units, and conversion of buildings into LMI housing. The program is a revolving loan fund with repaid loans being relent to eligible LMI households. New funds for the program are secured through a competitive application process with the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA).

### Habitat for Humanity

The goal of this program is to eliminate inadequate housing and poverty housing throughout the world. Local affiliates, including dozens in Wisconsin, are responsible for raising funds, recruiting volunteers, identifying project sites, and constructing owner-occupied housing for the benefit of participating low-income families. Visit [habitat.org](http://habitat.org).

### West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)

The Regional Planning Commission offers technical housing assistance with respect to housing related grants and funding and grant writing. WCWRPC should be contacted for further information. Visit its website at [wccwrpc.org](http://wccwrpc.org).

### Wisconsin Fresh Start Program

The Fresh Start Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to agencies that would like to establish programs based on the Operation Fresh Start, Inc. service model. The purpose of the program is to provide at-risk young people with education, employment skills, and career direction leading to economic self-sufficiency. This is accomplished through opportunities for meaningful service in the young people's communities by helping to meet the housing needs of low-income individuals and families. The program is designed to provide on-site housing construction and rehabilitation work experience, off-site academic classes, and supportive services for young people, primarily for ages 16-24. Contact the Wisconsin Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR) for more information.

## County and Local Housing Programs

### Clark County Housing Authority

The Clark County Housing Authority (CCHA) was established in June of 1994 by the Clark County Board of Supervisors to address County housing needs. The CCHA is the sole housing organization in the County that focuses on providing housing assistance to low to moderate income (LMI) households on a countywide basis. Through the use of funding from CDBG and a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), the CCHA offers assistance to LMI homeowners and landlords for repairs and down payment or closing costs.

### City of Neillsville Home Renovation Revolving Loan Fund

The City maintains a revolving loan fund for income qualified households in need of funds for rehabilitating their owner-occupied homes. The City uses Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to make direct interest-free loans to families to cover eligible improvements like doors, electrical wiring, furnace replacement, insulation, plumbing repairs, roof repairs, septic systems, siding, wells, windows, and foundation repairs. Loans are repaid when the property is sold or transferred. There is no interest on the loans and there are no monthly payments. For more information, contact the Neillsville City Clerk-Treasurer at 715-743-2105.

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### City of Neillsville Historic Preservation Commission Property Improvement Grant

The City's Historic Preservation Commission maintains a fund to assist owners of historically designated properties with exterior property improvements including painting, carpentry, windows, doors, soffits/gutters and porch or façade improvements. For more information, contact the Neillsville City Clerk-Treasurer at 715-743-2105.

### City of Neillsville Residential Incentive Program

This grant program provides incentives for new residential construction. The purpose is to encourage developers and/or residents to invest in or rehabilitate the City's housing stock. Grant amount is calculated as a percentage of the residential structure's assessed value and will be paid after a clean occupancy permit has been granted and an improvement value has been determined by the City Assessor Office. For more information, contact the Neillsville City Clerk-Treasurer at 715-743-2105.

### Wisconsin Energy Assistance Program

The Wisconsin Energy Assistance Program, administered by the Clark County Department of Social Services, assists low income households with purchasing furnaces when the family's existing furnace is a health hazard or beyond repair. The Department should be contacted for further information.

## TRANSPORTATION PLANS & PROGRAMS

### State Plans

#### Wisconsin State Transportation Plan 2030 (Connections 2030)

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has a statewide long-range transportation plan through the year 2030, called Connections 2030. The plan addresses all forms of transportation—highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit – and ways to make the individual modes work better as an integrated transportation system. The overall goal of the planning process is to identify a series of policies to aid transportation decision-makers when evaluating programs and projects.



Connections 2030 differs from WisDOT's previous planning efforts. Beginning with the release of Translinks 21 in the mid-1990s, the Department has prepared a series of needs-based plans for various transportation modes. Connections 2030 is a policy-based plan. The policies are tied to "tiers" of potential financing levels. One set of policy recommendations focuses on priorities that can be accomplished under current funding levels. Another identifies policy priorities that can be achieved if funding levels increase. Finally, WisDOT also identifies critical priorities

that must be maintained if funding were to decrease over the planning horizon of the plan. While the final plan includes statewide policy recommendations, some variances exist specific to individual corridors.

In addition to policies related to each transportation mode, Connections 2030 also includes recommendations on cross-cutting issues such as economic development, land use, transportation finance, and the environment. WisDOT's goal is to provide a plan that can aid policymakers in future transportation decisions. Connection 2030 is the statewide blueprint for future transportation.

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Connections 2030 identifies a series of multimodal corridors for each part of the state. Each corridor identifies routes and/or services of several modes such as highways, local roads, rail, air, transit, etc. The multimodal corridors build on the idea of the Corridors 2020 network, first established in 1988, which identified a system of two-lane and multi-lane highways. The network is made up of two subsystems:

- Backbone system: 1,550-mile network of multi-lane highways connecting all major population and economic regions of the state.
- Connector system: 2,100-mile network of high-quality two-lane highways directly linking significant economic and tourism centers to the Backbone system.

### Access Management

WisDOT employs three types of access control authorized by state statutes. A short summary of the state statutes follows, but it should be noted that the actual content of the statutes is significantly more detailed, and many special conditions and provisions are not included in this text. The type of access control that is imposed on various highway road segments influences how that segment is managed.

- Wis. Stats. 84.09 (purchase access control) – WisDOT acquires land by gift, devise, purchase or condemnation to establish, extend, or improve transportation facilities.
- Wis. Stats. 84.25 (administrative access control) – WisDOT designates some rural portions of the state trunk highway system as controlled-access highways where studies show that the potential exists for traffic volumes to exceed 2,000 vehicles per 24-hour day.
- Wis. Stats. 84.295 (freeway and expressway access control) – WisDOT designates highways with greater than 4,000 vehicles per day as freeways or expressways when it is determined that the volume and character of traffic warrants the construction or acquisition of right-of-way to accommodate a four-lane highway.

### Midwest Regional Rail System

Nine Midwestern states, including Wisconsin, worked together on plans for linking the Midwest into a national passenger rail network, adopting a plan in 2000. Funding was acquired for the implementation of the leg between Milwaukee and Madison, and for the next phase of study, corridor selection, between Milwaukee and Minneapolis. In 2010, Wisconsin abandoned the project, returning the implementation funds to the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) and discontinuing participation in the corridor selection study. MnDOT continued the corridor study without Wisconsin's cooperation, eventually recommending a route through La Crosse over routes through Eau Claire that would have more closely served Neillsville. While environmental study continues on the La Crosse route, the Eau Claire corridor is still shown in local, regional, and state (Minnesota and Wisconsin) transportation plans, leaving passenger rail service through Clark County with some hope for the future.

### Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030

Airports, aviation and aviation-related industries play a significant role in the economic success of Wisconsin communities. The Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030 (SASP 2030) provides a framework for the preservation and enhancement of a system of public-use airports adequate to meet current and future aviation needs of Wisconsin.

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### Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan – 2020

This is the state's major plan for developing and integrating bicycles into the transportation system. It was adopted by WisDOT in 1998 and looked at creating a system of bikeways using suitable routes along County and state highways.

### State Recreational Trails Network Plan

This plan was adopted in 2001 and updated in 2003 by WDNR as an amendment to the Wisconsin State Trail Strategic Plan to identify a network of trail corridors throughout the state consisting of more than 4,000 miles of trails known as the Trail Interstate System. The Plan identified a potential trail corridor for a Marshfield to Merrilan trail segment as going through Neillsville. Per the plan this trail segment would consist of both rail and roadway.

### Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) developed the Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 to provide a long-range vision addressing Wisconsin pedestrian needs. The Pedestrian Plan provides a basic description of existing and emerging pedestrian needs over the next 20 years, with a set of recommendations to meet those needs. WisDOT's efforts ensure that this plan complements both existing and future long-range transportation plans.

## **Regional and Local Plans**

Chippewa County, Clark County and the City of Neillsville consider applicable State, regional, and local transportation plans in the development of their own respective transportation plans. All three submit Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) plans to WDOT in order to receive LRIP funding. The City of Neillsville manages its local transportation improvements through its five-year capital improvements plan.

## **Major Planned Transportation Improvements**

### State of Wisconsin and Clark County Highways

No known major improvements, expansions, or realignments are currently planned for any State or County Highways within the City of Neillsville.

### City of Neillsville Improvements

The City has several projects that are planned over the course of the next few years as described in the transportation element. Planning for local streets and roads is a continual process and improvements may be hastened or delayed due to damage from flooding, winter-related damage, heavy use, or coordination with other infrastructure improvements.

## **State Programs**

### Adopt-A-Highway Program

The Adopt-A-Highway Program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT). The program was initiated to allow groups to volunteer and support the state's antilitter program in a more direct way. Each qualified group takes responsibility for litter control on a segment of state highway. The group picks up litter on a segment at least three times per year between April 1 and November 1. Groups do not work in dangerous areas like medians, bridges, or steep slopes. In addition, a sign announcing a group's litter control sponsorship can be installed. The state Adopt-A-Highway coordinator should be contacted for further information. Applications and forms are available through the WDOT website.



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### Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER)

PASER is a simple method of rating asphalt and concrete roads on a scale of 1 to 10 and gravel roads on a scale of 1 to 5, based on visual inspection. PASER manuals and a video explain how and why roads deteriorate, and describe proper repair and replacement techniques. PASER rating can be put into PASERWARE, an easy to use pavement management software. PASERWARE helps to inventory roads and keep track of their PASER ratings and maintenance histories. It also helps to prioritize road maintenance and improvement needs, calculate project costs, evaluate the consequences of alternative budgets and project selection strategies, and communicate those consequences to the public and local officials. Both PASER and PASERWARE are available from the University of Wisconsin's Transportation Information Center at no charge. The Center also offers free training courses. Call 1-800-442-4615 for more information.

### Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) Program

The Transportation Economic Assistance program provides 50% state grants to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for road, rail, harbor, and airport projects that help attract employers to Wisconsin, or encourage business and industry to remain and expand in the state. Grants of up to \$1 million are available for transportation improvements that are essential for an economic development project. It must be scheduled to begin within three years, have the local government's endorsement, and benefit the public. For more information about this program, contact: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Division of Transportation Investment Management, phone (608) 266-3488.

### Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources does provide funding to local governments for trails, paths, routes, and other infrastructure for alternative modes of transportation, such as biking, walking/hiking, boating, and ATVs. Though these programs often have a recreational focus, such facilities can many times be an important component of a community's transportation strategy.

### Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) administers many of the federal HUD Community Development Block Grant programs at the state level. This funding includes the CDBG-Public Facilities program for infrastructure and building projects which may include streets and specialized transportation projects.

### Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Transportation programming efforts in Wisconsin are largely coordinated or funded through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), including the distribution of federal transportation assistance dollars. Many of these key assistance programs for county and local governments are listed below.

- **General Transportation Aids** return about 30% of all state-collected transportation revenues to local governments for road construction, maintenance, and other related costs
- **Local Roads and Local Bridge Improvement Programs** assist local governments in improving seriously deteriorating roads and bridges.
- **Surface Transportation Program** uses allocated federal funds for the improvement of federal-aid-eligible rural and urban roads and streets.



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- **Connecting Highway Aids** are available to municipalities for roadways connecting to the State Trunk Highway system, in particular if increased traffic is experienced.
- **Traffic Signing and Marking Enhancement Grants Program** provides funds to local governments for signage improvements to improve visibility for elderly drivers and pedestrians.
- **Rural and Small Urban Area Public Transportation Assistance** and the **Transit Assistance Program** allocate federal funds to support capital, operating, and training expenses for public transportation services.
- **Supplemental Transportation Rural Assistance Program** provides federal funds for the planning, start-up, and expansion of non-urban transit service projects.
- **Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance** funds provide counties with financial assistance to provide transportation services to the elderly and persons with disabilities. Capital funds through the **Section 5310 Program** are also available for non-profits and local governments. A related WisDOT-administered program is **New Freedom**, which provides Federal Transit Administration funds to private and public entities for programs which assist individuals with disabilities to overcome transportation-related barriers so they may get to work.
- **Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP)** provides start-up and development grant funding for projects which connect low-income workers with jobs through enhanced local transportation services. WETAP includes federal **Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)** Program funding and related requirements.
- **Local Transportation Enhancement Program** funds projects that increase multi-modal transportation alternatives (e.g., bicycling, pedestrian), landscaping/streetscaping, and the preservation of historic transportation structures.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Program** funds projects that construct or plan for bicycle or bicycle/pedestrian facilities. This program shares the same application process as the Local Transportation Enhancement Program.
- **Safe Routes to School Program** is a federal program administered by WisDOT aimed at helping communities to make it safer for children to walk and bike to and from school and to encourage them to do so. In addition to planning grants, implementation of education, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation programs and projects are also eligible under the program.
- **Airport Improvement Program** combines a variety of resources to fund improvements for the state's public-use airports which are primarily municipally owned. WisDOT is currently encouraging land use planning around airports and a *Wisconsin Airport Land Use Guidebook* is available to assist in these efforts. Additional program and regulatory support is also available through the Federal Aviation Administration.
- **Freight Rail Programs** for the preservation of existing rail service through rail acquisition and rehabilitation, and for the improvement of rail infrastructure.

Each year, WisDOT updates a four-year **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program** of all highway and transit projects that propose to use federal funds. WisDOT also has a variety of specialty assistance programs, such as Flood Damage Aids, Rustic Roads, County Forest Road Aids, and the Adopt-A-Highway Program. Data for local roads is managed by WisDOT through the

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Internet-accessible **Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR)**. For further information, contact the WDOT at (715) 836-2891.

### **Regional and Local Programs**

#### Neillsville Public Works Department

The department provides: maintenance and repair of street, alleys, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, street signs, street lights, storm sewers, culverts, drainage areas, City buildings and structures, and machinery and equipment; and other associated items.

#### Clark County Highway Department

The County Highway Department has responsibilities regarding the maintenance and repair of county highways.

#### West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWPRC)

The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission offers highway, rail and airport planning services as well as access control planning, pavement management plans, thoroughfare plans, traffic and parking studies, and pedestrian/bicycle trail planning guidance. Contact WCWPRC for further information.

#### Neillsville Shared-ride Taxi System

The Neillsville Shared-ride Taxi System serves a five-mile radius around the City and has recently expanded to include Stanley in Chippewa County. Service runs seven days a week and the fee is subsidized for the elderly or people with disabilities by a WDOT grant. The service is run by Abby Vans who is headquartered in Neillsville. For more information, call 715-743-4600. The Shared-ride Taxi System is also available throughout Clark County five days a week. For more information, call 715-743-3364 or 800-236-8438.

#### Specialized Transportation and Transit Providers

The following programs were discussed previously in Section 4.5 and should be contacted for more information. Information on these programs, including contact information, can be found at the Clark County Department of Social Services website or by contacting their office at 715-743-5233.

Clark County Taxi Service  
Clark County Social Services Volunteer Transportation  
Clark County Aging Unit  
Interfaith Caregivers of Clark County  
Abby Vans, Inc.  
Comfort Care, Inc.

The Jefferson Lines intercity bus service can be contacted at 715-644-3511.

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## UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLANS & PROGRAMS

### **Assistance to Firefighting Grant Program**

This program is administered by the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The program assists rural, urban, and suburban fire departments to increase the effectiveness of firefighting operations, expand firefighting health and safety programs, purchase new equipment, and invest in EMS programs. For information regarding the grant contact FEMA Grant Program staff at 1-866-274-0960. For the most current information regarding grant awards and any other USFA projects, visit [usfa.fema.gov](http://usfa.fema.gov).

### **Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks**

Funds are available to assist local communities acquire and develop public outdoor recreation areas as per s. 23.09 (20), Wis. Stats. Counties, towns, cities, villages, and Indian Tribes with an approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan are eligible to apply. The program is offered by the WDNR, Bureau of Community Financial Assistance. There is a 50% local match required. Awards are granted on a competitive basis. Acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas are eligible projects. Priority is given to the acquisition of land where a scarcity of outdoor recreation land exists.

### **Brownfields Initiative**

The Brownfields Initiative provides grants to persons, businesses, local development organizations, and municipalities for environmental remediation activities for brownfield sites where the owner is unknown, cannot be located, or cannot meet the cleanup costs. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation should be contacted for further information.

### **Clean Water Fund Program**

Funds are available to protect water quality by correcting existing wastewater treatment and urban storm water problems and preventing future problems as per s. 281.58 and 281.59, Wis. Stats. Cities, towns, villages, counties, town sanitary districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and federally-recognized tribal governments are eligible to apply. Eligible projects include construction of treatment works, sewer systems, interceptors, and urban stormwater runoff treatment systems. Projects that are necessary to prevent violation of discharge permits, meet new or changed discharge limits, or correct water quality or human health problems in unsewered areas may receive priority for funding. Low interest loans are available for planning, design, and construction of wastewater treatment projects and urban storm water runoff projects approved by the Department. The program is offered by the WDNR, Bureau of Community Financial Assistance.

### **Community Development Block Grant Blight Elimination and Brownfield Redevelopment Program (CDBG-BEBR)**

The Blight Elimination and Brownfield Redevelopment Program is designed to assist communities with assessing or remediating the environmental contamination of an abandoned, idle, or underused industrial or commercial facility or site in a blighted area, or one that qualifies as blighted. Critical to obtaining a grant is a redevelopment plan that describes how the property will be reused for commercial or industrial development that results in jobs and private investment in the community. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation should be contacted for further information.

### **Community Development Block Grant for Public Facilities (CDBG-PF)**

The Wisconsin CDBG Public Facilities Program is designed to assist economically distressed, smaller communities with public facility improvements. Eligible activities include, but are not limited

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to, publicly-owned utility system improvements, streets, sidewalks, and community centers. Federal grant funds are available annually. The maximum grant for any single applicant is \$750,000. Grants are only available up to the amount that is adequately justified and documented with engineering or vendor estimates. For more information on this program contact the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

### **Community Development Block Grant Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED)**

The CDBG Public Facilities for Economic Development Program helps underwrite the cost of municipal infrastructure necessary for business development that retains or creates employment opportunities. Eligible activities are improvements to public facilities such as water systems, sewerage systems, and roads that are owned by a general or special purpose unit of government, and which will principally benefit businesses, and which as a result will induce businesses to create jobs and invest in the community. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation should be contacted for further information.

### **Household and Agricultural Hazardous Waste Collection Grant (Clean Sweep)**

Funds are available to municipalities to create and operate local “clean sweep” programs for the collection and disposal of hazardous waste. Any type of program for the collection and disposal of hazardous wastes, including permanent collection programs, is eligible. The program is offered from the WDNR, Bureau of Community Financial Assistance. The Clark County UW-Extension, which currently coordinates a county-wide clean sweep, can also be contacted for further information.

### **Tax Incremental Financing (TIF)**

TIF can help a municipality undertake a public project to stimulate beneficial development or redevelopment that would not otherwise occur. It is a mechanism for financing local economic development projects in underdeveloped and blighted areas. Taxes generated by the increased property values pay for land acquisition or needed public works. The City’s current TIF districts are discussed in more detail within the Economic Development element.

### **Clark County Utility Accommodation Policy**

The purpose of the Clark County Utility Accommodation Policy is to prescribe the policies and procedures that shall be met by any utility whose facility currently occupies, or will occupy in the future, any highway right-of-way or bridge over which Clark County has jurisdiction. The Policy applies to all public and private utilities as defined in 96.01(B) (9) and (15). It also applies to all existing utility facilities retained, relocated, replaced, or altered, and to new utility facilities installed on Clark County right-of-way.

## **AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES PLANS & PROGRAMS**

There are many agricultural, forestry, and natural resource conservation programs which area residents and communities can access, and a variety of related programs. Since these programs are less applicable to the City of Neillsville than our unincorporated neighbors, they have not been included here. The *Inventory of Plans, Programs, and Land Use Policies of West Central Wisconsin* prepared by West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission provides an excellent overview of many of these program and plans. The Chippewa and Clark County Land Conservation Departments, the County UW-Extension Office, and the local NRCS and Farm Services Agency are additional excellent resources.



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The following is a description of some of the natural and cultural resources programs which may be of particular interest to the City and its residents.

### **Natural Resources Programs**

#### Wisconsin Act 307 – Notification to Nonmetallic Resource Owners

This Act amends portions of the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law to increase communication and notification of local planning with owners of nonmetallic mineral sites. Public participation procedures must now include written procedures describing the methods the local government will use to distribute proposed, alternative, or amended elements of a plan to owners of property, or to persons who have a leasehold interest in property, which may extract nonmetallic mineral resources on the property. This is only required if the comprehensive plan changes the allowable use or intensity of use of the given property. Wisconsin Act 307 also added provisions to the Comprehensive Planning Law detailing that prior to a public hearing written notice shall be provided to property owners or operators with an interest in nonmetallic mineral resources.

#### Historic Building Code

The Wisconsin Historic Building Code facilitates the restoration and rehabilitation of historic structures. Once historic building owners obtain permission to use the Historic Building Code, they may use it in lieu of any other state, county, or municipal code. The code is designed to help owners maintain the historic appearances of their buildings and allow them to use original materials and construction techniques that may no longer be permitted under present day building codes. To qualify to use the code, property owners must own buildings that fall under the code's definition of a historic building. Buildings listed in, nominated to, or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or State Register of Historic Places qualify as historic under the code. The code may also be applied to properties located in National Register and State Register historic districts. The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services administers the Historic Building Code and can be contacted for further information.

#### Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The purpose of EQIP is to provide technical and financial help to landowners for conservation practices that protect soil and water quality. Nutrient management and prescribed grazing are eligible for cost-sharing statewide. Assistance for other practices is available in selected priority areas. Approved projects are based on environmental value. Five to 10-year contracts are used. Agricultural producers may be eligible for up to 75% cost share on agricultural land. Public access is not required. Contact: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service or Farm Service Agency, or County Land and Water Conservation Department.

#### Non-Point Pollution Abatement Program

Funds are available to improve water quality by limiting or ending sources of non-point source (run-off) water pollution by providing financial and technical assistance to landowners, land operators, municipalities, and other governmental units. Governmental units located within designated priority watersheds, or whose jurisdiction include priority lakes, are eligible to apply. Eligible projects are watersheds and lakes where: 1) the water quality improvement or protection will be great in relation to funds expended; 2) the installation of best management practices is feasible to abate water pollution caused by non-point source pollution; and 3) the local governmental units and agencies involved are willing to carry out program responsibilities. Efforts are focused statewide in critical watersheds and lakes where non-point source related water quality problems are most severe and control is most feasible. Rural landowners or land operators, whose properties lie within selected priority watersheds or include a priority lake, can contact their county land conservation department

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to receive an explanation of the program and to sign up for cost sharing of best management practices. Non-rural landowners and land operators can contact their municipal government offices. A watershed or lake project normally has a 10- to 12-year time frame: two years for planning and eight to ten years to implement best management practices. Contact the WDNR Regional Environmental Grant Specialist for further information.

### River Management and Planning Grants

River management and planning grants are available from the WDNR for various river protection and conservation efforts.

### Stewardship Grants for Non-profit Conservation Organizations

Funds are available for the acquisition of land or easements for conservation purposes, and restoration of wildlife habitat. Non-profit conservation organizations are eligible to apply. Priorities include acquisition of wildlife habitat, acquisition of lands with special scientific or ecological value, rare and endangered habitats and species, acquisition of stream corridors, acquisition of land for state trails including the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail, and restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Eligible types of projects include fee simple and easement acquisitions and habitat restoration projects. Contact the WDNR for further information.

### Land Recycling Loan Program (LRLP)

Wisconsin's Land Recycling Loan Program (LRLP) provides low cost loans to cities, villages, counties, and towns for the purpose of remediating environmental contamination (brownfields) at landfills, sites, or facilities where contamination has affected or threatens to affect groundwater or surface water. Redevelopment and housing authorities are also eligible. Contact the WDNR for further information.

## **HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES PLANS & PROGRAMS**

### Historic Building Code

The Wisconsin Historic Building Code facilitates the restoration and rehabilitation of historic structures. Once historic building owners obtain permission to use the Historic Building Code, they may use it in lieu of any other state, county, or municipal code. The code is designed to help owners maintain the historic appearances of their buildings and allow them to use original materials and construction techniques that may no longer be permitted under present day building codes. To qualify to use the code, property owners must own buildings that fall under the code's definition of a historic building. Buildings listed in, nominated to, or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or State Register of Historic Places qualify as historic under the code. The code may also be applied to properties located in National Register and State Register historic districts. The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services administers the Historic Building Code and can be contacted for further information.

### Wisconsin's Main Street Program

The Main Street Program is a comprehensive revitalization program designed to promote the historical and economic redevelopment of traditional business districts in Wisconsin. The program was established in 1987 to encourage and support the revitalization of downtowns. Each year, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation selects communities to join the program. These communities receive technical support and training needed to restore their Main Streets to centers of community activity and commerce.

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### Wisconsin Historical Preservation Tax Credits

One of the benefits of owning a historic property in Wisconsin is the ability to participate in federal and state income tax incentives programs for rehabilitation of historic properties. There are currently three programs available to owners of properties that are either listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the state or national registers of historic places. The three programs are:

- 1 Federal 20% Historic Rehabilitation Credit.
- 2 Wisconsin 5% Supplement to Federal Historic Rehabilitation Credit.
- 3 Wisconsin 25% Historic Rehabilitation Credit. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Division of Historic Preservation should be contacted for further information

### Wisconsin Historical Society, Office of Preservation Planning (OPP)

Whether you need information concerning state or federal laws and regulations that may be applicable in your case, whether you need information on grassroots strategies for preserving and protecting historic properties, or whether you need information on how you may protect and preserve your own historic property, the OPP can assist.

### Wisconsin's Historical Markers Program

For almost 50 years, Wisconsin's State Historical Markers program has been interpreting both important small incidents and monumental events that form the State's past. Placed on the very site where significant events occurred, markers evoke an immediacy of the past that no history book can provide. The Society's Division of Historic Preservation administers the Wisconsin Historical Markers Program. Applications are required for all official State of Wisconsin historical markers and plaques. Applications are available at [wisconsinhistory.org/histbuild/markers/apply](http://wisconsinhistory.org/histbuild/markers/apply).

### National Historic Landmarks Program

National Historic Landmark status is the highest level of national designation. These are properties of exceptional value to the nation that retain a high degree of architectural and historical integrity. The purpose of the National Historic Landmarks Program is to identify and designate these properties and to encourage their long-range preservation. Nomination preparers should consult the Division of Historic Preservation and the National Park Service before proceeding with a National Historic Landmark nomination.

### National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Services Fund

Grants from this fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation are designed to encourage preservation at the local level by providing seed money for preservation projects. These grants help stimulate public discussion, enable local groups to gain the technical expertise needed for particular projects, and encourage financial participation by the private sector. PSF award applicants must be a non-profit organization or public agency capable of matching the grant amount dollar-for-dollar. The grant range is from \$500 to \$5,000.

### Wisconsin Humanities Council, Historic Preservation Program Grants

The Wisconsin Humanities Council and the Jeffris Family Foundation have formed a partnership pool to support Historic Preservation Program Grants. The Wisconsin Humanities Council (WHC) will award grants with funds from both groups. The WHC accepts proposals for projects that enhance appreciation of the importance of particular historic buildings or that increase public awareness of the importance of particular buildings or decorative art works in Wisconsin. Preference will be given to small town and rural communities with populations under 30,000. For more information contact the WHC, 222 South Bedford Street, Suite F, Madison, WI 53703.

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### Certified Local Government Program

Local units of government that have enacted historic preservation ordinances may consider being certified to participate in the state and federal Certified Local Government (CLG) program. The CLG program provides special grants to fund planning and educational activities. The Division of Historic Preservation at the Wisconsin Historical Society administers the CLG program. Wisconsin has 40 Certified Local Governments. For more information about the Certified Local Government please visit the Society's Web site at [wisconsinhistory.org/](http://wisconsinhistory.org/) or the National Park Service's Web site at [nps.gov/nr/](http://nps.gov/nr/).

### Local Organizations

A wide variety of local organizations are involved in promoting cultural or historical resources, which are important partners in related planning and programming. Key local partners and programs are discussed in the Historic and Cultural Resources element.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS & PROGRAMS

In addition to the plans and programs of the City of Neillsville there are many organizations, programs, grants, and services available to assist with economic development planning and activities. A number of the programs related to infrastructure development were previously discussed in the Utilities and Community Facilities element. The following are some additional commonly referred to economic development plans and programs.

### **U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA)**

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides financial assistance to help distressed communities overcome barriers that inhibit the growth of their local economies. EDA provides assistance for public works projects, planning, research and technical assistance, grants, and education. The WCWRPC is designated as an economic development district by the Economic Development Administration. It is required to undertake economic development planning and project identification for all seven counties of the region. For more information, see [wcwrpc.org](http://wcwrpc.org).

### **USDA, Wisconsin Rural Development Programs**

The Wisconsin Rural Development Program has many services that are available to rural communities and their residents. Available programs and services include: community development programs, business and community programs, rural housing and utilities services, and community facility programs. For more information visit the Wisconsin Rural Development web site at [rurdev.usda.gov/wi/index.html](http://rurdev.usda.gov/wi/index.html).

### **Forward Wisconsin**

Forward Wisconsin helps businesses looking for available sites or buildings through its website at [forwardwi.com/search/index.html](http://forwardwi.com/search/index.html).

### **Wisconsin Economic Development Association**

WEDA is a statewide association of 410+ member organizations whose primary objective is to increase the effectiveness of individuals involved in the practice of economic development in Wisconsin by encouraging cooperation, exchange of information and promotion of professional skills. With a proactive Council and involved membership support, we will continue to advance the professionalism of Wisconsin's economic development efforts. For more information see [weda.org/](http://weda.org/).

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### **Wisconsin Department of Administration**

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) has several grant programs and services available to communities or businesses within communities. The federally funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program can be used for housing, economic development, and public facility improvements. The following programs are available:

- CDBG Public Facility (PF) program for infrastructure and buildings benefitting the public
- CDBG Economic Development (ED) funding for business expansions, employee training and business infrastructure
- CDBG Public Facility-Economic Development (PF-ED) funding for public infrastructure necessary for business expansions

For more information, see [doa.state.wi.us](http://doa.state.wi.us).

### **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation**

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) nurtures business growth and job creation in Wisconsin by providing resources, technical support, and financial assistance to companies, partners and the communities they serve. For more information, see [inwisconsin.com/](http://inwisconsin.com/).



One program within WEDC is the Main Street Program. The Main Street Program helps communities revitalize their downtown areas. The National Main Street Center and state staff offer a comprehensive range of professional services that follow a four-point approach: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. More information on the Wisconsin Main Street Program can be found at: [inwisconsin.com/mainstreet/](http://inwisconsin.com/mainstreet/).

### **Wisconsin Department of Tourism**

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism has four primary grant programs and provides technical assistance and support to promote tourism and to maintain a strong tourism industry in Wisconsin. The grant programs include the Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Program for tourism marketing, the Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) Program for sporting events, the Tourist Information Center (TIC) Program, and the Meetings Mean Business Program to support conventions. Contact the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for further information at: [industry.travelwisconsin.com/](http://industry.travelwisconsin.com/).

### **Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development**

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is a state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce in the 21st century and beyond. The Department's primary responsibilities include providing job services, training, and employment assistance to people looking for work, at the same time as it works with employers on finding the necessary workers to fill current job openings.

Under the DWD umbrella, a wide variety of employment programs can be found which include securing jobs for the disabled, assisting former welfare recipients as they make a transition into work, promoting 72 job centers, linking youth with the jobs of tomorrow, protecting and enforcing worker's rights, processing unemployment claims, and ensuring workers compensation claims are paid in accordance with the law. There are six divisions within the Department which is headed by a Secretary appointed by the Governor. For further information visit the website at [dwd.state.wi.us](http://dwd.state.wi.us).



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The Office of Economic Advisors (OEA), within DWD, researches the relationships between labor markets and other economic and demographic factors. OEA economists and analysts serve in regions throughout Wisconsin. Staff works closely with partners to provide timely analysis of labor market data and economic trends.

### **Agricultural Development and Diversification (ADD) Grant Program**

The ADD grant program annually provides funding to projects that have the potential to bolster agricultural profits or productivity. The program funds proposals that are likely to stimulate Wisconsin's farm economy with new production or marketing techniques, alternative crops or enterprises, new value-added products, or new market research. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection should be contacted for further information.

### **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) provides many avenues for business owners to work with the agency in growing and sustaining Wisconsin's economy. The Office of Business Support and Sustainability is the agency's one-stop shop for business assistance. The office's mission is to work across programs to create the business climate that yields better environmental and economic performance. Some of the programs administered through the WDNR are:

- ◆ Remediation & Redevelopment (RR) Program: The WDNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program oversees the investigation and cleanup of environmental contamination and the redevelopment of contaminated properties. WDNR provide a comprehensive, streamlined program that consolidates state and federal cleanups into one program (e.g., hazardous waste cleanup, underground storage tank investigation & cleanup, spill response, state-funded cleanups and brownfields).
- ◆ Business sector support: Sector development specialists are WDNR staff who work with specific industrial or commercial sectors. They serve as the first point of contact for those businesses, providing coordinated technical and compliance assistance across all DNR divisions and programs. Sector development specialists work to improve environmental and economic performance by clarifying requirements, facilitating flexible approaches to requirements and enabling practices that improve profitability and market performance.
- ◆ Improved environmental and economic performance is pursued through various strategies including pollution prevention, waste minimization, energy efficiency, supply chain management, green chemistry, market development and many others. The sector specialists will also work with a business or sector to address trends important to business retention and market development related to environmental performance.
- ◆ Green Tier: Green Tier assists green business ventures. WDNR assists businesses with credible, creative ways to enable businesses to be a powerful, sustainable force for environmental good and enhance productivity, cut costs and strengthen the health of culture and community.
- ◆ DNR SwitchCouncil: The WDNR SwitchCouncil is for people who need to securely login and access forms and reporting systems which are usually related to a specific company or municipality.

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### **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)**

The following economic programs are offered by WHEDA.

- ◆ Credit Relief Outreach Program: CROP features 90% guarantees on loans of up to \$30,000 made by local lenders. Interest rates are competitive, and payment is not due until March 31 of the following year. CROP can be used for feed, seed, fertilizer, pesticides, land rent, custom hire, animal feed, UCC filing fees, crop insurance, feeder animals, tillage services, equipment rental or repair, or utilities for commodity production. You cannot use CROP for property taxes, farm house utilities, existing loans, capital improvements, CROP loan interest, accounting services, or revolving lines of credit.
- ◆ FARM: FARM is for the producer who wants to expand or modernize an existing operation. FARM gives you access to credit by guaranteeing a loan made by your local lender. You can purchase agricultural assets including machinery, equipment, facilities, land, and livestock. You can also make improvements to farm facilities and land for agricultural purposes. FARM cannot be used for a farm residence, existing loans, maintenance, or other working capital needs that are eligible under CROP.
- ◆ Small Business Guarantee: A guarantee is a pledge of support on a bank loan. WHEDA will guarantee a portion of a loan made to you by your local lender. A WHEDA Small Business Guarantee can be used to expand or acquire a small business. It can also be used to start a day care business, including one owned by a cooperative or non-profit. The guarantee can be used for most of your financing needs, including working capital and refinancing of business notes and credit card debt.

### **Wisconsin Department of Transportation**

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) administers the Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) program which provides 50 percent state grants to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for road, rail, harbor and airport projects that help attract employers to Wisconsin, or encourage business and industry to remain and expand in the state. For more information, see [dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/tea.htm](http://dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/tea.htm).

### **Momentum West**

Momentum West is a regional economic development organization serving Clark, Clark, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pierce, Pepin, Clark, Rusk, and St. Croix counties. The mission of Momentum West is to develop partnerships and leverage the resources in West Wisconsin to market the region and grow the economy. For more information, see [momentumwest.org/index.cfm](http://momentumwest.org/index.cfm).

### **West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

On a multi-county level, the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission conducts economic development and project development. The Commission is designated as an economic development district by the Economic Development Administration and produces an annual, regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and is required to undertake economic development planning and project identification for all seven counties of the region. The Commission provides local economic strategies, industrial site analyses, economic development financing, county economic and population profiles, EMSI Analyst information, and community and industrial park profiles. In addition WCWRPC can assist communities with placemaking initiatives, Tax Incremental Financing (TIF), grant coordination, writing and administration. For more information, please see [wcwrpc.org](http://wcwrpc.org).

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### **Regional Business Fund, Inc.**

All communities in Clark County are covered by a business revolving loan fund. The Regional Business Fund, Inc., administered by WCWRPC which has three components—Downtown Façade Loan, Micro Loan Fund, and Technology Enterprise Fund.

### **Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau**

Clark County Economic Development Corporation is the primary agency in Clark County responsible for creating new jobs and investment as well as marketing the County for tourism and workforce attraction/retention. The programs are designed to support and promote economic development with the County and its communities, primarily by attracting new industries, assisting in the development, retention, and expansion of businesses, and assisting communities in preparing for economic development opportunities.

### **Clark County, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension**

The University of Wisconsin-Extension has an office in Balsam Lake. Cooperative Extension develops practical educational programs tailored to local needs and based on university knowledge and research. County-based Extension educators are University of Wisconsin faculty and staff who are experts in agriculture and agribusiness, community and economic development, natural resources, family living, nutrition, 4-H, and youth development.

Extension county-based faculty and staff live and work with the people they serve in communities across the state. Extension specialists work on UW System campuses where they access current research and knowledge. Collaboration between county and campus faculty is the hallmark of Cooperative Extension in Wisconsin.

One program within the Cooperative Extension is the First Impressions program. The First Impressions program offers an inexpensive way of determining what visitors think of your community. Volunteers from two somewhat similar communities (size, location, county seat, etc.) agree to do unannounced exchange visits and then report on their findings. It is somewhat similar to the WCWRPC's placemaking efforts, but provides a visitor's impressions of aesthetics and "welcomingness", rather than an emphasis on function, uses, and activities by those who live, work, and play in a place. The two programs can be complimentary. For more information, visit <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/communities/firstimpressions/> and contact WCWRPC regarding placemaking.

### **Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grant Program**

The Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grant Program provides partnership funding to help non-profit organizations promote tourism and to maintain a strong tourism industry in Wisconsin. JEM is based on state statutes and administrative rules that govern its administration, and permit the department to conduct a matching grant program with local non-profit organizations on a cooperative basis. The program offers Wisconsin's tourism communities a variety of options to assist in the development of marketing initiatives. Contact the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for further information.

### **Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development**

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is a state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce in the 21st century and beyond. The Department's primary responsibilities include providing job services, training, and employment assistance to people looking for work, at the same time as it works with employers on finding the necessary workers to fill current job openings.

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Under the DWD umbrella, a wide variety of employment programs can be found which include securing jobs for the disabled, assisting former welfare recipients as they make a transition into work, promoting 72 job centers, linking youth with the jobs of tomorrow, protecting and enforcing worker's rights, processing unemployment claims, and ensuring workers compensation claims are paid in accordance with the law. There are six divisions within the Department which is headed by a Secretary appointed by the Governor. For further information visit the web-site at [www.dwd.state.wi.us](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us).

The Office of Economic Advisors (OEA), within DWD, researches the relationships between labor markets and other economic and demographic factors. OEA economists and analysts serve in regions throughout Wisconsin. Staff works closely with partners to provide timely analysis of labor market data and economic trends.

### **Neillsville Area Chamber of Commerce**

The Neillsville Area Chamber of Commerce's mission is to promote and enhance the civic, commercial, and industrial welfare of the City of Neillsville and the surrounding area. This mission is accomplished through a variety of activities and member benefits, including a website with business directory, support and marketing of area businesses, events, and attractions, coordination of training programs, and a variety of member-to-member networking and promotion activities. The Chamber's Executive Director participated in this plan update. Visit their website at [www.neillsville.org](http://www.neillsville.org).

### **Neillsville Improvement Corporation (NIC)**

The NIC is a non-profit corporation which was originally formed to guide State Highway 73 improvements as part of a WDOT highway corridor improvement project. NIC's past efforts in the community include downtown signage and wayfinding and the gazebo and historic clock. The NIC is currently coordinating with the Chamber to schedule and conduct a First Impressions peer-to-peer evaluation and a placemaking exercise.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

The following general intergovernmental plans and programs are available to the City, in addition to those plans and programs mentioned in other sub-sections of this element.

### **League of Wisconsin Municipalities**

The League of Wisconsin Municipalities is a not-profit association of municipalities. First established in 1898, the League acts as an information clearinghouse, lobbying organization and legal resource for Wisconsin municipalities. Its membership consists of 378 villages and all of the 190 cities in the state. Clark County cities and villages participate in the League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

### **Annexation**

Wisconsin Statute, 66.021, Annexation of territory, provides three petition methods by which annexation may occur. Annexation involves the transfer of one or more tax parcels from a town to a City or Village. Cities and villages cannot annex property without the consent of landowners as required by the following petition procedures:

1. Unanimous Approval - A petition is signed by all of the electors residing in the territory and the owners of all of the real property included within the petition.

## Appendix E

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

Annexation by referendum - A petition requesting a referendum election on the question of annexation may be filed with the City or Village when signed by at least 20 percent of the electors in the territory. Chippewa and Clark County cities and villages have grown and will likely continue to grow through the use of annexation.

### **Extraterritorial Zoning**

Wisconsin Statute, 62.23(7a) allows a City or Village to participate with towns in the zoning of lands outside their incorporate boundaries. For the City of Neillsville, the extraterritorial area would encompass 1.5 miles. The steps for exercising this power are identified in the Statutes and include working with the Town to create a joint extraterritorial zoning committee with three City and three town members to create the extraterritorial zoning plan. A majority of the joint committee members must approve the zoning plan recommendations.

### **Extraterritorial Subdivision Review**

Wisconsin Statute, 236.10 allows a City or Village to exercise its extraterritorial plat review authority in the same geographic area as defined within the extraterritorial zoning statute. However, extraterritorial zoning requires town approval of the zoning ordinance, while extraterritorial plat approval applies automatically if the City or Village adopts a subdivision ordinance or official map. The town does not approve the subdivision ordinance for the City or Village. The City or Village may waive its extraterritorial plat approval authority if it does not wish to use it.

The purpose of extraterritorial plat approval jurisdiction is to help cities influence the development pattern of areas outside their boundaries that will likely be annexed to the City or Village. This helps cities protect land use near its boundaries from conflicting uses outside its limits. Overlapping authority by the City and Village is prohibited. This situation is handled by drawing a line of equal distance from the boundaries of the City and Village so that not more than one ordinance will apply.

### **Office of Land Information Services, Municipal Boundary Review**

Municipal Boundary Review regulates the transition of unincorporated areas to City or Village status through municipal annexation, incorporation, consolidation, or by joint City-Village-town activities involving cooperative boundary plans and agreements. Such agreements may change territorial boundaries and may provide for the sharing of municipal services. Staff members are available upon request to meet with local officials and citizens to discuss annexation, incorporation, consolidation, and cooperative boundary plans. Contact the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Office of Land Information Services for further information.

### **UW-Extension Local Government Center**

The mission of the Local Government Center is to provide focus, coordination, and leadership to UW System educational programs for local government, and to expand the research and knowledge base for local government education. The Center conducts and coordinates educational programming in general local government, local government finance, growth management, and community planning and design. Additional programs are under development. Educational programs are delivered through the two-way audio Educational Telecommunications Network (ETN), satellite television, and state-wide and regional workshops. The Center supports the programming of county-based Extension faculty. A variety of resources regarding



## Appendix E

intergovernmental cooperation are available through the Local Government Center. For further information visit its website at [uwex.edu/lgc/](http://uwex.edu/lgc/).

### **Wisconsin Intergovernmental Statute Agreements**

The following statutes in Wisconsin promote and allow for intergovernmental cooperation:

#### ***66.0301 - Intergovernmental Cooperation***

Wisconsin Statute, 66.0301 permits local agreements between the state, cities, villages, towns, counties, regional planning commissions, certain special districts, including school districts, public library systems, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, sanitary districts, farm drainage districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and sewer utility districts, Indian tribes or bands, and others. Intergovernmental agreements prepared in accordance with s. 66.0301, formerly s. 66.30, are the most common form of agreement and have been used by communities for years, often in the context of sharing public services such as police, fire, or rescue. This type of agreement can also be used to provide for revenue sharing, determine future land use within a subject area, and to set temporary municipal boundaries. However, the statute does not require planning as a component of any agreement and boundary changes have to be accomplished through the normal annexation process.

#### ***66.0307 - Boundary changes pursuant to approved cooperative plan***

Under Section 66.0307, Wisconsin Statutes, combinations of municipalities may prepare cooperative boundary plans or agreements. Each City, Village, or Town that intends to participate in the preparation of a cooperative plan must adopt a resolution authorizing its participation in the planning process.

Cooperative boundary plans or agreements involve decisions regarding the maintenance or change of municipal boundaries for a period of 10 years or more. The cooperative plan must include: a plan for the physical development of the territory covered by the plan. It must also include; a schedule for changes to the boundary; plans for the delivery of services; an evaluation of environmental features and a description of any adverse environmental consequences that may result from the implementation of the plan; and it must address the need for safe and affordable housing. The participating communities must hold a public hearing prior to its adoption. Once adopted, the plan must be submitted for state approval. Upon approval, the cooperative plan has the force and effect of a contract.

#### ***66.0309 Creation, Organization, Powers and Duties of Regional Planning Commissions***

Wisconsin Statute 66.0309 permits local governments to petition the governor to create a regional planning commission (RPC). If local support for a commission is unanimous, the governor may create it by executive order. The governor may also create a commission if local governments representing over 50% of the population or assessed valuation of the proposed region consent to the creation. Either local governments or the governor appoints commission members.

State Statutes require the RPC to perform three major functions:

- Make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the region.
- If requested by a local unit, report recommendations to that local unit on the location of, or acquisition of, land for any of the items or facilities that are included in the adopted regional master plan.
- Make an annual report of its activities to the legislative bodies of the local governmental units within the region.

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RPCs are also authorized to perform several other functions, however, by law, they serve a strictly advisory role. Clark County is a member of the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

### LAND USE PLANS & PROGRAMS

The following are some general land use plans and programs. Land use implementation tools are addressed in the Implementation element.

#### **City of Neillsville Comprehensive Planning Efforts**

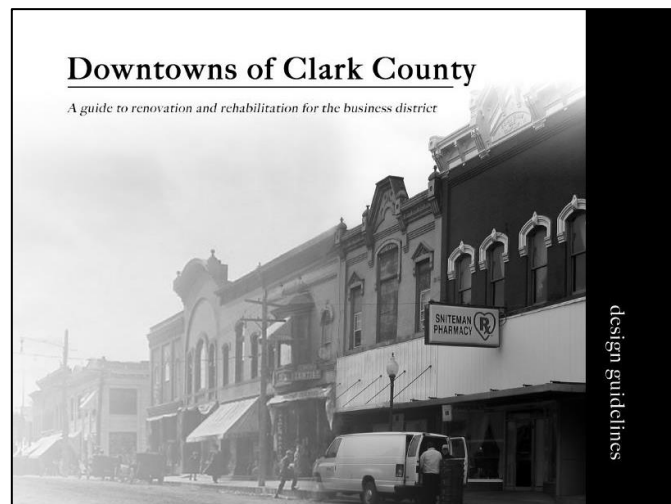
This document is an update of the *City of Neillsville Year 2033 Comprehensive* which was adopted in 2013 as an update to the City's plan adopted in 2009. This plan update reviewed and incorporated issues, data, goals, and strategies from the Plan as deemed appropriate by the Plan Commission and Economic Development Commission.

#### **City of Neillsville Policy and Planning Guidance, 2001**

The City of Neillsville Planning Commission prepared a document titled *Policy and Planning Guidance, February 2001*, with the assistance of the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The guidance document was divided into four sections. The first section displays the results of Plan Commission strategic planning done in 2000. The second section contains the City's goals and policies from the 1986 comprehensive plan. The third part contains the results of the 1997 community opinion survey and the last portion included the latest Capital Improvement Program. The 2025 Comprehensive Plan utilized the information, goals, objectives, and policies contained within the Policy and Planning Guidance report to create the goals, objectives, and policies, many of which are unchanged in this plan update.

#### **Downtowns of Clark County**

This guide to renovation and rehabilitation for the business district was developed by the Clark County Economic Development Corporation under a program to offer design assistance which maintains the historic integrity of downtown buildings working through design committees in each community. The City of Neillsville has adopted these guidelines for downtown landowners who wish to obtain a loan through the Regional Business Fund's Façade Program.



### **Additional Land Use Programs**

#### ***AB608, Wisconsin Act 233 – Clarification of Smart Growth Law***

This bill was signed into law in April 2004. This new law reduces the number of programs or actions with which a comprehensive plan must be consistent. Under the new legislation, the only actions which must be consistent with a comprehensive plan are official mapping, local subdivision regulation, and zoning ordinances, including zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands. The

## Appendix E

bill also reiterates that an RPC's comprehensive plan is only advisory in its applicability to a political subdivision (a City, Village, Town or County), and a political subdivision's comprehensive plan.

### ***Main Street Program***

The Main Street Program is a comprehensive revitalization program designed to promote the historic and economic redevelopment of traditional business districts in Wisconsin. Each year, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation selects communities to join the program. These communities receive technical support and training needed to restore their Main Streets to centers of community activity and commerce. Communities interested in applying to the Wisconsin Main Street Program are required to send at least one representative to a workshop. An application is required which must demonstrate the need for the program based on several criteria including a public sector commitment, financial capacity, organizational capability, as well as several other criteria. More information on the Wisconsin Main Street Program can be found at: <http://inwisconsin.com/mainstreet/>

### ***Wisconsin Land Information Program***

The Wisconsin Land Information Program is a voluntary, statewide program that provides financial support to local governments for land records modernization efforts. All 72 Wisconsin counties voluntarily participate in the Program. The Wisconsin Land Information Council oversees the Program's policies. The Council's statutory authority includes preparing guidelines to coordinate the modernization of land records and land information systems; implementing a grant program for local governmental units; approval of countywide plans for land records modernization; serving as the clearinghouse for access to land information; and providing technical assistance and advice to state agencies and local governmental units with land information responsibilities.

### ***Division of Intergovernmental Relations, Wisconsin Department of Administration***

The Division of Intergovernmental Relations provides staff support to the Wisconsin Land Council, and it administers the Wisconsin Land Information Program in conjunction with the Wisconsin Land Information Council. It also houses Plat Review and Municipal Boundary Review, both of which have statutory authority for approval of specific land use related requests, and the GIS Services, dedicated to the efficient use of geographic information systems. For further information about the division visit its web-site via the WDOA web-site at: [www.doa.state.wi.us](http://www.doa.state.wi.us).

### ***UW-Extension Center for Land Use Education***

The Center for Land Use Education uses a team-based approach to accomplish its dual missions in campus based undergraduate and graduate education and Extension outreach teaching related to: land use planning, plan and ordinance administration, project impact and regional trends analysis, and public involvement in local land use policy development. For more information on the Center for Land Use Education visit its web-site at [www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/).

### ***West Central Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan***

As required by State Statute, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission adopted a regional comprehensive plan in September 9, 2010. This advisory document includes all of the nine elements required under State comprehensive planning statutes, plus an additional energy and sustainability element. The plan includes land use trends for the region.

# Appendix F

## Appendix F: City of Neillsville Public Opinion Survey Results

### CITY OF NEILLSVILLE PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

285 Survey Returned - February 1, 2013

#### QUALITY OF LIFE

1. What are the **three** most important reasons you and your family choose to live in Neillsville? (285 Responses)

1.8%	Appearance of Homes	16.5%	Low Crime Rate	13.3%	Quality Neighborhood
7.7%	Community Services	16.8%	Natural Beauty	25.3%	Quality Schools
21.4%	Cost of Home	55.1%	Near Family & Friends	6.7%	Recreational Opportunities
4.2%	Near Shopping	34.4%	Near Job	54.4%	Small Town Atmosphere
4.2%	Property Taxes	11.6%	Other (please identify)	11.6%	Job Availability

2. Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in Neillsville? (274 Responses)	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
	27.0%	46.4%	22.3%	3.6%	0.7%

#### FACILITIES AND SERVICES

3. Rate the following <u>local services in Neillsville.</u>	Don't Know	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
A. Ambulance Service (278 Responses)	24.1%	50.4%	20.9%	3.6%	0.7%	0.4%
B. Fire Protection (277 Responses)	15.9%	59.9%	21.7%	2.2%	0.0%	0.4%
C. Garbage Collection (281 Responses)	1.1%	66.2%	25.3%	6.4%	0.4%	0.7%
D. Health care (280 Responses)	2.1%	35.0%	33.9%	22.9%	4.6%	1.4%
E. High Speed Internet (268 Responses)	24.3%	16.4%	29.5%	22.4%	5.6%	1.9%
F. Municipal Water System (279 Responses)	2.2%	36.9%	36.6%	21.5%	2.5%	0.4%
G. Park and Recreation Facilities/Programs (276 Responses)	6.9%	47.1%	33.3%	11.2%	1.1%	0.4%
H. Police Protection (277 Responses)	5.4%	43.3%	36.8%	12.3%	1.1%	1.1%
I. Public Library (280 Responses)	8.9%	60.7%	24.6%	4.6%	0.7%	0.4%
J. Public School System (279 Responses)	10.0%	53.0%	26.2%	8.2%	1.8%	0.7%
K. Recycling Programs (278 Responses)	4.0%	41.0%	38.5%	14.0%	1.8%	0.7%
L. Sanitary Sewer Service (277 Responses)	6.5%	36.8%	26.8%	17.3%	2.2%	0.4%
M. Senior Housing (277 Responses)	29.6%	22.4%	25.6%	15.9%	4.7%	1.8%
N. Senior Services (e.g. transportation) (274 Responses)	27.7%	26.3%	28.1%	13.9%	2.9%	1.1%
O. Snow Removal (280 Responses)	1.8%	37.5%	38.2%	21.1%	1.1%	0.4%
P. Street and Road Maintenance (281 Responses)	0.4%	29.5%	31.3%	29.9%	7.5%	1.4%



# Appendix F

## TRANSPORTATION

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
4. The overall road network (roads, streets, and highways) in Neillsville meets <b>current</b> needs. (270 Responses)	12.2%	75.9%	7.0%	1.9%	3.0%
5. The sidewalk system in Neillsville meets <b>current</b> needs (269 Responses)	7.8%	69.1%	14.5%	3.7%	4.8%
6. Additional non-motorized walking /biking trails or routes are needed in Neillsville. (269 Responses)	17.5%	40.9%	19.7%	4.8%	17.1%
7. More ATV routes are needed in Neillsville. (269 Responses)	7.1%	15.2%	33.1%	15.6%	29.0%

## COMMUNICATION

8. Which is your preferred primary source of information about City of Neillsville government? (267 Responses)

Direct Mailings	Radio	Newspaper Articles	Newsletter	Web Site	Community Television
18.0%	14.2%	50.9%	4.5%	7.5%	4.9%

## NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

9. How important it is for Neillsville to take these actions:	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	No Opinion
A. Enhance the gateways and entrances to the City. (272 Responses)	14.7%	39.3%	34.9%	11.0%
B. Restore the urban forest along the major streets and in the parks. (268 Responses)	22.8%	39.2%	28.7%	9.3%
C. Preserve the cultural and historic sites within the City. (272 Responses)	26.1%	46.7%	22.4%	4.8%
D. Restore the natural plant communities and wildlife habitat in the parks and open spaces. (272 Responses)	20.6%	46.3%	26.8%	6.3%
E. Protect the ground water and rivers by encouraging water to infiltrate into the ground rather than running into the storm sewers and creeks. (269 Responses)	49.1%	34.6%	11.2%	5.2%

## LAND USE

10. What is your vision for the future of Neillsville? How important is it for the City to:	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant
A. Encourage retail, commercial, and professional services development in Neillsville's downtown. (271 Responses)	64.2%	33.2%	2.2%	0.4%
B. Encourage increasing the base of manufacturing employment. (270 Responses)	73.3%	25.2%	1.0%	0.0%
C. Become a suburban "bedroom" community. (252 Responses)	5.2%	21.8%	56.0%	17.1%



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11. How do you feel about the following statements?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
A. Landowners should be allowed to develop their land any way they want. (269 Responses)	13.4%	27.9%	38.3%	14.5%	5.9%
B. It is important to protect my quality of life and property values from impacts due to activities/development on neighboring properties. (250 Responses)	46.8%	45.2%	4.0%	0.4%	3.6%

## HOUSING

12. What is your opinion about the availability of the following housing types in the City of Neillsville?	Too many	Right amount	Too few	No Opinion
A. Single family homes (257 Responses)	6.2%	62.3%	12.1%	19.5%
B. Starter homes (for first time buyers) (256 Responses)	8.2%	46.5%	24.6%	20.7%
C. Duplexes and townhomes (254 Responses)	3.5%	30.3%	36.6%	29.5%
D. Upscale condominiums (253 Responses)	4.3%	15.8%	28.9%	51.0%
E. Affordable, quality apartment units (256 Responses)	0.4%	31.6%	50.4%	17.6%
F. Senior condominiums and apartments (258 Responses)	1.6%	36.4%	38.8%	23.3%
G. Assisted living facilities (257 Responses)	0.4%	48.2%	27.6%	23.7%
H. Nursing homes (255 Responses)	0.4%	64.3%	14.5%	20.8%
I. Downtown housing (255 Responses)	16.5%	31.8%	11.4%	40.4%

13. The appearance of residences in my neighborhood is <b>important</b> to me. (265 Responses)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
	65.3%	31.3%	1.9%	0.4%	1.1%

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

14. Rate the importance of promoting and encouraging the following types of development for the future of Neillsville?	Essential	Very Important	Important	Not Important	No Opinion
A. Agricultural Related (257 Responses)	26.5%	34.2%	31.1%	2.3%	5.8%
B. Commercial and Retail (260 Responses)	33.8%	40.8%	22.7%	1.2%	1.5%
C. Office/Professional (259 Responses)	18.1%	33.2%	39.8%	3.9%	5.0%
D. Downtown Development and Revitalization (262 Responses)	32.8%	32.1%	27.1%	5.7%	2.3%
E. Home-Based Businesses (256 Responses)	8.6%	19.9%	39.1%	19.1%	13.3%
F. Industrial and Manufacturing (262 Responses)	48.9%	32.1%	16.4%	0.8%	1.9%
G. Government (254 Responses)	16.1%	30.3%	35.8%	11.8%	5.9%
H. Historical- and Cultural-Based Tourism (260 Responses)	15.4%	28.5%	39.6%	11.2%	5.4%
I. Outdoor-Based Tourism and Recreation (258 Responses)	18.6%	39.9%	33.7%	3.9%	3.9%
J. Other (21 Responses)	33.3%	28.6%	19.0%	4.8%	14.3%



# Appendix F

15. If someone in your household works outside the home, how many minutes (one way) does it take them to commute to work each day? (260 Responses)	NA	Under 10	10 - 19	20 - 34	35+
	46.2%	30.8%	7.3%	7.7%	8.1%

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Please tell us some things about you. The information in this survey does not identify you personally and all surveys are anonymous. Do not include your name.

16. Gender: (278 Responses)	Male	Female	17. Age (278 Responses)	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	44.6%	55.4%		0.4%	4.0%	6.5%	16.9%	22.3%	50.0%

18. Employment Status: (281 Responses)	Employed Full Time	Employed Part Time	Self Employed	Unemployed	Retired	Other
	31.3%	8.5%	7.1%	2.1%	50.5%	0.4%

19. Place of Residence: (281 Responses)	Own	Rent	Other: _____
	92.2%	7.1%	0.7%

Household size:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8+
20. Number of Adults 18 to 64 in Household: (281 Responses)	42.3%	20.3%	30.6%	6.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
21. Number of Adults 65 or older in Household: (281 Responses)	47.3%	29.9%	22.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
22. Number of Children under 18 in Household: (281 Responses)	85.1%	4.6%	6.4%	3.2%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

23. Annual Household Income Range: (261 Responses)	Less than 15,000	15,000 – 24,999	25,000 – 33,550	33,551 – 38,350	38,351 – 43,150	43,151 – 47,900	47,901 – 51,750
	10.7%	15.7%	14.6%	8.4%	9.2%	5.0%	8.4%
	51,751 – 55,600	55,601 – 59,400	59,401 – 63,250	63,251 – 74,999	75,000 – 99,999	100,000 or more	
	2.3%	0.8%	5.4%	6.1%	6.1%	7.3%	

24. How many years have you lived in Neillsville? (281 Responses)	Less than 1	1 – 4	5 - 9	10 - 24	25+
	3.6%	3.6%	6.8%	26.3%	59.8%

## Appendix G

### Appendix G: List of Potentially NRHP-Eligible Historic Properties - as Determined by a 2003 Intensive Survey of the City of Neillsville and as Identified by the City Historic Preservation Commission

Photos below are in the care of and provided by Rebecca Bernstein.



105 West 7th (Merchant's Hotel)



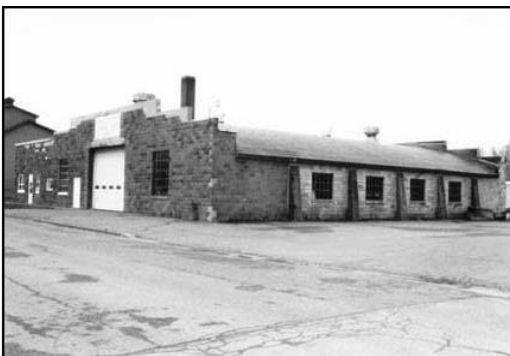
212 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street



208 Hewett Street (Grey stucco Dutch Colonial)



313 Hewett Street (Bungalow)



801 Clay (County Garage)



1003 Hewett Street



# Appendix G

Photos below are from the Wisconsin Historical Society's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) database as provided by the City of Neillsville through the City's 2003 Intensive Survey of properties.



134 E 5<sup>th</sup> Street (North House)



161 E 5<sup>th</sup> Street



140 W 5<sup>th</sup> Street



312 W 5<sup>th</sup> Street



319 State Street

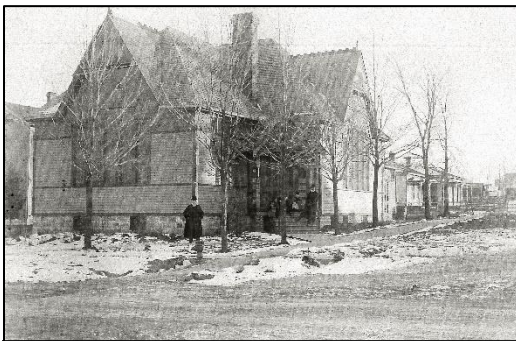


122 Hewett Street

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1209 Lloyd Street

312 E 4<sup>th</sup> Street316 W 5<sup>th</sup> Street203 W 7<sup>th</sup> Street221 W 8<sup>th</sup> Street

214 Clay Street



300 Clay Street



1002 Hewett Street



