



TOWN OF MEDARY

Comprehensive Plan 2044/5



Abstract

Title: Town of Medary Comprehensive Plan 2024-2044

The Town of Medary Comprehensive Plan 2024-2044 provides a snapshot of existing conditions and addresses the Town's important issues. This plan provides a vision for the Town of Medary's future and includes goals and recommendations that will guide the Town towards it. This plan is organized into chapters that encapsulate core duties and functions of Town government including Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Economic Development, Utilities and Community Facilities, Intergovernmental Relationships, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Sustainability. This summary provides a brief overview of each of these elements.

Background and Demographics

In this chapter, an overview of Medary's population is presented. Figures are drawn from the 2020 decennial census and the 2022 5-year American Community Survey (ACS). Statistics presented in this section include population data by age and sex, housing and income, and workforce makeup of residents.

Land Use

This chapter assesses the existing makeup of development within the Town and projects the estimated land needed to accommodate future developments at current pace. The primary focus of these projections and the chapter is housing, as the existing land use is primarily residential and agricultural. The unique geography and topography of Medary limit the available land for development.

Housing

In housing, the residential statistics mentioned in the previous chapter are expanded upon and housing costs are emphasized.

Transportation

The transportation chapter gives an overview of the existing transportation system within Medary. This includes all modes of travel that a Medary resident of any age or ability may consider. Regional and State plans are also considered for their applicability and relevance to Medary's goals.

Economic Development

Economic development establishes priorities for how the town can encourage and assist in the development of a healthy local economy. Rates of unemployment, the makeup and distribution of incomes, and commuting patterns are presented in this chapter. Additionally, a general economic development policy is outlined that supports a strong local economy and workforce.

Utilities and Community Facilities

This chapter summarizes the existing community facilities and public services available in the region and the availability of them to town residents. These services range from water and wastewater treatment to emergency services and parks.

Intergovernmental Relationships and Conflicts

Within this section, the existing relationships with partner organizations and agencies are explored. The Town works with numerous agencies to ensure Town services run smoothly and effectively. Existing conflicts and a potential path towards resolution are also discussed within this chapter.

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources

The resources chapter outlines the existing agricultural, natural, and cultural wealth in Medary. As these resources stretch far beyond Medary's borders, it's important to consider the broader scope of change these resources are experiencing so that they can be effectively planned for.

Sustainability

New to the Medary comprehensive plan, the sustainability chapter discusses the quality of the natural environment in Medary and the potential negative impacts of climate change. Various sectors are highlighted with resources and recommendations to both mitigate further environmental pollution and adapt to existing and future climate impacts. Within Medary, the conservation of natural resources and beauty were among the most important qualities residents supported.

Implementation

This plan will be used to guide the Town's decision making related to land use, transportation, and project budgeting. Specific recommendations are made throughout this plan and are organized within this chapter into actionable steps for Town officials to implement.

Plan development period: March 2024 – January 2025

Town of Medary Board: Steve Elsen, Chairman
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Dean Taylor, Supervisor 2

Town Clerk: Diane Elsen

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INTRODUCTION

The Town of Medary Comprehensive Plan is being prepared under the State of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law, Section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. This law specifies the contents of a comprehensive plan and states that beginning on January 1, 2010, if a local governmental unit engages in official mapping, subdivision regulation, zoning, or zoning of shorelands or wetlands these actions are to be consistent with a local governmental unit's comprehensive plan. The content of this Plan is designed to meet the requirements of the State's comprehensive planning law. The Town of Medary previously adopted a 2008 - 2028 Comprehensive Plan in January 2009.

The Town of Medary is located in La Crosse County in western Wisconsin. The Town consists of approximately 4,400 acres. The Town of Medary is bordered on the north by the Towns of Onalaska and Hamilton, on the south by the Town of Shelby, on the east by the Town of Barre and Town of Hamilton, and on the west by the Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska. See Map 1.

Plan Purpose

The Town of Medary Comprehensive Plan has been developed to provide background and direction for a variety of land use decisions. Included in this plan are chapters, or elements, which provide baseline information and goals, objectives, and recommendations specific to each element. This plan should be used by the Planning Commission to make decisions about growth and development over the next 20-year period. Periodic updates are required to ensure this plan remains current over time. Specific requirements and procedures for use and maintenance of this plan are provided in the Implementation Element.

Plan Organization

Elements in this plan include:

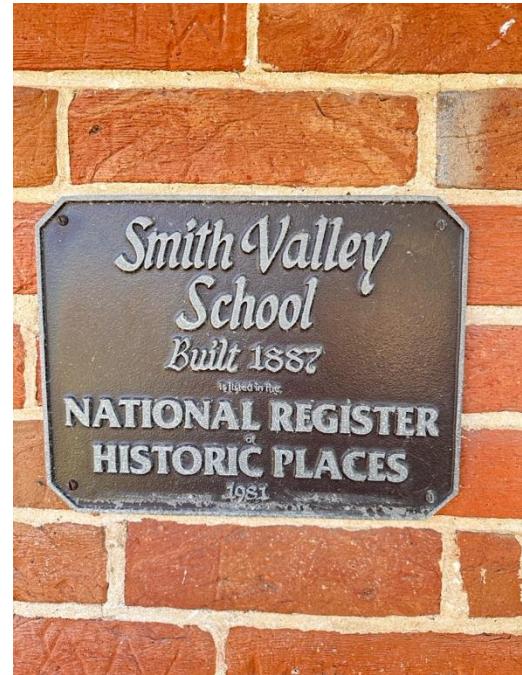
1. Background and Demographics
2. Land Use
3. Housing
4. Transportation
5. Economic Development
6. Utilities and Community Facilities
7. Intergovernmental Cooperation
8. Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
9. Implementation



Town of Medary History

In April of 1953 a referendum was overwhelmingly approved by the Town residents to divide the Town of Campbell into two towns. Final approval of this action was authorized in December of 1953 by the La Crosse County Board. The Town of Medary was created in 1954. The Town of Medary began government operations shortly after the first town board member and officer elections on April 6, 1954. Prior to this time the land area of Medary was part of the Town of Campbell. The dividing line for the split was approximately Oak St. on La Crosse's north side; west of that line continued to be Town of Campbell; east of that line became Town of Medary. The reason behind the creation of Medary was that residents of this rural area were not in favor of participating in the fuller range of public services that the urbanizing residents in the western part of the Town of Campbell wanted. The name Medary was selected for the new Town to honor a prominent businessman, John S. Medary, who owned the J.S. Medary Saddlery Company, a farm and a slaughterhouse. This new Town's land area included all land east of the cities of Onalaska and La Crosse to the Barre and Hamilton town lines and the Onalaska and Shelby town lines to the north and south respectively. The Town's original boundaries did not change greatly until urbanizing pressure again began to exert its influence. In 1969 the land area that now makes up the La Crosse interstate industrial park was annexed to the City of La Crosse. From this point on the Town has been subjected to numerous annexations from both the cities of La Crosse and Onalaska. The strong housing and commercial real estate markets along Country Trunk OS, State Highways 157, 16, and Interstate 90 created the need for sewer service to these growth areas, which is usually provided upon the condition landowners and residents annex.

The Smith Valley School serves as the Medary Town Hall. This brick structure was built in 1887. The school when built was to be 24' x 40' & 12' feet from floor to ceiling with the walls made of brick. Electricity came to the school in 1939 at a cost of \$90. Power was then supplied by the Swarthout Dam and Power Plant in West Salem. In 1951 an addition was added to the back of the brick structure including an oil furnace and bathrooms. Until that time the school was heated with a wood stove. In 1958 a two-room addition was added in back, including a basement. The Smith Valley School stands by the roadside of Smith Valley Road, half on the property of the late Jacob Herman and half on the property of the late Wesley Dawson, later the Urban and Robert Keil farm. The Smith Valley School became part of the La Crosse School system in 1965. The school operated until June of 1977, when doors closed and the students for all six grades were



transported to Roosevelt School in La Crosse. The Town of Medary purchased the Smith Valley School in 1979, and in May that year a group of interested people met to discuss the feasibility of preserving the old room and restoring it as a one-room school. It was voted to join the West Salem Historical Society as the Smith Valley Branch. The room was readied for grand opening on July 27, 1980. The school is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It has hosted thousands of students, teachers, and visitors. This one room school is still open to the public today upon request.

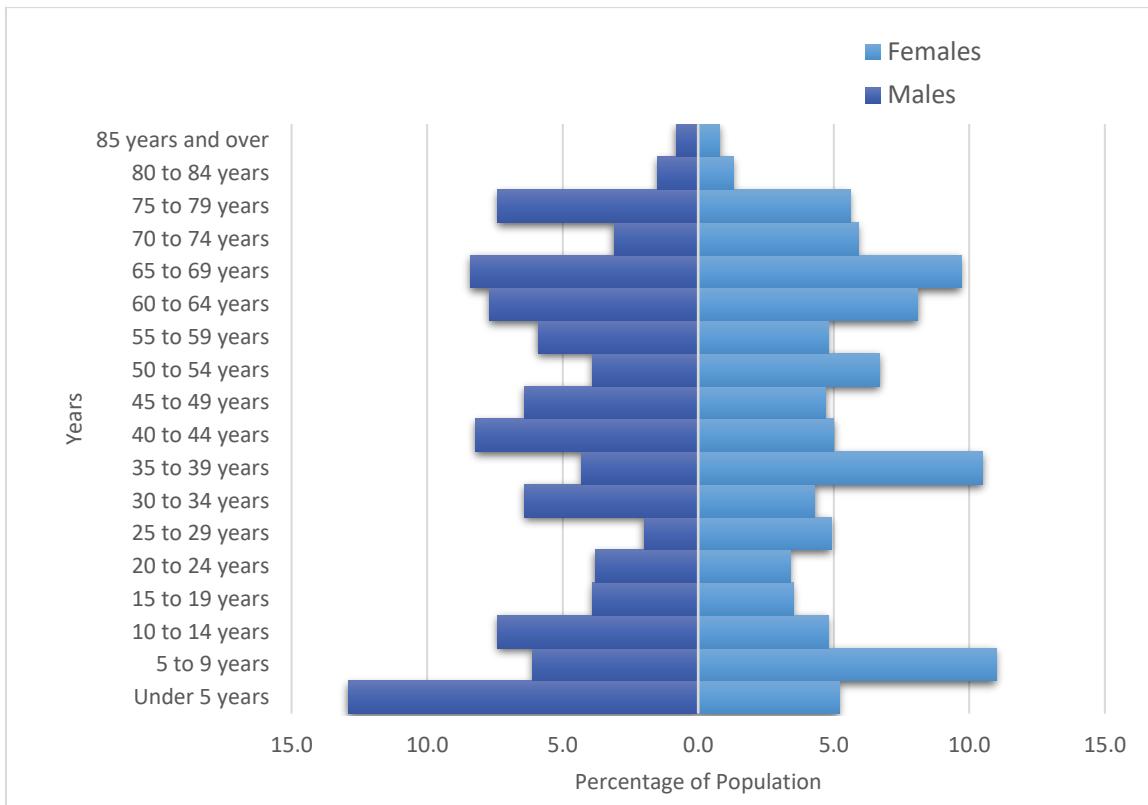


1) BACKGROUND AND DEMOGRAPHICS

This chapter contains a snapshot of the existing demography within Medary including population, housing, income, and workforce. Statistics are from the 2020 Decennial census or the 2022 5-year American Community Survey (ACS).

According to the 2020 Decennial Census, the Town of Medary has a total population of approximately 1,604, marking a 9.8% increase from the 2010 Census figure of 1,461. The median age for male residents is 41.5 years, while for female residents it is slightly higher at 43.2 years. About 27% of Medary's population is 18 years old or younger, with around 15% being school-aged children between 5 and 14 years. Additionally, 22% of the population is 65 years or older, indicating a significant portion of residents are of retirement age (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Population by Sex (2022)

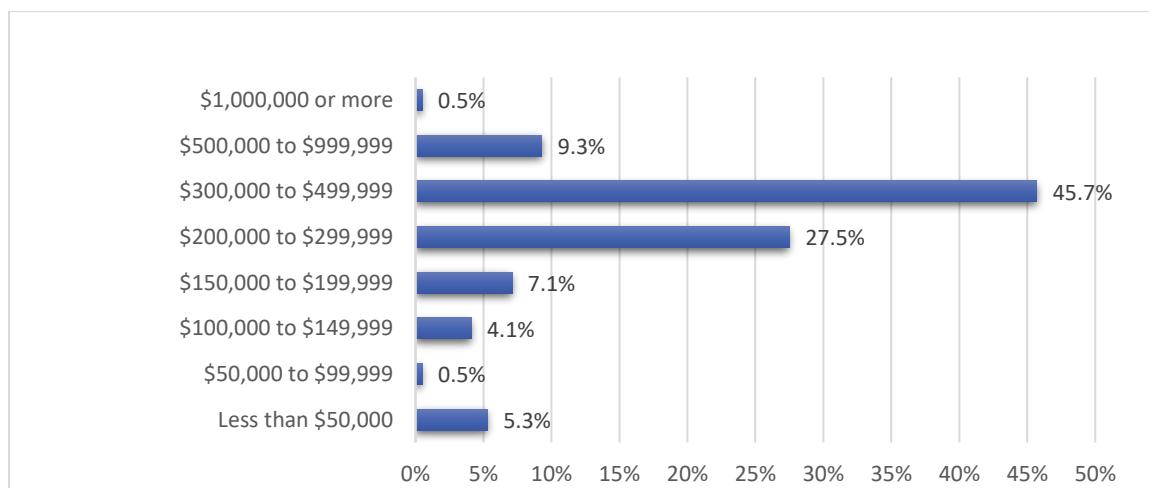


Housing and Income

In Medary, full-time, year-round workers earn a median income of \$68,462, while households have a higher median income of \$97,500 as of 2022. The income varies by family size: two-person households, which make up about 62% of the population, have a median income of \$110,556. Three-person households, about 8% of the population, have a median income of \$81,250, and four-person households, around 20%, lead with a median income of \$129,286.

Residents face median monthly housing costs of \$1,551, including average real estate taxes of \$3,957 for homeowners. Renters pay a median rent of \$1,156. The 2020 Census reports 667 housing units in Medary, with a strong homeownership rate of around 94%. Most homes (over 80%) are single-family residences, and nearly half of the owner-occupied homes fall within the \$300,000 to \$499,999 value range, with a median home value of \$316,700. This median home value is higher than both La Crosse County's median of \$231,300 and Wisconsin's median of \$252,800, reflecting Medary's strong and desirable housing market (*Figure 2*).

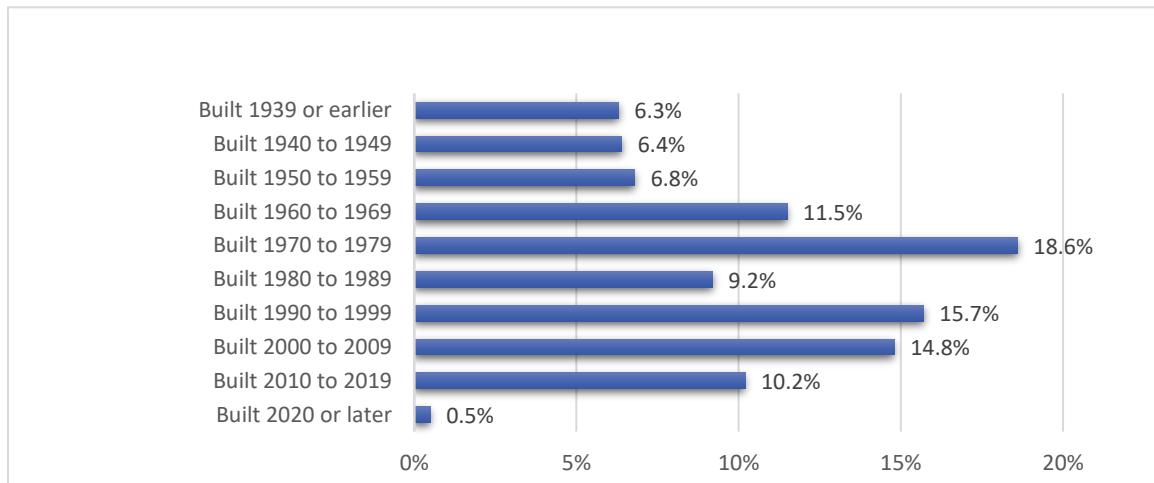
Figure 2. Owner-Occupied Housing Values



Town of Medary's housing reflects different periods of construction, with the 1970s being the peak decade, when about 19% of the area's homes were built. The 1990s also saw a lot of growth, adding roughly 15% of the current housing stock. However, new construction has slowed significantly in recent years. Since 2020, new

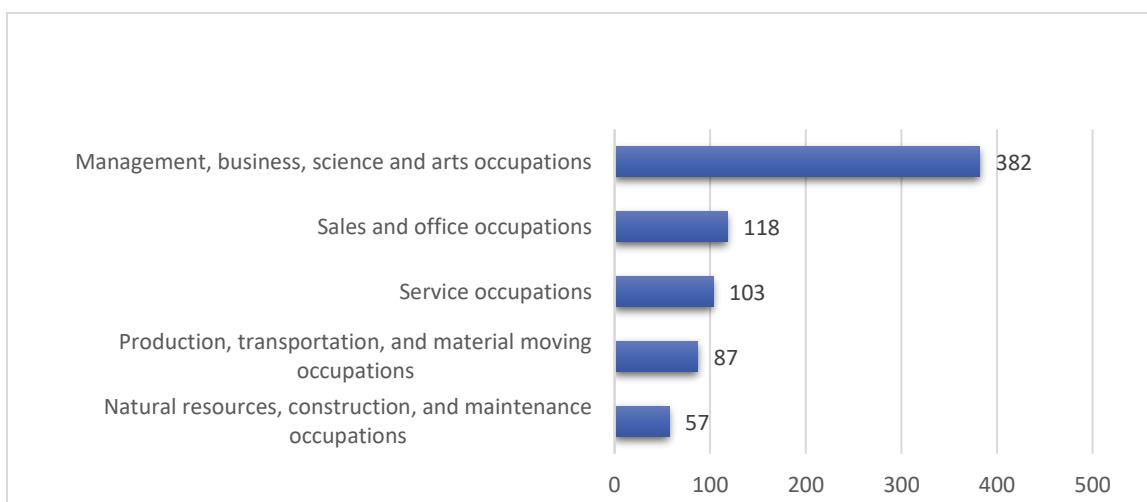
home building has dropped to less than 1%. This marks a shift from the strong building trends of the past toward a period of slower growth (*Figure 3*).

Figure 3. Year of Structure Built



In Medary, 63% of residents aged 16 and older are part of the civilian workforce, showing strong community involvement in economic activities. Most residents—64.8%—work in the private sector, reflecting a thriving entrepreneurial spirit. Despite this, Medary maintains economic stability with a low poverty rate of just 1.5%, much lower than La Crosse County's rate of 11.8% and Wisconsin's rate of 10.7%. The most common occupations are in management, business, science, and the arts, which make up about 51% of the workforce. This highlights Medary's focus on innovation and skilled professions as key parts of its economy (*Figure 4*).

Figure 4. Occupation for the Civilian Employed Population



Comprehensive Plan Objectives, and Recommendations

Each of the subsequent chapters of this comprehensive plan includes a set of goals, objectives, and policies which the Town Board will use to guide the future development of the town over the next 20 years. For the purpose of this plan, goals, objectives, and policies are defined as follows:

- Goal – Broad statements that express general public priorities regarding development issues for the next 20 years. Goals are based on key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the community.
- Objectives – More specific than goals, and usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. Accomplishment of objectives contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.
- Policies & recommendations – Rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Decision-makers use policies and recommendations on a day-to-day basis.

As identified in the Town's 2008 Comprehensive plan, these goals still hold true today:

- Strive to maintain the serene - rural settings of Peters Valley, Smith Valley, Miller Valley, and Kiel Coulee. These valleys are unique because of their location so close to the City of La Crosse and within a Metropolitan Service Area.
- Protect and preserve the rural community character of the Town of Medary.
- Strive to improve communication and cooperation with surrounding town, villages, cities, and county governments.

2) LAND USE

Land use analysis is a means of broadly classifying how land is used. Each type of land use has its own characteristics that determine compatibility, location, and preference to other land uses in the Town. This chapter brings together consideration for both the physical development as well as the social characteristics of the town. To plan land use of the Town, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the existing land uses. This section analyzes existing land uses, development densities, and the supply, demand, and price of land.

Existing Land Use

The Town of Medary is mainly rural with 68.8% assessed as agriculture, forestlands, or undeveloped. The agricultural land in the Town primarily consists of cropland, grazing pasture, and forests. Popular crops grown are corn, alfalfa, and soybeans.

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

Existing Land Use Classifications

Map 5 outlines the existing land use pattern throughout the Town. The intent of an existing land use map is to illustrate the location of existing land use categories within the Town for planning purposes. Land use classifications are grouped by the use most central to each parcel. For example, lands classified as residential may also have a barn or home-based business on site (*Table 1*).

Table 1. Land Use Assessment Inventory

Land Type	Acres	Percent of Land Use
Residential	1,179	26.8
Commercial	161	3.6
Manufacturing	0	0
Agriculture	855	19.4
Undeveloped/Other	761	17.3
Forest/Ag Forest	1,417	32.1
Other (public land, etc.)	32	.07
Total	4,405	100

Source: WI DOR, Bureau of Equalization, 2023 Statement of Assessments

Productive Agriculture Soils

The productive or prime agricultural soils in the Town have been mapped using the U.S. Department of Agricultural, Natural Resource Conservation Service Soil Survey Capability System. This system shows the suitability of soils for most kinds of crops. In this capability system soils are grouped at three levels with "capability classes" being the broadest grouping. Soils are designated in one of eight broad classes. Class I soils have few limitations that restrict their use. Class II soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require moderate conservation practices. Class III soils have severe limitations that limit the choice of plants and require special conservation practices. Class IV-VIII soils have very severe limitations that generally make them unsuited for cultivation. For planning purposes Class I, II, and III are considered prime soils, as they are most suitable for productive agriculture. Map 12 shows the locations in the town of the Class I, II and III soils.

Future Land Use Needs

Over the next 20 years, the Town of Medary is projected to need an additional 51 acres of residential land (Table 2). These projections are based on the historic population trends and average number of people per household in the town developed in the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan 2022-2050. This projection is based on population density in 2020, projected population change from 2020-2030 (DOA), and proposed projections from the steering committee using core values of the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan 2022. These values have been calculated to adjust for market changes in the next 20 years.

Table 2. Town of Medary Projected Need for Residential Land

Residents per Acre	2030 Population Projected Change	Proposed Projections (based on core values)	Projected Need for Acres of Residential Land over Next 10 years	200% Market Adjustment for 20 Year Projected Residential Acres
3.434	60	60	51	206
Source: La Crosse County				

Zoning and Other Land Use Regulations

The Town of Medary is a zoned Town. The La Crosse County Zoning Department administers the County Zoning Ordinance in the Town of Medary. Map 6 shows the location of these zoning areas. The La Crosse County Zoning Department also administers regulations mandated by Wisconsin State Statute in the Town of Medary such as the Private On-site Sanitary Sewer Ordinance, Shoreland, Wetland and Floodplain regulations.

The Town of Medary has adopted several local ordinances that are enforced by the Town Board. Local ordinances adopted include building code, permits and inspections ordinance, building permits, driveways, and wells ordinance, and burning ordinance. Additional ordinances adopted by the Town of Medary do exist and are available upon inspection of Town Board records.

Residential and Non-Residential Density

Table 3 illustrates the residential density of the Town of Medary as compared to La Crosse County and adjacent towns. In 2020, the Town of Medary had 137 people per square mile and 57 housing units per square mile. The population and housing density for the Town of Medary is less than that of La Crosse County and greater than the neighboring rural townships of Barre and Hamilton (Table 3).

Table 3. Residential Density (2022)

	Population	Housing Units	Land Area in Sq. Mi.	Density (Pop. Per Sq. Mi.)	Density (Units per Sq. Mi.)
	Population	Housing Units	Land Area in Sq. Mi.	Density (Pop. Per Sq. Mi.)	Density (Units per Sq. Mi.)
T. Barre	1,267	522	20.7	61.2	25.2
T. Campbell	4,284	2,039	3.84	1115.6	531.0
T. Hamilton	2,428	1,079	50.1	48.5	21.5
T. Medary	1,604	667	11.7	137.1	57.0
T. Onalaska	5,835	2,236	37.0	157.7	60.4
T. Shelby	4,804	2,059	25.6	187.7	80.4
C. La Crosse	52,680	24,221	21.7	2427.6	1116.2
C. Onalaska	18,803	8,241	10.4	1808.0	792.4
La Crosse County	120,784	52,774	451.8	267.3	116.8

Source: 2020 US Census Bureau

Land Use Trends

Not all the 4,400 acres of land in the Town classified as agricultural and forest and forest agricultural lands are suitable for development. The primary reason for this is because much of this land is on slopes greater than 30%. It is estimated that 33% of all land in the Town is on slopes of 30% or greater where building is prohibited. Map 7 shows the area within Medary that is classified 'environmental' by La Crosse County and includes wetlands, slopes greater than 30%, preserved lands, and historic or archaeological sites. Special protections are encouraged within this area because of their unique landscapes, topographical features, wildlife, and historical value.

Despite the steep slopes the demand for land for development purposes is high. The 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture valued agricultural land at \$4,987 dollars per acre in La Crosse County. In recent years, prices per acre of land have soared due to the

value of recreational property and the public demand for country living. From 2015-2019, the Town of Medary had no farmland sales.

From 2011 to 2021, the Town has annexed 955 acres to the City of Onalaska and the City of La Crosse (*Table 4*), an average of 86 acres per year. This has included 5 housing units and 18 petitions in an 11-year period.

Table 4. Housing Units Annexed 2011-2021

	Number of Housing Units* Annexed	Number of Properties Annexed	Population Annexed	Acreage Annexed
Town of Shelby	0	1	0	53
Town of Medary	5	18	10	955
Town of Campbell	5	7	10	3
All Towns La Crosse County	31	78	77	3,069

Source: Municipal Boundary Review (MBR) team, Department of Administration, MRRPC 2022
 *Housing Unit - A house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters.

From 2000 to 2020, the Town of Medary had, on average, a projected housing unit increase of 3% every 5 years (DOA, *Table 5*). However, this projected increase falls to an interval of 1.4% growth by 2035-2040. The Town of Medary is projected to need approximately 68 new housing units between 2015 and 2040. This will increase the current supply 11.6% between 2015 and 2040. To compare, the Town of Shelby is projected to have a 1.4% increase in households, the City of La Crosse will see a 0.14% increase, and La Crosse County will see an increase of 12.9% (based on US Census projections).

The table below outlines the number of households currently in the County as well as the projected growth in households that is expected from 2015 to 2040. The projections provided for the next twenty years have been provided by the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA). The projections have been reached by closely monitoring past growth trends within the Town, County, and surrounding areas.

Table 5. Projected Housing Units - 2015 to 2040

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Town of Shelby	1,973	1,993	2,011	2,020	2,011	2,001
Town of Medary	587	605	622	638	646	655
City of La Crosse	22,265	22,538	22,683	22,676	22,519	22,298
La Crosse County	48,658	50,388	51,968	53,262	54,159	54,929

Source: DOA 2013, US Census Bureau 2010

Single Family, Multi-Family, and Mobile Home Residential land use accounts for 1,179 acres of land in the Town in 2023. In 2020, there were approximately 667 homes in the Town. On average, a residential unit is on 1.77 acres based on this data. Most of the land in the Town of Medary is classified as Forest/Ag Forest (32.1%), Residential (26.8%), and Agriculture (19.4%) (Table 2.1). As the Town is projected to need more residential area, approximately 89 acres is needed from 2020 to 2030 to account for the projected housing increase while maintaining an average of 1.77 acres per housing unit.

Geographically, the Town of Medary has limited remaining developable land because of the existing steep slopes, wetlands, and navigable waterways. Future residential developments will be encouraged to develop near or within existing residential areas, preserving the rural nature of the town. Residents supported the concentration of new housing developments near existing housing in the public input survey.

La Crosse County made projections for residential area in acreage needed in the next 20 years. This is based on population density in 2020, projected population change from 2020-2030 (DOA), and proposed projections from the steering committee using core values of the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan 2022. These values have been calculated to adjust for market changes in the next 20 years. The Town of Medary is projected to need 206 acres for residential units in the next 20 years (Table 2.2). This accounts for approximately 1.9% of the growth in all the towns of La Crosse County.

Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

Goal – Provide for the health, safety, and general welfare of town residents while making efficient use of existing tax dollars.

Goal – Pursue and promote environmentally friendly and sustainable development.

Objectives:

- Utilize the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for future land use and zoning decisions.
- Protect and preserve the rural character of the Town of Medary.
- Balance individual property rights with the community's desire to maintain Medary's rural character and quality of natural resources.
- Identify 'smart growth areas'; defined by WI Statues as an area that will enable the development with existing infrastructure and municipal, state, and utility services.

Recommendations:

- Permit new development based upon consideration of this Comprehensive Plan.

- The Town will look for redevelopment opportunities where practical but redevelopment opportunities in the Town are limited due to its rural nature, rough terrain, no blighted areas and most development activity being fairly recent.
- Encourage land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns.
- Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential commercial and industrial uses.
- Conservation Mixed Use (CMU) and Mixed-Use Development (MU) areas along State Highway 16 and the Mixed-Use Development area on the North end of Smith Valley near County Highway B are the areas that best qualify as Smart Growth Areas due to City of La Crosse boundary and water and sewer lines adjacent to or near these areas. In addition, State Highway 16 and County Trunk Highway B both designated as principal traffic arterials have better capacity to more efficiently serve these areas.
- The Town's recommended Land Use Map shows locations where residential and commercial developments are being recommended. Industrial uses in the Town outside of the area North of Gillette Street and East of River Valley Road are not recommended in the Town due to lack of suitable sites and road capacity concerns in the Town.
- Provide opportunity for input at public meetings where changes to the Comprehensive Plan or when zoning changes are being considered that balance both individual property rights and community interests and goals.
- Provide a town's public participation plan that calls for town resident survey, public information meetings and a public hearing prior to developing the Comprehensive Plan.
- Encourage the Mississippi Valley Conservancy (MVC), Bluffland Coalition, and any other applicable community partners to better delineate their boundaries and inform the public about the location of adjacent private properties to reduce trespassing.



3) HOUSING

The housing chapter mandated by the Wisconsin State Statute requires communities like the Town of Medary to delve deeper than just the number of available housing units. Its purpose is to highlight the quality, quantity, and other pertinent characteristics of the homes and their occupants. This chapter explores the historical trends in housing supply and the projected need for additional housing units.

Overview

In Town of Medary, there are 667 housing units accommodating just over 1,604 residents, with the majority being owner-occupied and predominantly housing families. The average family size in Medary is slightly larger at 2.91 members compared to La Crosse County's average of 2.90 members. Additionally, the population within housing units varies, with 26.7% of households having children under 18, higher than the county average of 18.9%. Financially, the median gross rent in Medary is \$1,156, compared to \$967 in La Crosse County. Physically, the housing units are primarily single-family detached homes, with limited representation from two-unit and larger buildings. The housing stock has consistently grown over the past six decades, and the owner occupancy rate tends to be high, ranging between 96% and 97%. While the houses are statistically affordable for the average family in Medary, with an average value of \$153,600 and a median household income of \$97,500, challenges exist for renters, with one-third spending over 30% of their income on housing costs.

Residential Mobility in the Last Year

Measure	Value
Moved within the same county	4.5%
Moved from different county, same state	0.6%
Moved from a different state	3.5%
Moved from abroad	0.0%

Housing Value

Measure	Value
Less than \$50,000	5.3%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	0.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	4.1%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	7.1%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	27.5%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	45.7%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	9.3%
\$1,000,000 or more	0.5%

Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The Town has experienced housing growth at different times throughout the past century, only 13 percent of the homes in the rest of Town of Medary have been constructed in the past 15 years. The different growth patterns occurring throughout the Town should be noted as this planning process continues.

Housing Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations:

Goal - Allow private development of residential housing.

Goal – Provide an adequate supply of housing that meet the needs of town residents for both large and small families.

Goal – Protect the integrity of current housing stock by encouraging development consistent with density and character of existing neighborhood.

Objectives:

- Encourage home improvement, local and private resources, and development standards that enhances the overall appearance.
- Provide opportunities for innovative housing techniques such as planned unit developments, clustering, conservation subdivisions and accessory apartments that are compatible with existing neighborhoods and are designed to better protect the natural environment.
- Maintain zoning standards that allow residential development where it will not encroach on prime agricultural land but may mix into the agricultural community in appropriate locations.

Recommendations:

- Allow considerations for residential development, on both larger lots and in clustered subdivisions, both where appropriate and while maintaining the town's rural landscape.
- Provide adequate areas for the projected need for residential development on the Future Land Use Map.
- Utilize the Town's Public Utilities and Community Facilities; Transportation; Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources and Recommended Land Use maps to help identify locations for new housing development.
- Consider program assistance to builders promoting alternative construction types that lower building costs or on-going energy usage.
- Work with local advocacy agencies to enhance the ability of elderly and special needs populations to stay in their homes.
- Identify various organizations and programs that assist with the purchase, rehabilitation, or construction of housing.

4) TRANSPORTATION

Any community's transportation system consists of a variety of roads; some owned and maintained by the local unit of government, others are part of the county or state road systems. In addition to roads, the transportation system includes separate facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, railroads, airports, and public transit. A safe and efficient transportation system seeks to enable all modes of transportation. This section describes the transportation system for the Town of Medary and the potential for improvements to the system.

Public roads are classified as arterial, collector, or local based on functionality. Arterials provide intra-community links and interconnect urban arterial systems and connections to rural collectors. Collector roads provide traffic circulation in residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas. Collectors also focus traffic from local roads onto the arterial system. Local roads provide the lowest level of mobility and provide direct access to collectors and arterials.

Within the Town of Medary there are 20.67 miles of public road that are under the jurisdiction of either La Crosse County or the Town of Medary. The Town of Medary maintains 16.97 miles of public road, of which .46 miles are classified as collector roads and the remaining road miles are all classified as local roads. La Crosse County has 3.7 miles of public road in the Town of Medary.

Public Road Inventory and Pavement Condition

WisDOT requires all local units of government to submit road condition rating data every two years as part of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). The WISLR program maintains a complete listing of public roads in the Town of Medary by jurisdiction, classification, and number of miles. An inventory of Medary roads is found in Map 9. The Pavement Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program and WISLR are tools that Town of Medary uses to manage pavements for improved decision making in budgeting and maintenance (Table 6).

The condition of Medary roads was the single most important public facility or service that survey respondents reported needed improvement. 79.5% said that road maintenance needed to be improved followed by the next highest category, snow removal with 29.9%.

The PASER system rates road surfaces on a scale of 1 to 10.

- 1 and 2 = very poor condition
- 3 = poor condition
- 4 and 5 = fair condition
- 6 and 7 = good condition
- 8 = very good condition
- 9 and 10 = excellent condition

Table 6. Town of Medary Road Inventory (Source: PASER)

Road Name	GIS Length (Miles)	Surface Type	Average PASER Score
Smith Valley Road	2.70	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Miller Road	0.74	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Stone Hill Road	0.96	Chip Seal / Asphalt	8
Cedar Point Road	0.11	Chip Seal / Asphalt	8
Hanks Peak	0.23	Chip Seal / Asphalt	8
Hidden Springs Road	0.49	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Storandt Drive	0.05	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Keil Coulee Road	1.38	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Valley Verde South	0.44	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Valley Verde North	0.20	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Bond Road	0.34	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Sun Valley Road	0.35	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Evergreen Trails	0.18	Chip Seal / Asphalt	8
Timber Creek Trails	0.23	Chip Seal / Asphalt	8
Brookview Road	0.20	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Deerfield Road	0.36	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Peters Road	0.71	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Scenic Drive	0.68	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Goodview Court	0.06	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Westview Court	0.22	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Kleinsmith Road	0.12	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Wolf Ridge Court	0.43	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Puent Road	0.12	Asphalt	8
Three Town Road	0.76	Low Maint chip	2
Shady Maple Ridge	0.30	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Potato Ridge Road	0.32	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Baker Road	0.13	Chip Seal / Asphalt	5
Kohlmeier Road	0.06	Gravel	1
Rim of the City Road	0.45	Slurry Coat / Asphalt	6
Quarry Road	0.05	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Vista Court South & North	0.16	Chip Seal / Asphalt	5
Valley Place	0.04	Chip Seal / Asphalt	5
River Valley Drive	0.11	Concrete	9
Esther Drive	0.11	Chip Seal / Asphalt	5
Germann Court	0.13	Old Asphalt	6
Pralle Road	0.13	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Meadowwood Road	0.72	Chip Seal / Asphalt	5
Hickory Point Ct	0.23	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Cottonwood Road	0.29	Chip Seal / Asphalt	7
Old Hickory Drive	0.33	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Marcou Road	0.19	Asphalt / Urban	8
French Road	0.18	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Harter Drive	0.01	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Timbercrest East	0.18	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Timbercrest West	0.18	Chip Seal / Asphalt	6
Crestwood Land	0.28	Asphalt / Urban	9
Maple Lane	0.11	Chip Seal	6
Pierce Road	0.24	Gravel	2
TOTAL MILEAGE	16.97		

Traffic Counts

Limited traffic counts are available for Medary. There are two DOT traffic counts available for roads that are directly adjacent and/or lead into Medary ([Table 7](#)).

Table 7. WisDOT Traffic Counts near Medary. (Source: WisDOT TCMap)

Site #	Location	AADT	Date	Notes
321122	CTH OS/Main St	7300	8/9/2021	
321229	CTH B	3400	8/9/2021	West of Medary, CTH B continues East into Medary

On September 26th, 2024, LAPC deployed a MioVision traffic counting device. MioVision is capable of delineating between different kinds of motor travel and count pedestrians and cyclists. MioVision performed a continuous traffic count on Smith Valley Road from the 26th through the 30th. The average daily traffic at this site was 1449 motor vehicles. A full breakdown of this traffic count can be found in the appendix.

Interstate Highways

Interstate 90 intersects State Highway 16 (east/west) in the City of Onalaska which borders the Town of Medary. I-90 is classified as a Principal Arterial-Interstate and its function is to serve as a high-speed large traffic volume expressway.

Highways

State Highway 16 passes through most of the Town of Medary in a geographic north-south orientation. STH 16 is a four-lane non-divided roadway whose function is to serve as an arterial that interconnects the principal traffic generators such as the Valley View Mall, Crossing Meadows, and I-90 suburban area with the central City of La Crosse.

Non-Driving Population

Non-driving populations include those that are elderly, disabled, low-income, students, and those that prefer not to drive. Within the Town of Medary, it is estimated that 10 – 20% of residents are non-drivers. The majority of the non-driving residents are likely those under the age of 15, who are too young to drive. According to the 2022 ACS 5-year estimates, only 0.8% of Medary residents, not including the 10.7% of residents working from home, did not drive or carpool on their commute to work. All 0.8% walked as their alternate means of commuting.

STH 16 shared use path passes through portions of Medary, offering alternative travel options for residents living along/near STH 16. Fewer trail options exist in the easternmost portions of Medary where there is less development. Most of the roadways in Medary are local roads that have narrow shoulders and offer cyclists little buffer from vehicle travel.

Intercity Bus Service

There are intercity bus stops served by SMRT Bus and Jefferson Lines near the Town of Medary, but none exist within the town or directly adjacent to roads leading into Medary.

Para Transit

Para Transit is the specialized transportation services for the elderly and persons with disabilities that may have difficulty accessing other forms of public transit.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of La Crosse County operates a minibus service to La Crosse County residents, including the Town of Medary that are over the age of 60 or are an adult with a disability. Door to door service is available and the cost of a one-way trip varies from \$3.50 to \$4.50.

Alternatively, there are private para transit companies that operate for-profit taxicab services. This may be an option for those that do not qualify for transportation assistance. The primary private provider of para transit services in the area is Abbey Vans.

Taxis

Three taxi operators provide taxi service to La Crosse County residents. The major taxi companies that operate in the area are Coulee Region Taxi, Bullet Cab, and Bee Cab. All three of these services are pre-booked and drivers are assigned as requests for pickup are made.

Freight Rail Service

A small portion of two Class I railroads operate in Medary. CPKC travels east/west through the northeast area of the township, while BNSF Railway travels north/south near the southwest area of the township. CPKC and BNSF connect the area to Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and ultimately to major seaports in the Pacific Northwest, East Coast, and Gulf of Mexico. There are no public railroad grade crossings in Medary.

Passenger Rail Service

Daily passenger service (AMTRAK) is available in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The AMTRAK Empire Builder Line provides passenger service between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest via Minneapolis/St. Paul. Additionally, the Borealis Line provides passenger service between Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul. There are two westbound and eastbound train stops at the La Crosse terminal daily.

Airports

There are no public airports located in the Town of Medary. The La Crosse Municipal Airport is located to the west of the Town of Medary on French Island. The airport is designated as an Air Carrier/Cargo Airport. Airports of this classification are designed to accommodate all aircraft and, in some cases, wide body jets and military transports.

The La Crosse Regional Airport (LSE) is one of 10 such airports in Wisconsin categorized as a non-hub primary commercial service facility. Meaning the airport is publicly owned and receives scheduled passenger services. Commercial air service is provided year-round by American Eagle, Northwest Airlines, and Skyway Airlines.

Water Transportation

The Town of Medary is not located on a commercial waterway. The nearest water transportation is located at the Port of La Crosse, in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Port of La Crosse serves ingoing and outgoing barge traffic on the Mississippi River. It provides water access for freight through public and private terminals. Cargo primarily shipped by barge in the region include liquid bulk cargo (chemicals, petroleum, etc.) and dry bulk cargo (grain, scrap metal, etc.).

Commercial Vehicles

Truck transportation for hauling consumer goods is an important part of the regional, state and national economy. Through trucking in the Town of Medary primarily takes place on STH 16. Trucking of local goods (non-metallic minerals, agricultural products), for the most part take place on county and town roads. In the spring of each year, road bans are placed on local roads limiting the weight of products hauled due to the weight capacity of local roads during the Spring thaw.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails

The La Crosse River State Bicycle Trail traverses the Town of Medary. The trail is 21.5 miles in total length connecting to the Great River State Trail and the Sparta-Elroy State Trail. A bicycle/snowmobile bridge was built in the early 1990's at Medary Junction to allow bicyclists a safer crossing over the Canadian Pacific railroad tracks.

Over half of survey respondents said that they would support the expansion of biking routes and hiking trails when asked if they would support the creation or expansion of any transportation opportunity (58.7% and 66.9% respectively). It is important that residents have the freedom to choose how to get around, whether it be by driving, biking, or walking.

Related Transportation Plans

Active Transportation Plan 2050

Wisconsin DOT's Active Transportation Plan (ATP) outlines six goals that will help guide and provide recommendations for providing long-term transportation for active modes such as walking, biking, etc. At the time of writing, this plan is in the pre-draft stage, but six overarching goals have been committed to the plan.

Wisconsin State Freight Plan

The Wisconsin DOT updated and adopted the Wisconsin State Freight Plan (SFP) which provides a long-range multimodal plan to address the transportation needs of freight in Wisconsin.

WisDOT Connect 2050

This plan was developed by the Wisconsin DOT and seeks to guide local plans with its vision, goals, and objectives. In turn these plans will be used to implement Connect 2050 over the long-term.

Beyond Coulee Vision 2040

Beyond Coulee Vision 2040 is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) by the La Crosse Area Planning Committee, the MPO for the region. This plan covers a 20-year horizon and projects the needs of the transportation system and strategies that will support an intermodal transportation system within the planning area. Also, the plan identifies anticipated projects for the planning area. The MPO is in the process of updating the MTP and is slated to be adopted in the fall of 2025.

Transportation Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

Goal – Maintain a safe and efficient town road system.

Goal – Provide transportation choices for town residents.

Objectives:

- Maintain road capacity for all the traffic and vehicle types expected on town roads.
- Provide for annual maintenance of the town roads.
- Maintain and improve arterial roads that provide a shared space for low volume traffic, walking, and biking on the road.
- Support snowmobile and ATV trails/ routes within the town.

Recommendations:

- Continue creating and implementing a 5yr town road improvement plan.
- When applicable, use town ordinances to address blind spots, increase safety, and to space out appropriate driveways to preserve road capacity.
- Work with La Crosse County Planning and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as they develop / update bicycle & pedestrian plans.
- Maintain and upgrade town roads and bridges so they continue to accommodate emergency vehicles, school buses and snowplows.
- Continue creating and implementing a 5-year town road improvement plan.
- When applicable, use town ordinances to address blind spots, increase safety, and to appropriately space out driveways to preserve road capacity.
- Work with La Crosse County Planning and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as they develop / update bicycle and pedestrian plans.
- Maintain and upgrade town roads and bridges so they continue to accommodate emergency vehicles, school buses, and snowplows.

- Update the town's official map to show where future roads will go in cooperation with adjacent municipalities, La Crosse County, and WISDOT.
- Encourage neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices, such as walking and bike paths.
- Develop a bike and walking trail along the east side of Smith Valley Road. This path would originate across the road from the Town Hall and then extend north to the Northwoods Elementary School, see Map 10.
- Collaborate with La Crosse County to develop a bike and walking trail along County Road FA from County Road F north.
- Develop a new road to serve Smith Valley. This road will serve as an additional north south collector. It will begin as an extension of Sablewood Road at or near the east La Crosse City limits and run south for approximately one mile up the valley to a point where it would connect with Hidden Springs Road, see Map 10.
- Identify organizations and maintain a list of programs to help fund road infrastructure projects.
- Identify organizations and maintain a list of programs to help fund transportation alternative projects.

5) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of this Economic Development Element is to establish priorities and recommendations for how the Town of Medary assists in the development of a healthy economy. Much of this work will be done in collaboration and support of partner organizations to help stabilize, retain, and expand the economic base and build quality, accessible employment opportunities.

Content for this element was determined through staff research, stakeholder input, review of current economic development trends, and review of the following documents and plans:

- Municipal Comprehensive Plans
- Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Report
- 7 Rivers Alliance Workforce Innovation for a Strong Economy (WISE) Plan

Additional economic development plans exist that promote specific business sector growth. These plans were also kept in mind when policies and recommendations were developed.

While unemployment rates have reduced drastically over the past five years, the Town is even lower than state and national averages. There is an active work force participating in a wide range of industries. The employers in La Crosse County provide numerous opportunities for employees both in and outside the Town of Medary.

MEDARY ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

- 1.5% POVERTY RATE OF ALL RESIDENTS IN MEDARY, AS COMPARED TO 11.8% POVERTY RATE FOR ALL RESIDENTS IN LA CROSSE COUNTY, WISCONSIN
- \$97,500 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN MEDARY AS COMPARED TO \$69,492 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN LA CROSSE COUNTY, WISCONSIN
- 2.0% OF INDUSTRIES ARE AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING AND HUNTING, AND MINING IN MEDARY COMPARED TO 0.7 % OF INDUSTRIES ARE ESTIMATED AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING AND HUNTING, AND MINING IN LA CROSSE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Strengths and Weaknesses for Economic Development.

Table 8 below provides an initial list of strengths and weaknesses that are currently facing La Crosse County. Past reports, business development plans, and site visits have contributed to this list.

Table 8. La Crosse County Economic Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
Regional Center	Lack of Cooperation between Communities
Multiple Transportation Modes	Infrastructure Limitations
Low Unemployment Rate	Isolation from Larger Population Centers (Twin Cities, Milwaukee, Madison)
Great Natural Resource Amenities	Topography and Geography of the Area
Available Land and Building Space	Per Capita income is below the State Average
High Quality of Life	Property tax system encourages sprawl
Educated and Diverse Workforce	
Topography and geography of the area	
Higher education opportunities	
Health Care and Medical Facilities Options	
Strong, Diverse manufacturing base	
Diversity	
Regional economic base separated from larger population centers (Twin Cities, Milwaukee, Madison)	

Source: SAA, 2005

Labor Force

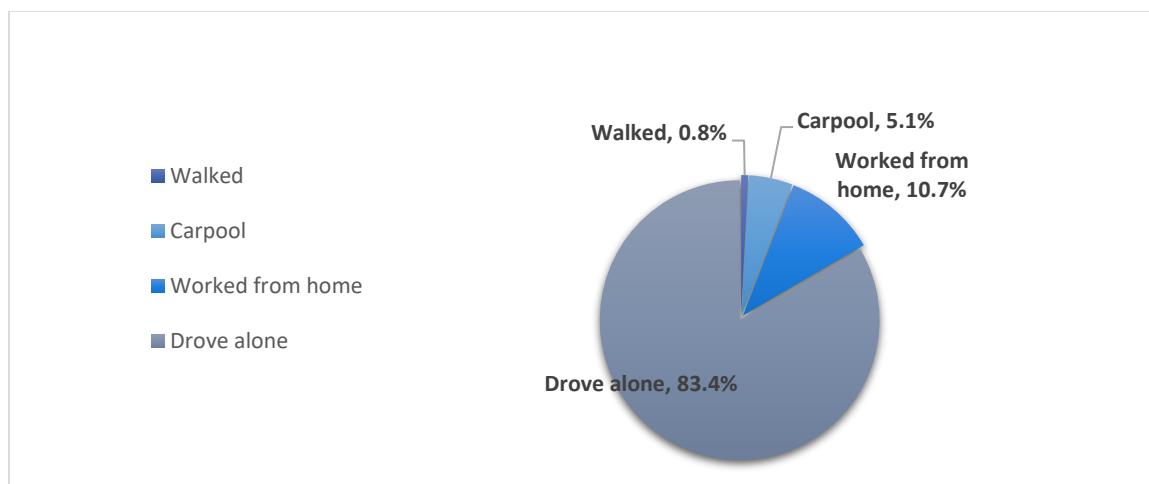
Over 64.6 percent of the population over 16 years old is involved in the work force. Of those that are active in the labor force only 1.5 percent are currently without a job. The Town of Medary is experiencing exceptionally strong employment numbers, as over 98 percent of their residents are employed.

Educational attainment in Medary stands notably higher than the county average, with 51.8% of residents holding a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to just 34.9% for La Crosse County as a whole. This emphasis on higher education reflects a commitment to intellectual growth and professional development within the community. Similarly, the median household income in Medary town outpaces that of La Crosse County, with households earning \$97,500, plus or minus \$15,184, compared to the county's median of \$69,492. This higher income bracket suggests a greater degree of economic prosperity and financial stability among Medary residents, contributing to the overall well-being and vitality of the town.

Commuting Patterns

Residents of Medary enjoy a relatively short average travel time to work, taking just over 20 minutes to commute. The vast majority, comprising 83.4% of workers, opt to drive alone, while a smaller percentage, 5.1%, choose to carpool. Additionally, just under 1% of residents prefer walking to work, showcasing a commitment to sustainable transportation options. Notably, 10.7% of Medary's workforce have embraced remote work, highlighting the increasing prevalence of telecommuting arrangements in modern employment practices (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Means of Travel to Work



Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Wisconsin Rural Entrepreneurial Venture

In 2024, town officials began participating in the Wisconsin Rural Entrepreneurial Venture (REV) program through UW Extension. This program is designed to "support small town economies through a targeted business approach" (REV). This program will provide coaching, resources, and connections as town representatives collaborate with REV's partners to explore what economic development will look like for the Town. This program promises to deliver a trained coach that will work with town leadership for up to three years, the tools to identify and expand leadership to support entrepreneurial activity, and a greater understanding of new business opportunities within a local context.

General Economic Development Policy

- Encourage high-skill, living-wage job growth & support workforce attraction, retention, and development.
- Support tax base creation and assist in the elimination of blight
- Contribute to better housing opportunities, neighborhoods, and quality of life
- Work toward greater efficiency of public services through collaboration

- Welcome a diverse population to improve our business environment.
- Promote land use and transportation policy links
- Promote and support entrepreneurship
- Continue to cultivate a local environment of sustainability
- Market the benefits and opportunities of Medary, for both residents and tourists

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

Goal – Promote maintenance of the agricultural, recreational, and entrepreneurial economic base.

Objective:

- Support industrial and public-institutional developments, following established Land Use Map locations and availabilities.
- Promote a variety of small commercial business throughout the Town of Medary.

Recommendations:

- Accommodate home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.
- Protect farmer's right to farm by discouraging conflicting land uses near active farms.
- Allow for non-animal micro-farming operations as complimentary or supplementary use in residential areas.
- Investigate how the town's existing agricultural lands in Smith, Miller and Peters Valley and Kiel Coulee can further support the region's agricultural and food processing industry and Agri-energy production. Small farm and direct to consumer agriculture, community supported agricultural production systems and organic farming are gaining economic strength throughout the state.
- Investigate the concept of the Town Hall and Park or other areas in the Town serving as a farmers' market or other use to provide income opportunities for agricultural landowners and gardeners.
- Direct commercial and industrial development to locate in cities and villages.
- Promote a variety of small commercial business throughout the Town of Medary.
- Define the types of business growth that are desired and appropriate for the Town.
- Identify organizations and programs that help fund economic development planning and activities.
- Participate in the REV program to the maximum extent practicable to maximize its value to the town and town officials.

6) UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This element includes background information, goals and recommendations to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the Town of Medary. It describes current facilities and includes recommendations for future utility needs, upgrades, and considerations.

Sanitary Waste and Water Supply

No public water or sewer service is available in the Town. All businesses and residences in the Town are served by private on-site wastewater treatment systems. Some residential subdivisions have shared wells or community wells. Enforcement of private on-site wastewater treatment system standards (Wisconsin Administrative Code: COMM 83) is enforced by the La Crosse County Health Department.

Any form of residential or business development in the Town needing water or sewer service is dependent upon providing their own private onsite wastewater treatment system. The City of La Crosse has public water lines immediately adjacent to the Town along CTH B and South Kinney Road. Public water supply is also provided adjacent to the Town by the City of Onalaska along CTH OS and Marcou Road.

Solid Waste/Recycling

The Town of Medary privately contracts for recycling and garbage pickup for residents. The garbage services dispose of waste at the La Crosse County landfill. In total, La Crosse County handled 138,133 tons of solid waste in 2020 – up from 123,274 tons in 2007 (+12.1%), and up from 129,673 tons in 2019 (+6.5%; see Figure 16). The COVID pandemic caused substantially higher citizen usage of the County solid waste system, which explains the increased amount of solid waste generated in 2020. Economic recession may explain the relatively low quantity of solid waste generated in 2009 and the subsequent increasing trend.

Of the total solid waste handled in 2020, 63.0% was deposited into the landfill, 20.8% was incinerated to produce electricity, and 16.2% was recycled. Roof damage caused by storms resulted in large quantities of shingles being received by the County solid waste system in 2020, which explains the increased quantity of recycled material. The 2020 total diversion rate (i.e., the sum of the percent incinerated, and the percent recycled) was 37.0%, down from 41.4% in 2007, but up from 33.5% in 2019.

Waste from La Crosse County incinerated at French Island was used to produce an estimated 19.6 million kWh of electricity in 2020, enough to supply approximately 2,153 households. La Crosse County adopted a Master Land Use Plan (MLUP) for the landfill to guide land use decisions for the site. The most recent plan was created in 2015 and includes short-, medium-, and long-term goals to achieve a balance of economic, social, and environmental land use objectives. For more information on this plan, refer to the Master Land Use Plan for the La Crosse County Landfill.

The Household Hazardous Materials (HHM) Program located at 6502 State Road 16 in La Crosse opened its doors in October 2001. The HHM facility collects hazardous

household materials from La Crosse County residents free of charge and for a minimal fee for individuals who reside outside of La Crosse County.

Storm Water Management

The Town of Medary is located in the La Crosse River watershed. Smith Valley, Miller Valley are two of the more significant valleys that collect storm water via roadway ditches or streams and carry the waters out to the La Crosse River watershed. The town does not have any storm sewer lines to maintain. Several ordinances are used to manage storm water. These ordinances are *Ordinance 4.03 Regulating Excavations and Openings in Streets, Sidewalks and Roadways in the Town of Medary* and *Ordinance 4.031 Excavation and Grading*. La Crosse County's Construction Site Erosion Control Ordinance is another tool that is used to control erosion and manage storm water volume and pollution of storm water. The Town also manages storm water through routine maintenance on their culverts, bridges, and road ditches by keeping them free of debris.

It is important to report in this section that the Town of Medary is exempt from the requirement to obtain municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit coverage under Chapter NR 216 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. This exemption was granted due to a petition the Town filed in June 2005 with the Department of Natural Resources. On March 9, 2006, the Department of Natural resources granted the Town's request to be exempt from this requirement. Their reasoning for granting this request was: 1) The Town is not otherwise required to obtain permit coverage pursuant to S. NR 216.02(2). 2) The Town's population is less than 1,000. 3) The Town's storm water is not contributing substantially to the pollution loadings to a physically interconnected municipal separate storm sewer system that is regulated under NR 216. 4) The Town's storm water has not been identified as having a pollutant that causes impairment to a water body.

Town Government Structure

The Town of Medary consists of two appointed positions, the Town Clerk and Treasurer. There is an elected chairperson and two supervisors accompanied by an appointed Plan Commission.

Town Facilities

The Medary Town Hall and its surrounding three-acre parcel of land with a ball field and playground apparatus are the primary public facilities owned by the Town. The only piece of major equipment owned by the Town is a tractor. The Town Hall is located at 3393 Smith Valley Road. The Town does not employ any full-time employees. Part time employees include a tractor operator, janitor, and park maintenance person. The Town of Medary contracts with private companies for maintenance of Town roads.

Fire Protection, Police Protection, and Emergency Management

The Town of Medary does not have a fire department. Fire protection is provided by the City of La Crosse Fire Department. The Town of Medary does not have a police department. The La Crosse County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement to

the Town. La Crosse County Emergency Government Office is responsible for HAZMAT planning for La Crosse County.

Emergency Medical Services

Tri-State Ambulance Service based out of La Crosse provides emergency medical services for Town residents. First responders are provided through the City of La Crosse Fire Department. The La Crosse County 911 Emergency Dispatch Center provides 24-hour emergency telephone service to everyone in La Crosse County. The system uses the enhanced 911 system that provides emergency communications to all providers allowing quick and accurate emergency assistance.

Healthcare

No health care facilities are located in the Town of Medary. The nearest health care facilities to the Town are in the City of La Crosse. Gundersen Lutheran and Mayo Clinic Health System are two (2) large medical centers that operate in the region, each with a hospital and large clinic in the City of La Crosse. In addition, both Gundersen Lutheran and Mayo Health System operate health care facilities (i.e. Express Care, Clinics) in the City of La Crosse and the City of Onalaska.

Gundersen-Lutheran Medical Center is the area's recognized leader in heart, trauma and cancer care, births, business services, research, and health education, with over one million clinic, hospital, and emergency room visits each year. Gundersen Lutheran operates a 325-bed teaching hospital with a Level II Trauma and Emergency Center in La Crosse. Mayo Clinic Health System La Crosse Campus operates a 250-bed hospital with a 24-hour Emergency Trauma Center. Mayo Clinic Health System offers excellent specialty services including cardiology, neurology, nephrology, oncology, orthopedics, and many others, as well as comprehensive, compassionate primary care throughout an 11-county region in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Mayo Clinic Health System is a leader in women's health, having established the area's first Women's Health Center in 1983. A health care education consortium that includes Viterbo University, Western Wisconsin Technical College and the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse exists in the region.

Daycare Facilities

The childcare options within the Town of Medary are limited to private home-based childcare facilities. Additionally, the La Crosse County Family Resource Center helps to connect parents and children to childcare providers. La Crosse County has 26 regulated full day family childcare centers and 59 regulated full day group childcare homes. 55 childcare facilities offer infant care. The earliest select care facilities open is 5:00 am and close at the latest at 6:30 pm.

Educational Facilities

The La Crosse, Onalaska and West Salem school districts service The Town of Medary. The majority of Town of Medary residences are in La Crosse and Onalaska School Districts with just a small portion of students attending school in the West Salem School District.

In addition, the County has 16 private schools that provide additional educational choices for residents. Within the County, town residents also have access to several post-secondary education schools, including the following:

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (UW-L) was founded in 1909 and is now one of the 13 four-year campuses in the University of Wisconsin System with enrollment of around 10,000 students. UW-L has joined the City's other two institutions of higher education and the region's medical facilities to form a consortium to bring cutting-edge health care to the region, along with a state-of-the-art health research and education facility for professionals and students.

Western Technical College (WTC) is a public two-year college with a focus on technical education. The college has an annual enrollment of approximately 9,400 credit students and 12,900 non-credit students. The average age of WTC's credit and non-credit student is 33.

Viterbo University, established in 1890, is a co-educational Catholic University founded in the Franciscan tradition. Viterbo offers undergraduate and graduate degrees and has an enrollment of approximately 2,700 students. It offers over 40 academic programs at the associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral level.

Libraries

There are no public libraries located in the Town of Medary. The libraries readily accessible to Medary residents include: the City of La Crosse's La Crosse Public Library (Main), 800 Main Street; North Community Library, 1552 Kane Street; and the South Community Library, 1307 South 16th Street; the City of Onalaska Library, 741 Oak Avenue South; and West Salem's library (Hazel Brown Leicht Memorial Library), 702 Industrial Dr.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

There is a park and playground equipment located at the Town Hall and maintained by the Town. Hiking trails within the Town are owned and maintained by outside entities.

This plan is aligned with the *La Crosse County Outdoor Recreation Plan* and supports the continual enhancement of recreational facilities for the quality of life benefits they present.

Table 9. Town of Medary Recreation Facilities

Recreational Area	Type	Acres	Site Description
Bluebird Springs Recreation Area	Private Campground	200	X-country skiing, hiking, playground apparatus, basketball court, volleyball court, recreation hall, store, snack bar, drink bar. Showers, toilets, laundry, dump station, spring fed swimming pond, two fishing ponds, picnic shelter
Green Hills	Open Space	1	Wooded open space
La Crosse River Marsh	Open Space	1,280-1,920	Walking and biking trails through nature preserve
Meadwood	Open Space	8	Wooded open space
Smith Valley Creek	Creek	1	Trout fishing, Class III Stream
Town Hall Park	Neighborhood Park	2	Playground and ball field
Walsh Golf Center	Golf	2,145	9-hole golf course, driving range, mini golf
Wolfridge	Open Space	13	Wooded open space

Source: La Crosse County

Churches and Cemeteries

There are no churches or cemeteries located in the Town of Medary.

Electricity/Telephone and Cable/Internet Services

There are no electric power stations in the Town of Medary. Electricity to town residences is provided by Xcel Energy and Vernon Electric CoOp. Xcel Energy also has gas lines installed in the Smith Valley area. Telephone and internet/cable service to residents is provided by Charter or CenturyTel. See Map 13 for the available internet speeds available to Medary residents.

Communication Towers

There are several radio and microwave towers located on the west side of CTH FA in the Town of Medary. La Crosse County has an ordinance that regulates height and location of communication towers. The ordinance details a public process that must be followed by parties interested in constructing a communication tower. The ordinance does apply to land areas in the Town of Medary.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

Goal – Provide sufficient public services (roads, police, fire & rescue, garbage & recycling) either through town efforts or as a partner with other communities.

Goal - Meet existing needs of town residents, as well as future demand for agricultural and residential uses.

Objectives:

- Maintain the current provision of community services.
- Provide information to residents on the proper maintenance of septic systems and the benefits of water conservation.
- Share equipment and services across town boundaries, where possible.
- Provide the most efficient police, fire, ambulance, and plowing services to town residents at the most cost-effective rates.

Recommendations:

- Continue maintaining town roads. See Transportation chapter for more details.
- Continue cooperating with the city of La Crosse and La Crosse County Sheriff's department to provide law enforcement services.
- Continue cooperating with the city of La Crosse Fire Department.
- Develop storm water management plans for Smith, Miller, Peters Valley, and Keil Coulee that manage storm water.
- Create a 5-year Utilities and Community Facilities needs forecast.
- Create list of capital improvements for the Town Park in the La Crosse County Outdoor Recreation Plan for access to DNR funding.
- Identify organizations and programs that help fund storm management plans and projects.
- Identify needs for improved rural broadband and create local partnerships with Internet Service Providers (ISP) and other local municipalities.
- Identify organizations and programs that help fund internet-for-all efforts.

7) INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS AND COORDINATION

The Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter of the plan covers the relationships between public, quasi-public, and private entities to increase efficiencies and capabilities such as—

1. Increased accountability and responsiveness to needs,
2. Increased efficiencies in the delivery of services,
3. Integrity of land use policies,
4. Coordinated planning with adjacent jurisdictions,
5. Encourage cooperative boundary agreements¹,
6. Resource leverage.

The Town of Medary collaborates with a number of area agencies:

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission

La Crosse County is located within the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission's (MRRPC) jurisdiction. The MRRPC prepares and adopts regional or county-wide plans and represents Pierce, Pepin, Buffalo, Trempealeau, La Crosse, Vernon, Crawford, Jackson, and Monroe counties.

The RPC was established to carry out comprehensive and intergovernmental planning. MRRPC has jurisdiction throughout the seven-county area, including incorporated and unincorporated areas; Meet area-wide requirements so local jurisdictions could receive federal grants; and provide an organization to receive federal grants.

The La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC)

The LAPC is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the La Crosse, WI-La Crescent, MN Urbanized Area. MPOs carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process as established in 23 CFR 450 and provide a forum for local decision-making on transportation issues of a regional nature.

To assist in carrying out the continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive performance-based multimodal transportation planning process required of MPOs, the LAPC has agreements with its member communities, the Wisconsin and Minnesota DOTs, and public transportation operators.

La Crosse County

The Town maintains a cooperative relationship with several of County agencies and departments. The La Crosse County Sheriff's Department provides police services to the Town, the Highway Department maintains county and state roads within the town, and Medary has adopted the La Crosse County Zoning ordinances and the

¹ A cooperative boundary agreement is a formal contract between municipalities and/or towns that sets terms and provisions related to municipal boundaries and shared services. Under a cooperative boundary agreement, no boundary of a municipality may be changed unless it is consistent with the agreement. See [Ch. 66.0307](#) for statute language.

County enforces zoning. The Town expects to continue the existing level of cooperation between itself and the County.

State of Wisconsin Towns Association

The Town of Medary is a member of the Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA). The WTA provides educational materials and legal information to town officials to support effective town governance. The Town will continue its membership of the WTA and will continue to utilize its services.

School Districts

The La Crosse, Onalaska, and West Salem school districts serve Town of Medary residents. See map 2 for a visualization of local school districts related to Medary.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Southwest Region plays a critical role in many aspects of the County's transportation system, from highway design and development to bicycle and pedestrian facilities and networks.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) also has a prominent role in the County because of the many DNR-owned land and facilities that are located here.

University of Wisconsin Extension

The University of Wisconsin Extension office is located in the City of La Crosse and serves as an educational resource for County residents.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service maintains a presence in the County because of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

United States Army Corps of Engineers

The U.S Army Corps of Engineers also maintains a presence in the County because of their ownership and management of locks and dams along the Mississippi River, which borders the western edge of the County.

Adjoining Units of Government

The municipalities that border the Town of Medary are the cities of La Crosse and Onalaska and the towns of Onalaska, Hamilton, Barre, and Shelby.

The Town recognizes the importance of working with state and federal agencies and is committed to continuing an ongoing dialogue with these agencies, both during and after the development of this Comprehensive Plan.

Existing or potential intergovernmental conflicts

Since the previous Town of Medary Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2008, the Town and neighboring municipalities have had discussions related to annexation, resulting in borders between Medary and the cities of La Crosse and Onalaska and the Town of Onalaska being modified.

The Town of Medary will pursue boundary agreement(s) with the adjoining municipalities to ensure satisfactory and mutually beneficial outcomes for the involved agencies.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

Goal – Seek mutually beneficial cooperation with all levels of government.

Objective:

- Maintain open channels of communication with all levels of government.

Recommendations:

- Continue to participate in the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC)
- Continue cooperation and coordination with inspections, zoning and emergency services.
- Consolidate services between government and quasi-public entities.
- Continue participating in County and Town Association meetings.
- Support programs that conserve wildlife habitat, particularly wetlands, through private/public cooperation.
- Encourage coordination and cooperation with the county and other local government entities.
- Review and evaluate neighboring towns comprehensive plans to identify conflicts and/or coordination opportunities.
- Utilize the La Crosse County Planning Departments website to provide information about the Town.
- Continue to work with the three school districts that serve the Town and facilitate to the extent practical any resources the Town has they could assist the School Districts in their missions.
- Continue to participate in planning efforts that address interests of overlapping or neighboring jurisdictions.

8) AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

This chapter describes local land and water conditions in detail as well as agricultural and cultural heritage. It is important to consider the patterns and interrelations of natural resources on a broader scale because they do not follow geo-political boundaries. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administered at the county, state, or federal level.

Agriculture

There are 855 acres of agricultural land within the Town of Medary. This accounts for nearly 19.4% of all the land within the Town. Farming is part of the local economy and is also a way of life for some residents. Map 5 shows where agricultural land is located within the Town under 'Natural Area'.

Based on *Table 10*, the number of farms in La Crosse County has increased by 1.3%. This is more than the State average decline in farms of 9.6%. Though the number of farms has slowly increased, the overall market value of agricultural land has drastically increased in the County by 28.6%. This is below the State average increase of 33.0%. The largest changes are in sizes of farms (in acreage) to smaller farms.

Table 10. La Crosse County Agriculture Summary

	2017	2022	% Change 2017-2022
Farms (#)	667	676	1.3%
Land in farms (acres)	144,334	138,200	-4.2%
Estimated market value of land and buildings (\$)	1,079,187	1,334,354	23.6%
Estimated market value of all machinery and equipment (\$)	83,104	98,711	18.8%
Farms by Size			
1 to 9 acres	49	86	75.5%
10 to 49 acres	150	132	-12.0%
50 to 179 acres	218	233	6.9%
180 to 499 acres	185	156	-15.7%
500 to 999 acres	51	50	-2.0%
1,000 or more acres	14	19	35.7%
Total cropland	575	572	-0.5%
Irrigated land (# of farms)	26	33	26.9%
Source: 2022 & 2017 USDA Ag. Census			

Natural Resources

Soils

See maps 10 and 11 for soil types and the location of class 1, 2, and 3 soils in Medary. These classes are considered prime agricultural land, as they are most suitable for productive agriculture.

Groundwater

The region's surface waters are among the most popular environmental resources from a recreational and aesthetic perspective. There are few natural inland lakes in La Crosse County, but the adjoining surface waters of the Mississippi River, Black River, Lake Onalaska, and Lake Neshonoc are the biggest contributors to surface water recreation.

Surface Water

There are several small streams and creeks within the Town of Medary. Most notable is Smith Valley Creek a class three trout stream that flows north into the La Crosse River. The La Crosse River serves as the northern boundary of the Town. There are no natural lakes with the Town.

Topography and Watersheds

A large portion of Medary's landscape can be characterized as ridges and valleys. Numerous streams and creeks that flow into the La Crosse River drain the Town's rugged landscape. See map 8 for a visualization of Medary's topography.

Woodlands

Farmed ridges and valleys and woodlands on the valley walls and ridge tops characterize the Town of Medary's landscape. Forest or Forest Ag. makes up 32.1% or 1,417 acres of the entire Town.

Floodplains/Wetlands

Special Flood Hazard Areas inundated by a 100-year flood are located within the Town of Medary within the La Crosse River Corridor. This has been designated Zone A-4 in which no base flood elevations have been determined. The flood plain map for the Town of Medary is dated March 15, 1984, by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The most recent FEMA flood hazard map for Medary is on Map 14.

Open Space

Open spaces are one of the Town of Medary's greatest attributes. Over 75% of the town's landscape is made up of forested, agricultural, undeveloped or public lands. The Town of Medary has a lot of steep coulees making and slopes, that are difficult to farm. These steep slopes also require larger lot size restrictions for residential development.

Non-Metallic Mineral Resources

There was a non-metallic quarry located in the Town of Medary between the City of La Crosse's Hixon Forest and County Highway B. In late 2005 this quarry property was acquired by the Mississippi Valley Conservancy for its La Crosse Blufflands Preservation Program.

Wildlife Resources

The agricultural fields, scattered forestlands, and streams provide excellent habitat for wildlife. White-tailed deer and eastern wild turkeys are found in the Town. Squirrels, rabbits, pheasants, ruffed grouse, raccoons, and a wide variety of songbirds also make their home in the Town of Medary. Smith Valley Creek is a class three trout stream.

Air Quality

The Town of Medary has a total population of around 1,600 people and limited industrial businesses. Therefore, the impact that Medary has on local air quality is minimal. Potential threats to air quality in the future that will have to be evaluated include unregulated outdoor burning, the neighboring urban municipalities of La Crosse and Onalaska, and climate impacts such as increased risk of wildfires and drought.

Stream/Environmental Corridors

Natural stream environmental corridors in the Town would include the La Crosse River and Smith Valley Creek and their surrounding wetlands. The wooded uplands that cover the higher elevations of the valley walls in the town are examples of natural occurring environmental corridors that provide important wildlife habitat.

Threatened and Endangered Species

There are 12 plant and animal species in La Crosse County that are currently endangered, threatened, or are proposed to be on this list ([Table 11](#)). These species include mammals, birds, reptiles, mussels, and insects. Over the last few decades, the communities within the County have experienced changes in the composition of their animal and plant life. Historically most changes occurred through human encroachment and consequent disturbance to the wildlife and its habitat. Land uses that have drastically altered the natural environment such as the cutting of forests, wetland drainage, agriculture, and increased urbanization have resulted in the reduction of the quantity and quality of habitat for many species. This reduction in habitat has also resulted in the near extirpation of some species.

The U.S. government, to protect biological resources, enacted the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. The Act essentially prohibits the taking of a threatened or endangered species or its habitat. Wisconsin, in accordance with the ESA, has developed the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Working Lists. The Wisconsin Natural Heritage Working Lists contains species known or suspected to be rare in the state. The list and a map depicting the general location of these rare species can be viewed on the DNR website.

Table 11. Threatened and Endangered Species - La Crosse County

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
<i>Mammals</i>		
<i>Canis lupus</i>	Gray wolf	Endangered
<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Northern long-eared bat	Threatened
<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>	Tricolored bat	Proposed endangered
<i>Birds</i>		
<i>Grus americanus</i>	Whooping crane	Experimental population
<i>Reptile</i>		
<i>Sistrurus catenatus</i>	Eastern massasauga	Threatened
<i>Mussels</i>		
<i>Lampsilis higginsii</i>	Higgins eye pearlymussel	Endangered
<i>Plethobasus cyphyus</i>	Sheepnose	Endangered
<i>Insects</i>		
<i>Bombus affinis</i>	Rusty patched bumble bee	Endangered
<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Monarch butterfly	Candidate
<i>Lyaedoides melissa samuelis</i>	Karner blue butterfly	Endangered
<i>Plants</i>		
<i>Aconitum noveboracense</i>	Northern wild monkshood	Threatened
<i>Plantanthera leucophaea</i>	Eastern prairie fringed orchid	Threatened

Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service 2024

Archeological and Historic Resources

A search of the Wisconsin National Register of Historic Places revealed 52 registered buildings or sites in La Crosse County. The register included historic houses, churches, mounds, historic camps and burial sites. The Medary Town Hall is housed in the Smith Valley Schoolhouse and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The other listing in the Town of Medary is the Valley View Site.

Wisconsin's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) was searched and 3 structures/objects in the Town of Medary were in the inventory. The AHI contains data on buildings, structures and objects that illustrate Wisconsin's history. The AHI documents a wide range of historic properties such as the round barns, log houses, metal truss bridges, small town commercial buildings, and Queen Anne houses. It is a permanent record maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society. One structure identified in the Town of Medary was the Town Hall (constructed in 1887). The other two are houses located in Smith Valley. One with an unknown construction date is brick and vernacular in design and the other is a brick gabled ell house constructed in 1864.

Recreational Resources

In community facilities section**

County Parks

In community facilities section**

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

Goal – Maintain and enhance the quality of the town's land and water resources for appropriate agricultural and silvicultural use while protecting public health.

Objectives:

- Promote proper maintenance of septic systems and wells.
- Protect natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, rivers, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- Preserve cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
- Protect economically productive areas including farmland and forests.

Recommendations:

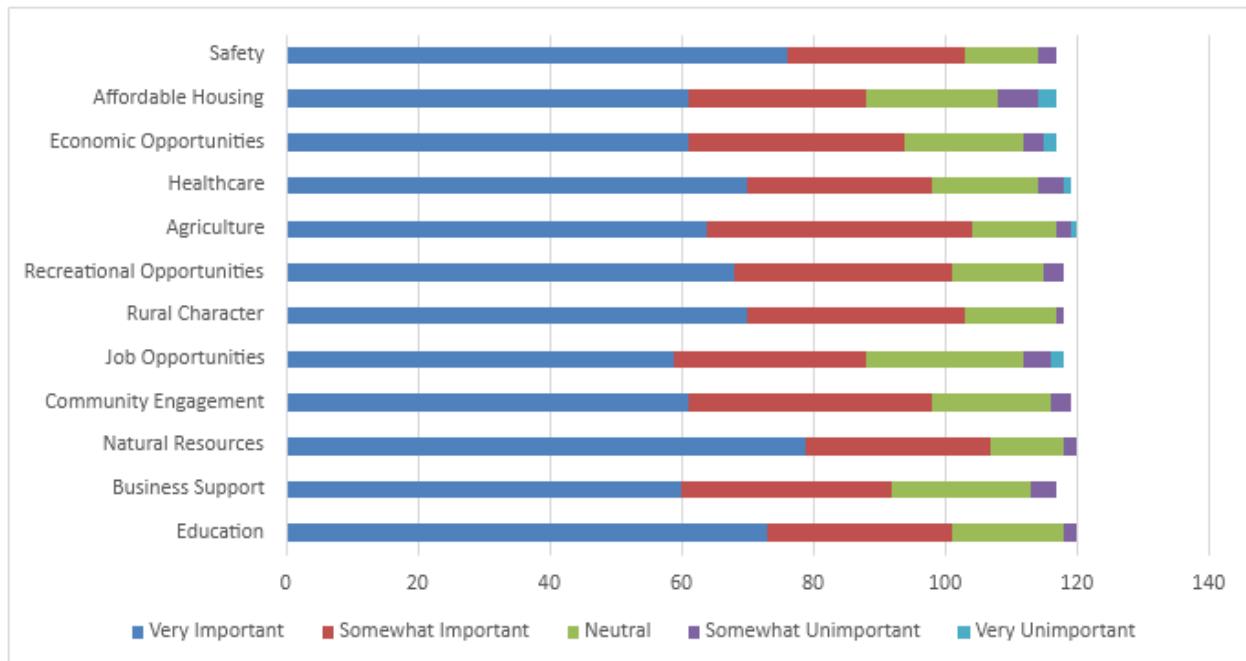
- In conjunction with the Planning Commission, the Town will review all new development proposals regarding their impacts on the above natural resources.
- Prohibit the development on slopes 30% or greater in order to assist in protecting the Town's forested valleys.
- Assist property owners with the purchase of development right programs with conservancy organization so land maintains agricultural and forestry use.
- Identify organizations and programs that help fund natural, agricultural, and cultural plans and projects.
- Support programs that conserve wildlife habitat, particularly wetlands, through private/public cooperation.

9) SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental Conservation

Most of geographic area within the Town of Medary boundary is zoned 'Environmental' within future land use maps. (See Map 7). This area contains floodplains, wetlands, and slopes that meet or exceed 30%. These areas are not considered suitable for development and are technically conserved through this designation, though no formal protections exist for these areas. Maintaining the areas within the Environmental zone is essential for protecting rivers and streams downslope from agricultural areas and new developments. Within the community survey conducted for this plan, Medary residents rated 'Natural Resources', 'Safety', and 'Rural Character' as the three most important qualities of the Town of Medary (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Residents Ranking for Important Town Qualities



Agriculture and Local Food System

As stated in the agriculture section [above](#), 19.4% of the land area within Medary is deemed agricultural lands. For many within Medary, farming is a way of life, and their livelihoods bolster the local economy. As the climate changes, the crops that are grown today, the yields of those crops, and when those crops are planted and harvested will change with it. Conserving Medary's existing farmland is vital to the longevity of farming in the region.

Programs such as the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) help to conserve existing farmland by offering tax credits to participating landowners. Those who claim this tax credit must comply with Wisconsin soil and water conservation standards. As part of compliance, farmers may consider alternative practices related to tilling

methods and crop rotations. Landowners of agricultural land in La Crosse County are eligible for tax credits because La Crosse County adopted farmland preservation zoning, which limits the amount of development on agricultural lands and records deed restrictions as a condition for approval of limited development.

Waste Reduction and Diversion

See [Solid Waste/Recycling](#) section for existing conditions and waste streams.

No numbers are available for the quantity of waste collected from Medary residents, however, there is likely much that can be done to reduce/divert waste and help extend the life of the County Landfill. For instance, encouraging the diversion of food waste via individual or community composting would dramatically reduce the methane emissions from the landfill and provide community benefit ([EPA, 2024](#)). Additional measures may include a broader awareness and mindfulness towards proper recycling practices. Lastly, ensuring that Medary residents are aware of and utilizing the Hazardous Material Program, located at 3202 Berlin Drive, is important to guarantee that materials that cannot be safely landfilled or recycled are separated from the environment where they could potentially contaminate to the local environment and groundwater.

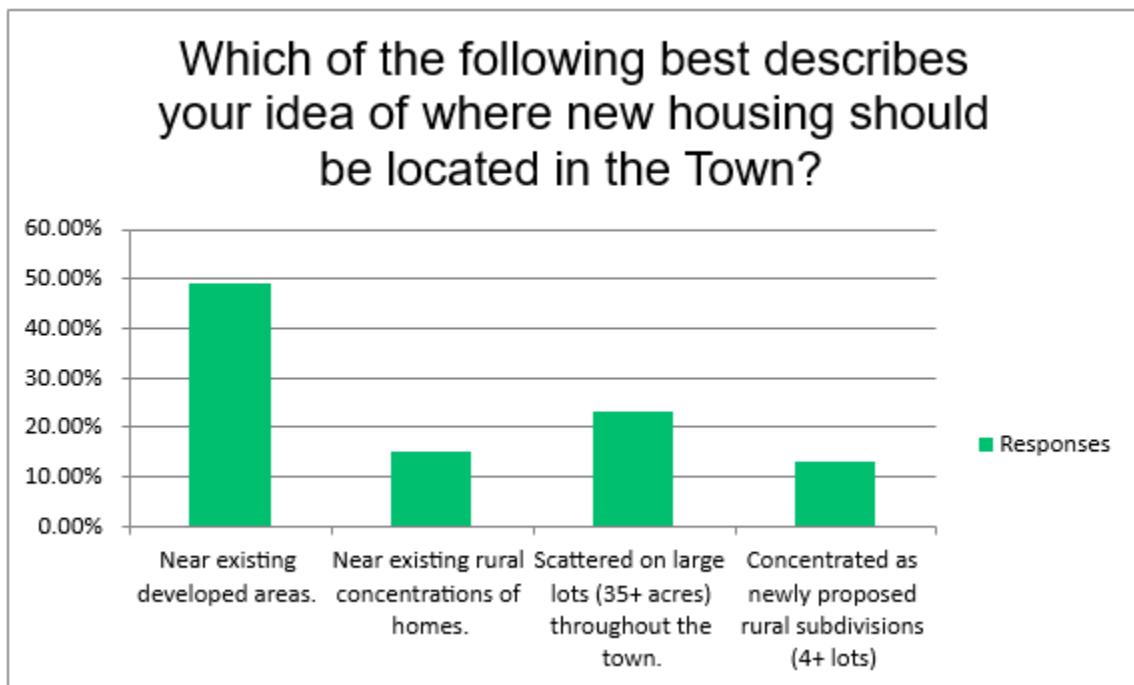
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

The primary energy provider to the Town of Medary, Xcel Energy, has a plan to be a carbon-neutral energy provider by 2050, with an 80% reduction in emissions slated for 2030. While this is good news for household carbon emissions, energy efficiency still plays an important role in energy cost savings and reducing carbon emissions in the interim. Investments in home/business energy efficiency begin to pay dividends by consuming less power for the same functionality and saving on utility bills. [Focus on Energy](#) is a Wisconsin program that partners with utilities to offer rebates and discounts for energy efficiency upgrades, including home insulation upgrades and upgrades to businesses. La Crosse County has a list of resources available on their [webpage](#) for individuals, businesses, and rental property owners looking to make energy efficiency upgrades.

Land Use and Transportation

As seen in Map 5, there are a variety of existing land uses within Medary ranging from natural area, residential, commercial, and some light industrial use. The parts of Medary closest to the incorporated areas have a higher density of commercial uses. Housing density in Medary is greater than the towns farther east from the incorporated areas, however it is less than other towns such as the Town of Shelby, and the Town of Onalaska that also border the cities of La Crosse and Onalaska. Residential and Commercial density are important considerations regarding sustainable land use. Future residential or commercial developments within Medary should be encouraged to build closer to already developed areas so as not to contribute to sprawl. The desire to cluster residential development is reflected by the majority of residents that participated in the Comprehensive Planning Survey ([Figure 7](#)).

Figure 7. Resident Survey Response for Desired Development



Given the rural, primarily residential, makeup of the town, residents must travel outside of Medary to access employment, healthcare, and other services. Para-transit services such as the door-to-door transportation services through the county Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) are available to residents who do not drive and who are eligible. The non-driving population of Medary is estimated to be ~10-20% of the total population, most of whom are those under 15 years old and are too young to drive. Few trails or wide-shoulder roads are available within the town to enable alternative modes of transportation in and out of Medary. While car travel is likely to remain the primary mode of transportation for residents, other modes should be viable alternatives. To support the mobility of residents, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure should be incorporated into future road re-developments and maintenance.

Green Economy

Industries and commercial operations are encouraged to electrify and remove fossil fuels from their operational supply chain to better prepare for an economy that is depending less and less on fossil fuels. Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, (BIL) there are billions of dollars available to businesses looking to electrify and reduce emissions. Looking beyond the BIL, new funding sources are being made available for business carbon reduction and climate mitigation strategies. It is important that businesses are proactive regarding impact mitigation, as the costs of unmitigated climate impacts may outstrip the cost of mitigation.

Tourism is a significant source of revenue for businesses and acts as a supplemental tax stream that help provide local services and reduce the tax burden of residents. Preserving quality natural recreation opportunities in Medary is important to maintaining access to nature for residents and tourists alike.

10) IMPLEMENTATION

This comprehensive plan will be used to guide decision making related to land use and proposed project budgeting. Town and County officials should consider this document a key policy document during decision making. Specific recommendations from this plan are expected to be implemented by Town and County staff with support from their partners.

Plan Update and Amendments

State statutes call for all Comprehensive Plans to be updated at least every ten years. An update is a major rewrite of the entire plan and maps. An amendment can be made at any time as long as appropriate public notices and meetings have occurred to allow for the amendment.

The town will evaluate the Plan's need for amendments at least every five years and update it pursuant to State Statutes every ten years. It is paramount that this plan remains current and relevant to the needs of the Town.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation

It is the responsibility of Town officials and the Planning Commission to adhere to this plan to the best of their ability and consider the goals and objectives within during decision making.

Land Use Goals and Recommendations

Goal – Provide for the health, safety, and general welfare of town residents while making efficient use of existing tax dollars.

Goal – Pursue and promote environmentally friendly and sustainable development.

Objectives:

- Utilize the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for future land use and zoning decisions.
- Protect and preserve the rural character of the Town of Medary.
- Balance individual property rights with the community's desire to maintain Medary's rural character and quality of natural resources.
- Protect prime agricultural lands for productive agriculture or forest/ ag. Forest
- Identify 'smart growth areas'; defined by WI Statues as an area that will enable the development with existing infrastructure and municipal, state, and utility services.

Recommendations:

- Permit new development based upon consideration of this Comprehensive Plan.
- The Town will look for redevelopment opportunities where practical but redevelopment opportunities in the Town are limited due to its rural nature, rough terrain, and lack of blighted areas.
- Encourage land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns.
- Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential commercial and industrial uses.
- Conservation Mixed Use (CMU) and Mixed-Use Development (MU) areas along State Highway 16 and the Mixed-Use Development area on the North end of Smith Valley near County Highway B are the areas that best qualify as Smart Growth Areas due to City of La Crosse boundary and water and sewer lines adjacent to or near these areas. In addition, State Highway 16, and County Trunk Highway B are both designated as principal traffic arterials and have better capacity to serve these areas more efficiently.
- The Town's recommended Land Use Map shows locations where residential and commercial developments are being recommended. Industrial uses in the Town outside of the area North of Gillette Street and East of River Valley Road are not

recommended in the Town due to lack of suitable sites and road capacity concerns in the Town.

- Provide opportunity for input at public meetings where changes to the Comprehensive Plan or when zoning changes are being considered that balance both individual property rights and community interests and goals.
- Provide a town's public participation plan that calls for town resident survey, public information meetings and a public hearing prior to developing the Comprehensive Plan.
- Encourage the Mississippi Valley Conservancy (MVC), Bluffland coalition, and any other applicable community partner to better mark their boundaries and inform the public about the location of adjacent private properties to reduce trespassing.

Housing Goals and Recommendations

Goal - Allow private development of residential housing.

Goal – Provide an adequate supply of housing that meet the needs of town residents for both large and small families.

Goal – Protect the integrity of current housing stock by encouraging development consistent with density and character of existing neighborhood.

Objectives:

- Encourage home improvement, local and private resources, and development standards that enhances the overall appearance.
- Provide opportunities for innovative housing techniques such as planned unit developments, clustering, conservation subdivisions and accessory apartments that are compatible with existing neighborhoods and are designed to better protect the natural environment.
- Maintain zoning standards that allow residential development where it will not encroach on prime agricultural land but may mix into the agricultural community in appropriate locations.

Recommendations:

- Allow considerations for residential development, on both larger lots and in clustered subdivisions, both where appropriate and while maintaining the town's rural landscape.
- Provide adequate areas for the projected need for residential development on the Future Land Use Map.
- Utilize the Town's Public Utilities and Community Facilities; Transportation; Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources and Recommended Land Use maps to help identify locations for new housing development alternatives.
- Consider program assistance to builders promoting alternative construction types that lower building costs or on-going energy usage.
- Work with local advocacy agencies to enhance the ability of elderly and special needs populations to stay in their homes.
- Identify various organizations and programs that assist with the purchase, rehabilitation, or construction of housing.

Transportation Goals and Recommendations

Goal – Maintain a safe and efficient town road system.

Goal – Provide transportation choices for town residents.

Objectives:

- Maintain road capacity for all the traffic and vehicle types expected on town roads.
- Provide annual maintenance of the town roads.
- Maintain and improve arterial roads that provide a shared space for low volume traffic, walking, and biking on the road.
- Support snowmobile and ATV trails/ routes within the town.

Recommendations:

- Continue creating and implementing a 5-year town road improvement plan.
- When applicable, use town ordinances to address blind spots, increase safety, and to appropriately space out driveways to preserve road capacity.
- Work with La Crosse County Planning and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as they develop / update bicycle and pedestrian plans.
- Maintain and upgrade town roads and bridges so they continue to accommodate emergency vehicles, school buses and snowplows.
- Update the town's official map to show where future roads will go in cooperation with adjacent municipalities, La Crosse County, and WISDOT.
- Encourage neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices, such as walking and bike paths.
- Develop a bike and walking trail along the east side of Smith Valley Road. This path would originate across the road from the Town Hall and then extend north to the Northwoods Elementary School, see Map 10.
- Collaborate with La Crosse County to develop a bike and walking trail along County Road FA from County Road F north.
- Investigate the feasibility of developing a new road from Hidden Springs Road north to Sablewood Road in the City of La Crosse. See Map 10.
- Identify organizations and maintain a list of programs to help fund road infrastructure projects.
- Identify organizations and maintain a list of programs to help fund transportation alternative projects.

Economic Development Goals and Recommendations

Goal – Promote maintenance of the agricultural, recreational, and entrepreneurial economic base.

Objective:

- Support industrial and public-institutional developments, following established Land Use Map locations and availabilities.
- Promote a variety of small commercial business throughout the Town of Medary.

Recommendations:

- Accommodate home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.
- Protect farmer's right to farm by discouraging conflicting land uses near active farms.
- Allow for non-animal micro-farming operations as complimentary or supplementary use in residential areas.
- Investigate how the town's existing agricultural lands in Smith, Miller and Peters Valley and Kiel Coulee can further support the region's agricultural and food processing industry and Agri-energy production. Small farm and direct to consumer agriculture, community supported agricultural production systems and organic farming are gaining economic strength throughout the state.
- Investigate the concept of the Town Hall and Park or other areas in the Town serving as a farmers' market or other use to provide income opportunities for agricultural landowners and gardeners.
- Direct commercial and industrial development to locate in cities and villages.
- Promote a variety of small commercial business throughout the Town of Medary.
- Define the types of business growth that are desired and appropriate for the Town.
- Identify organizations and programs that help fund economic development planning and activities.
- Participate in the REV program to the maximum extent practicable to maximize its value to the town and town officials.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goals and Recommendations

Goal – Provide sufficient public services (roads, police, fire & rescue, garbage & recycling) either through town efforts or as a partner with other communities.

Goal - Meet existing needs of town residents, as well as future demand for agricultural and residential uses.

Objectives:

- Maintain the current provision of community services.
- Provide information to residents on the proper maintenance of septic systems and the benefits of water conservation.
- Share equipment and services across town boundaries, where possible.
- Provide the most efficient police, fire, ambulance, and plowing services to town residents at the most cost-effective rates.

Recommendations:

- Continue maintaining town roads. See Transportation chapter for more details.
- Continue cooperating with the city of La Crosse and La Crosse County Sheriff's department to provide law enforcement services.
- Continue cooperating with the city of La Crosse Fire Department.
- Develop storm water management plans for Smith, Miller, Peters Valley, and Keil Coulee that manage storm water.
- Create a 5-year Utilities and Community Facilities needs forecast.
- Create list of capital improvements for the Town Park in the LC County Outdoor Recreation Plan for access to DNR funding.
- Identify organizations and programs that help fund storm management plans and projects.
- Identify needs for improved rural broadband and create local partnerships with Internet Service Providers (ISP) and other local municipalities.
- Identify organizations and programs that help fund internet-for-all efforts.

Intergovernmental Relationships and Conflict

Goal – Seek mutually beneficial cooperation with all levels of government.

Objective:

- Maintain open channels of communication with all levels of government.

Recommendations:

- Continue to participate in the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC)
- Continue cooperation and coordination with inspections, zoning, and emergency services.
- Consolidate services between government and quasi-public entities.
- Continue participating in County and Town Association meetings.
- Support programs that conserve wildlife habitat, particularly wetlands, through private/public cooperation.
- Encourage coordination and cooperation with the county and other local government entities.
- Review and evaluate neighboring towns comprehensive plans to identify conflicts and/or coordination opportunities.
- Utilize the La Crosse County Planning Departments website to provide information about the Town.
- Continue to work with the three school districts that serve the Town and facilitate to the extent practical any resources the Town has they could assist the School Districts in their missions.
- Continue to participate in planning efforts that address interests of overlapping or neighboring jurisdictions.

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Goals and Recommendations

Goal – *Maintain and enhance the quality of the town's land and water resources for appropriate agricultural and silvicultural use while protecting public health.*

Objectives:

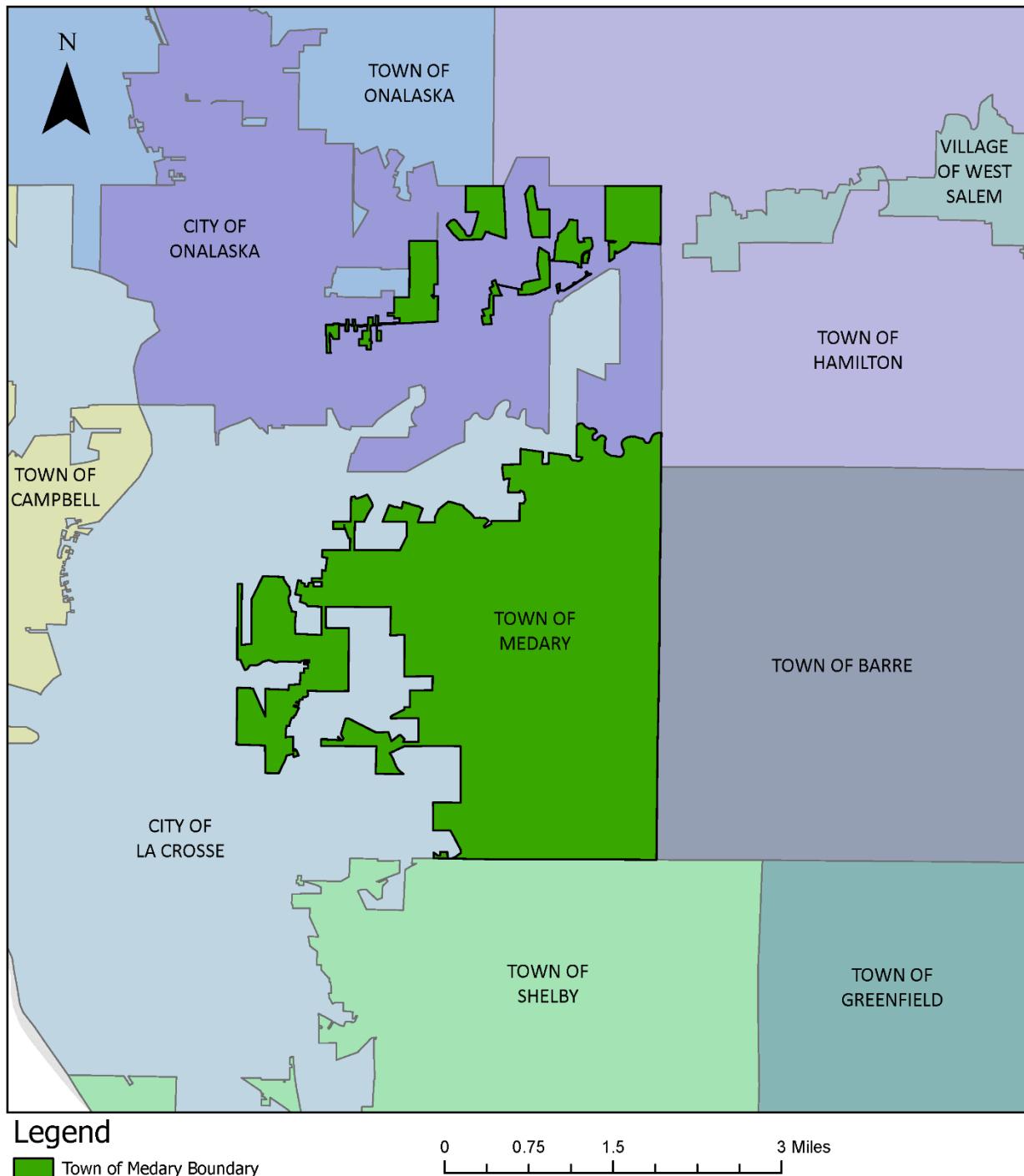
- Promote proper maintenance of septic systems and wells.
- Protect natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, rivers, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- Preserve cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
- Protect economically productive areas including farmland and forests.

Recommendations:

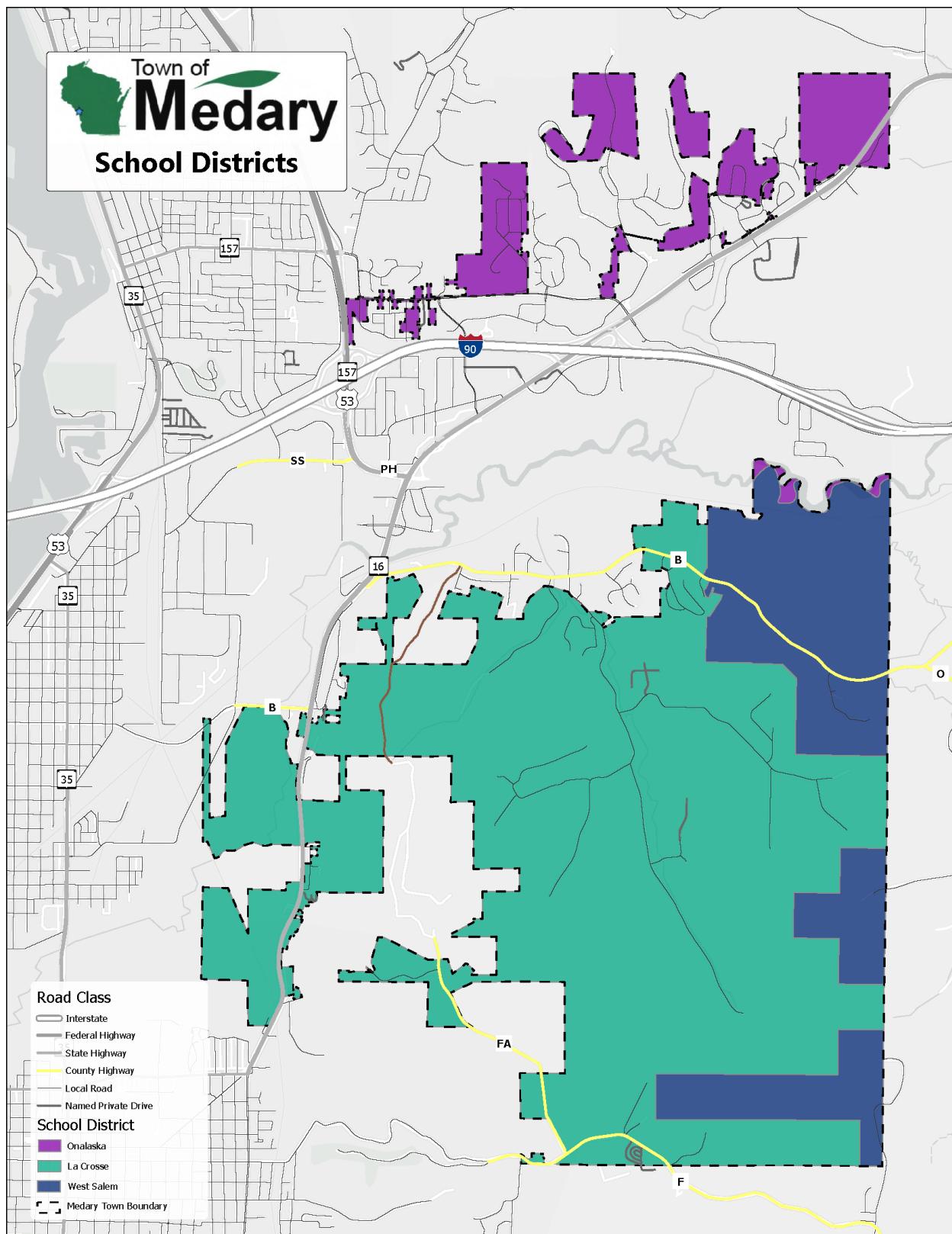
- In conjunction with the Planning Commission, the Town will review all new development proposals regarding their impacts on the above natural resources.
- Prohibit the development on slopes 30% or greater in order to assist in protecting the Town's forested valleys.
- Assist property owners with the purchase of development right programs with conservancy organization so land maintains agricultural and forestry use.
- Identify organizations and programs that help fund natural, agricultural, and cultural plans and projects.
- Support programs that conserve wildlife habitat, particularly wetlands, through private/public cooperation.

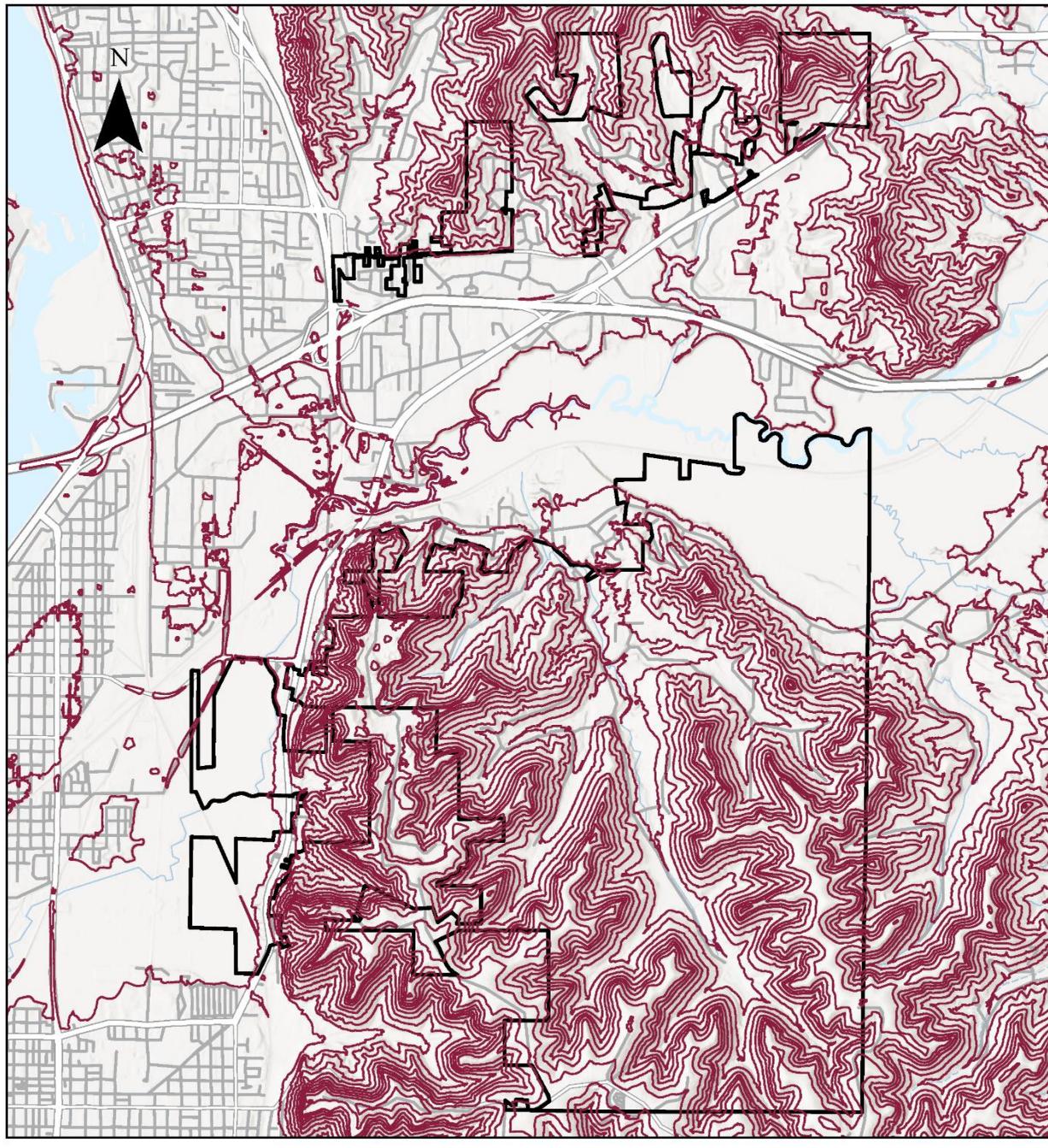
11) MAPS

1. Neighboring Municipalities
2. School Districts
3. Town of Medary 50 ft. Interval Contours
4. Town of Medary Watersheds
5. Town of Medary Existing Land Use
6. Town of Medary Future Land Use
7. Town of Medary Environmental
8. Town of Medary Shaded Relief
9. Town of Medary Road Inventory
10. Proposed Transportation Facilities
11. Town of Medary Soil Types
12. Town of Medary Soil Classes
13. Town of Medary Maximum Internet Speed



**Neighboring
Municipalities**





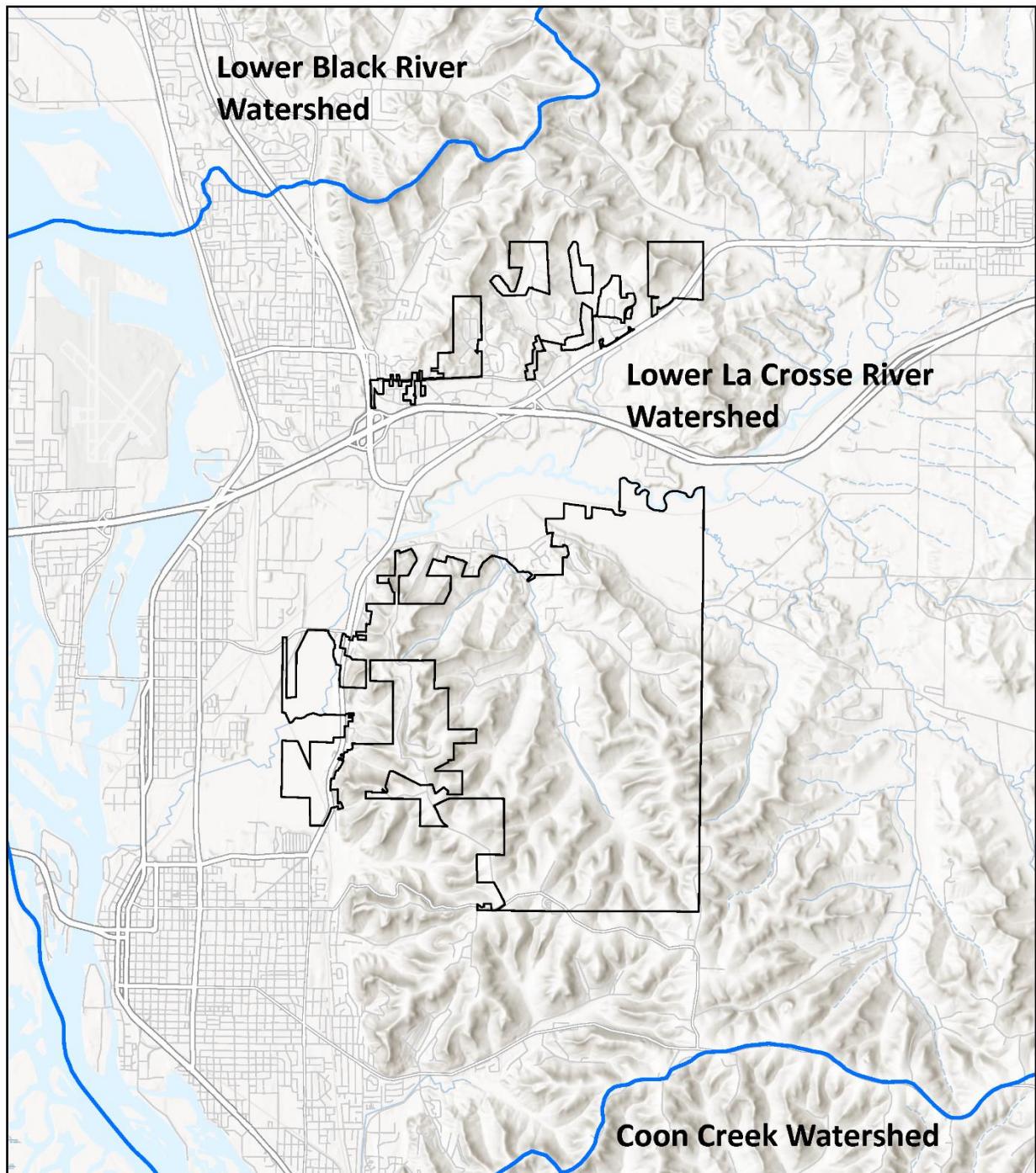
Legend

■ Town of Medary Boundary

— Contours 50 FT



**50 ft. Interval Contour -
Town of Medary**



Watersheds

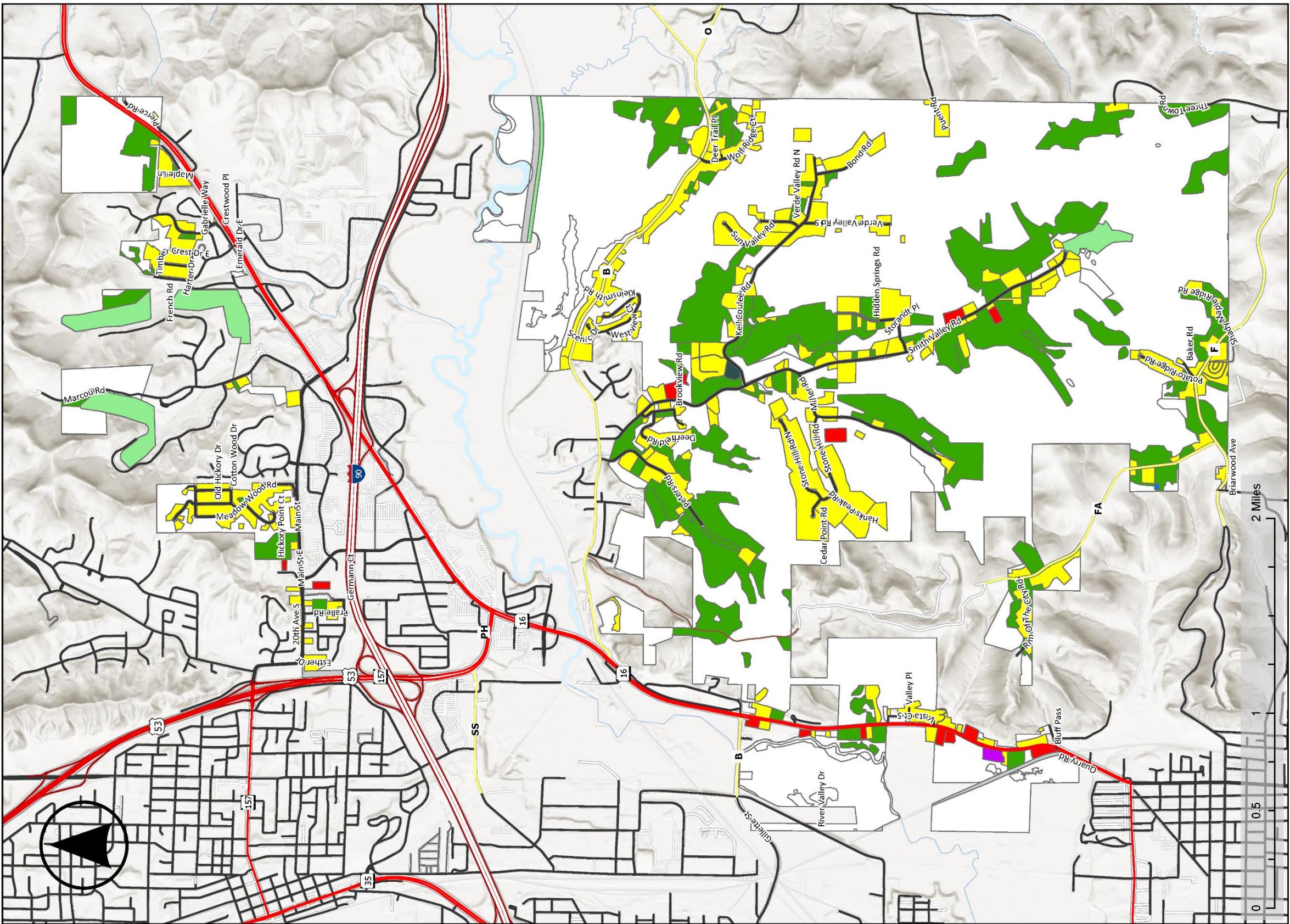
- Town of Medary Boundary
- Watershed Boundaries

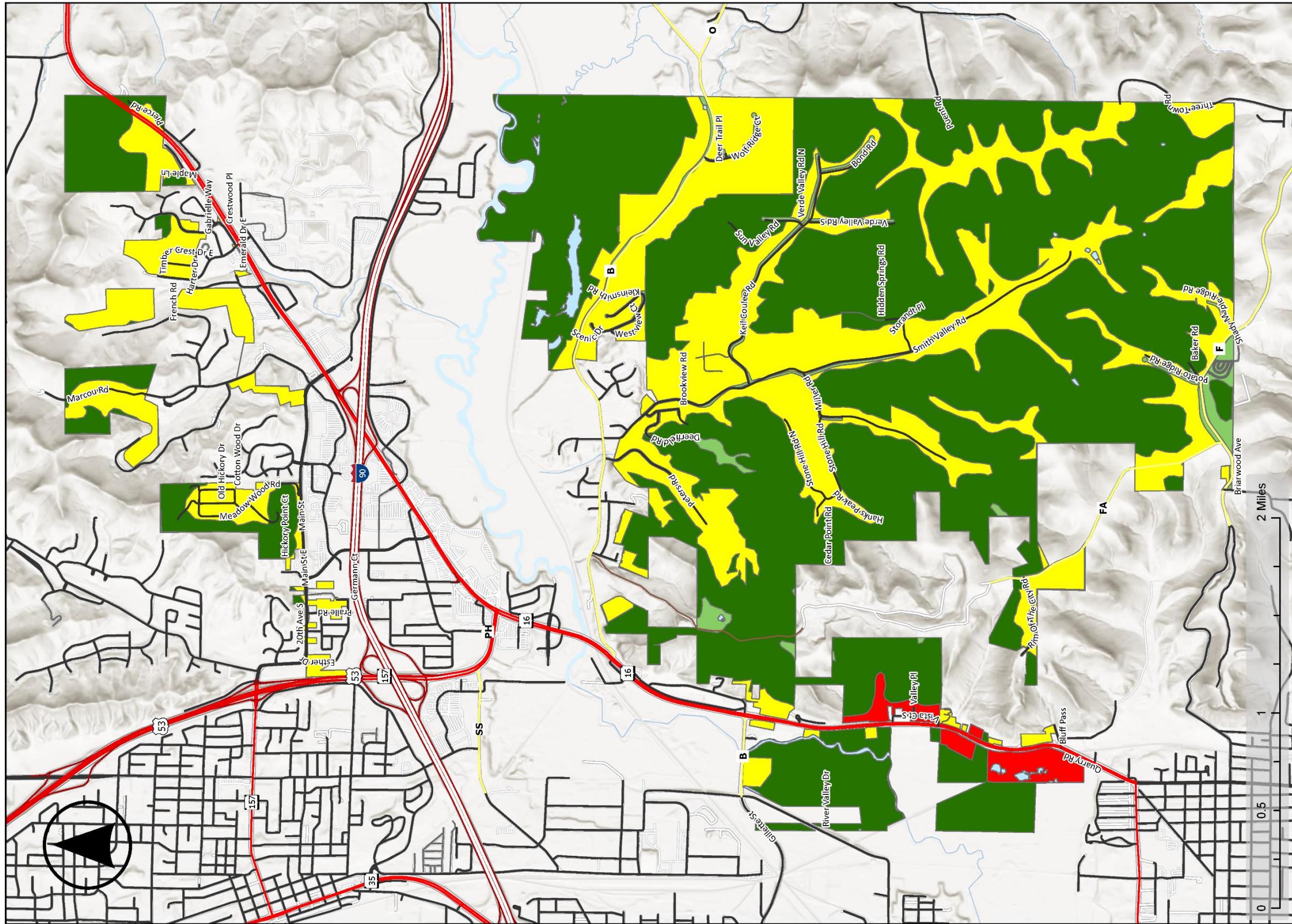


Existing Land Use



■ Transportation
■ Mass Assembly Area
■ Leisure Activities
■ Natural Resources
■ No Human Activity/
■ Unclassifiable

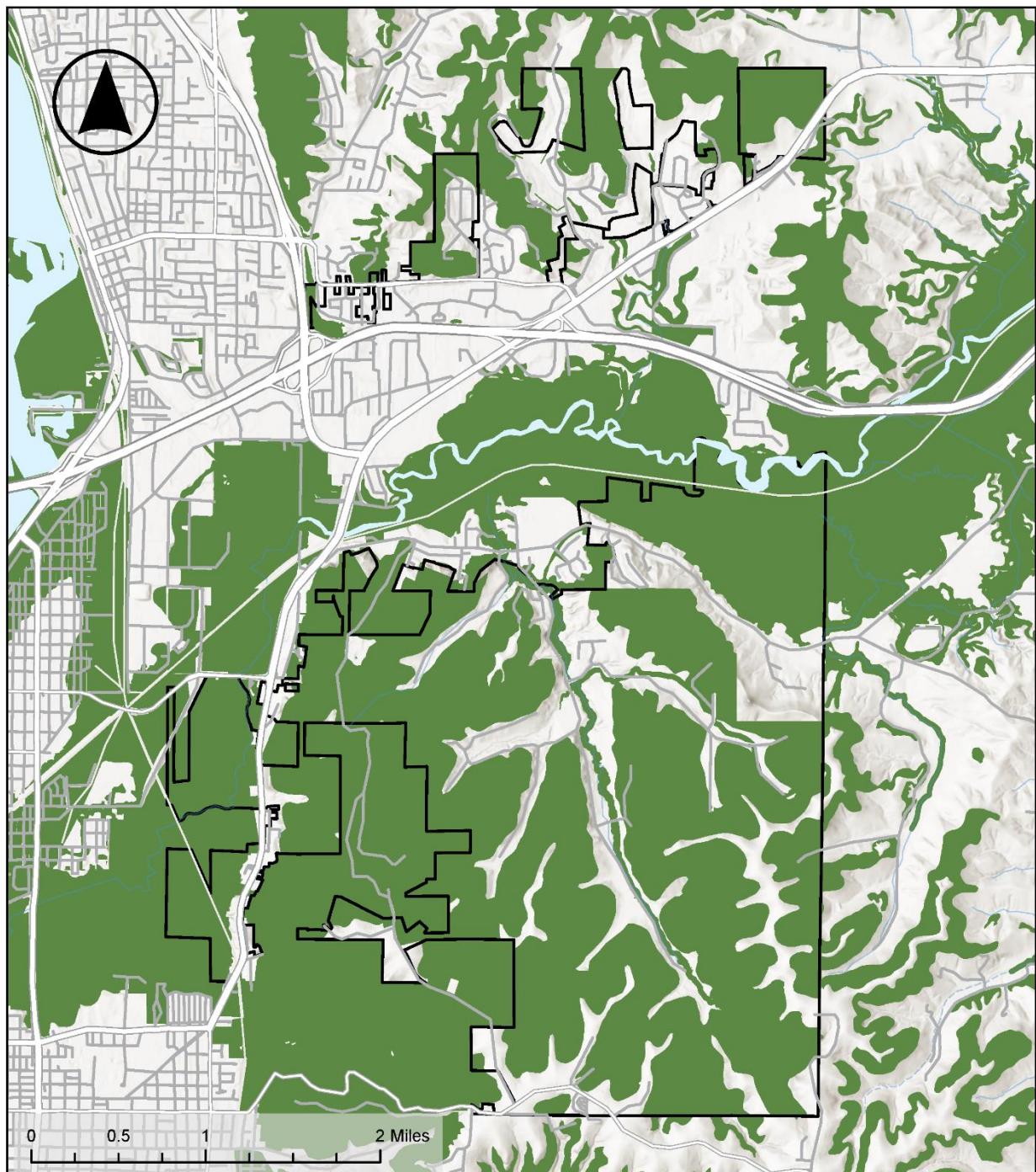




Future Land Use



A legend on the left side of the map, consisting of four colored squares with corresponding labels: a light green square for 'Agricultural and Rural', a dark green square for 'Environmental', a red square for 'Non-Residential', and a blue square for 'Public-Institutional'.

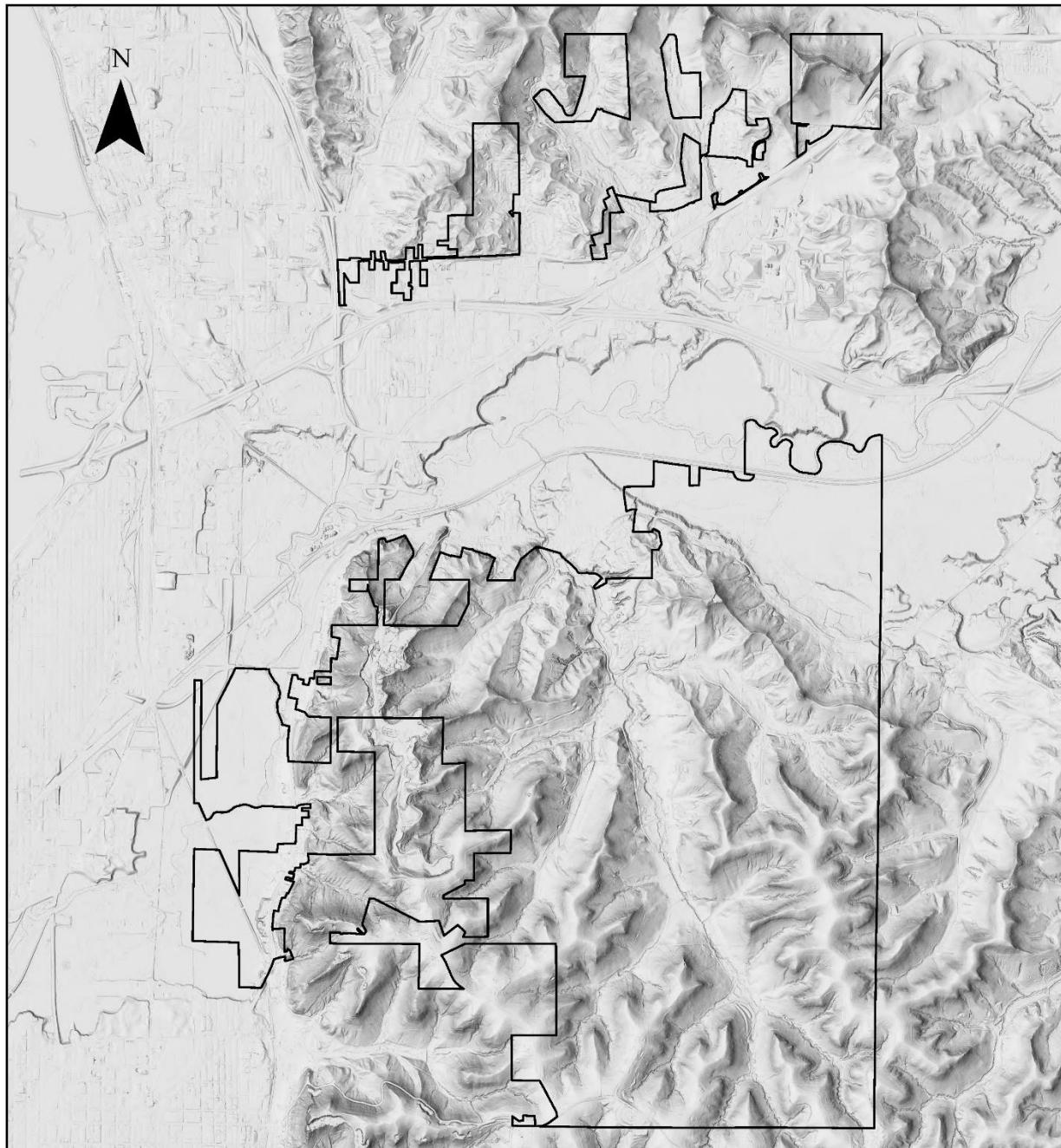


Environmental

The environmental class includes areas where special protection is encouraged because of unique landscape, topographical features, wildlife, or historical value. They contain floodplains; Steep Slopes 30% or greater; Wetlands; Preserved Lands in permanent conservation easements; and viewsheds, historic, archaeological, or culturally significant sites.

This text is taken from the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan regarding Land Use classifications.





Legend

■ Town of Medary Boundary

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



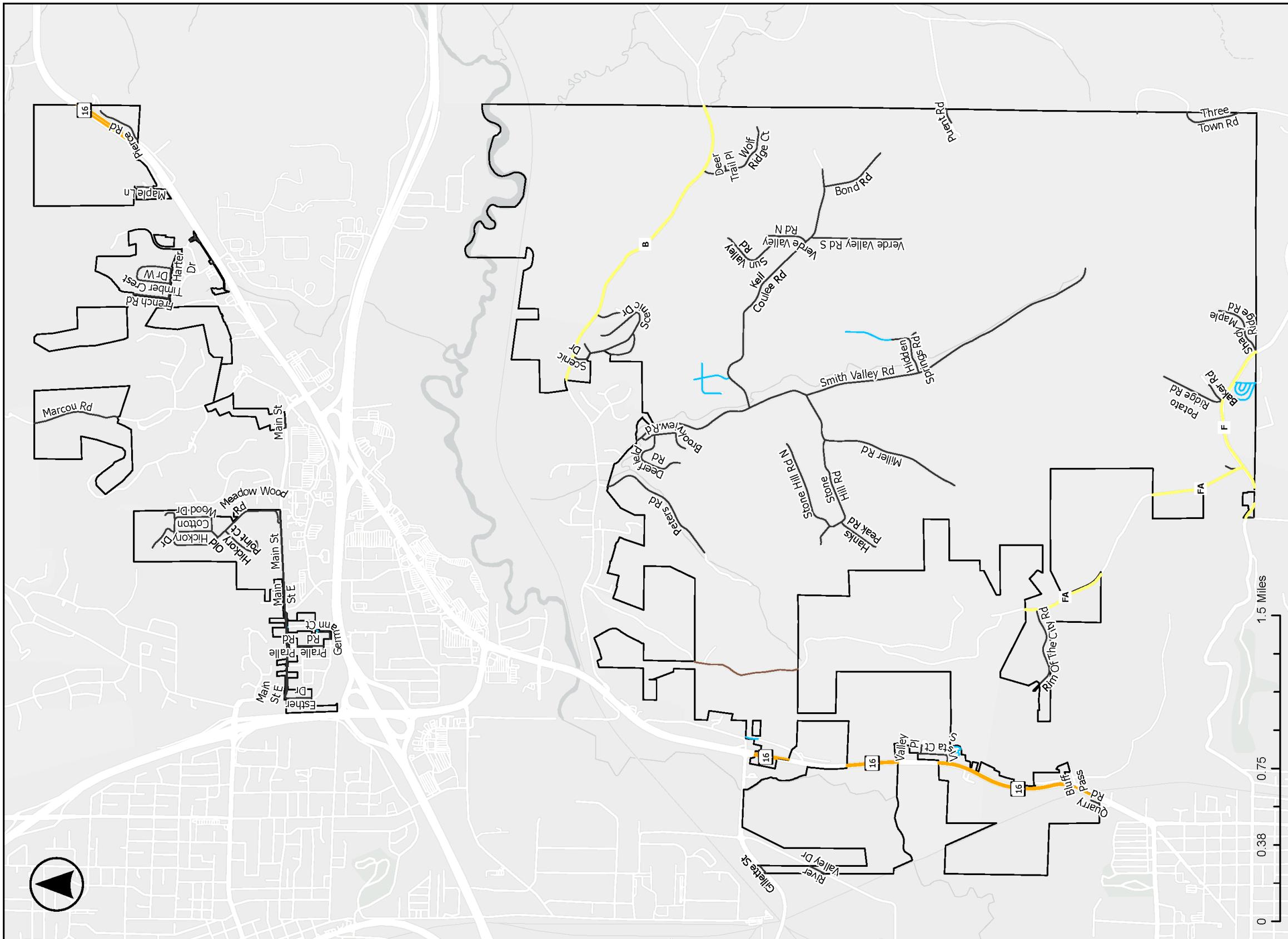
Shaded Relief

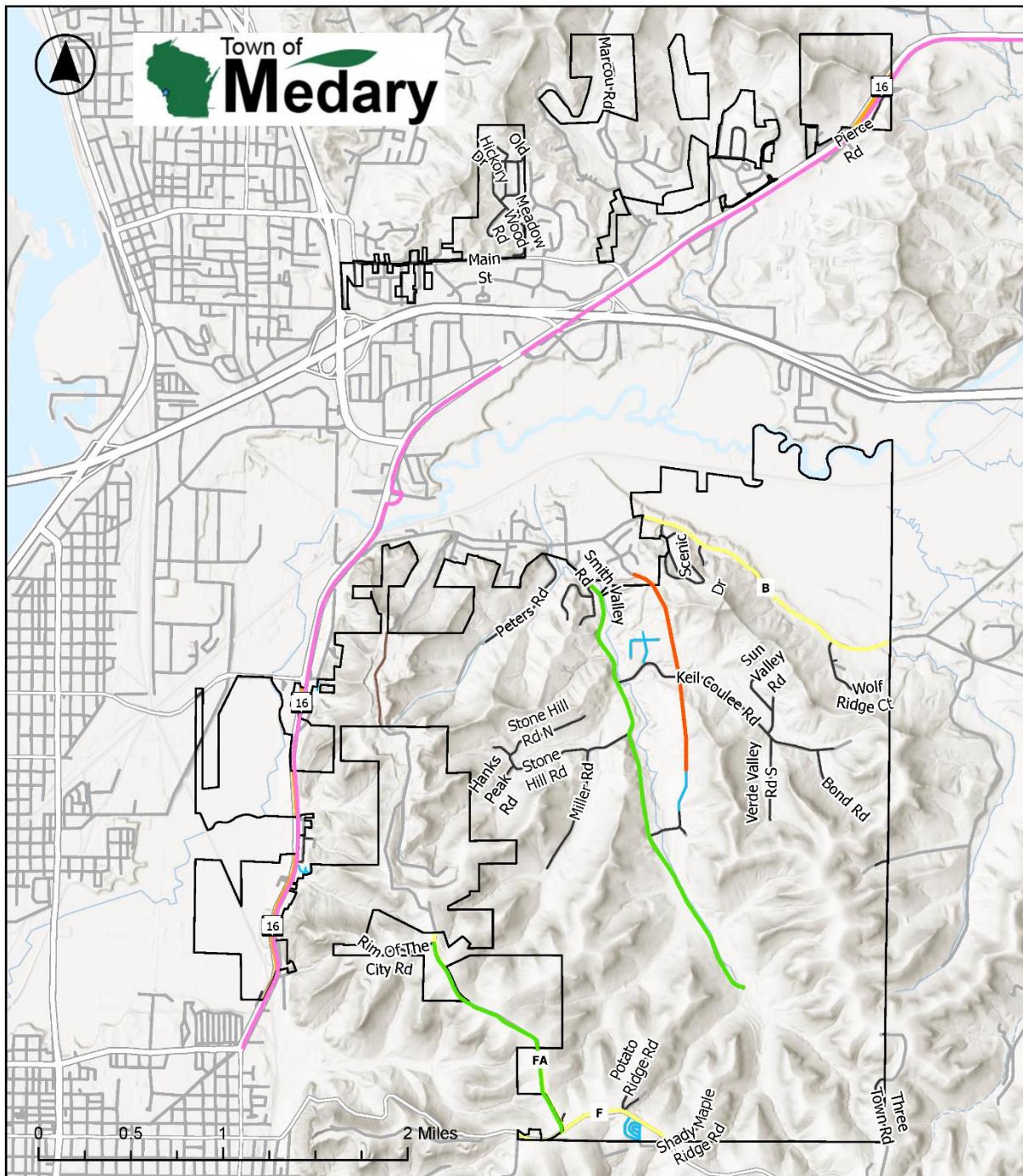
Road Inventory



Legend

- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Named Private Drive
- Limited Access
- Town of Medary Boundary

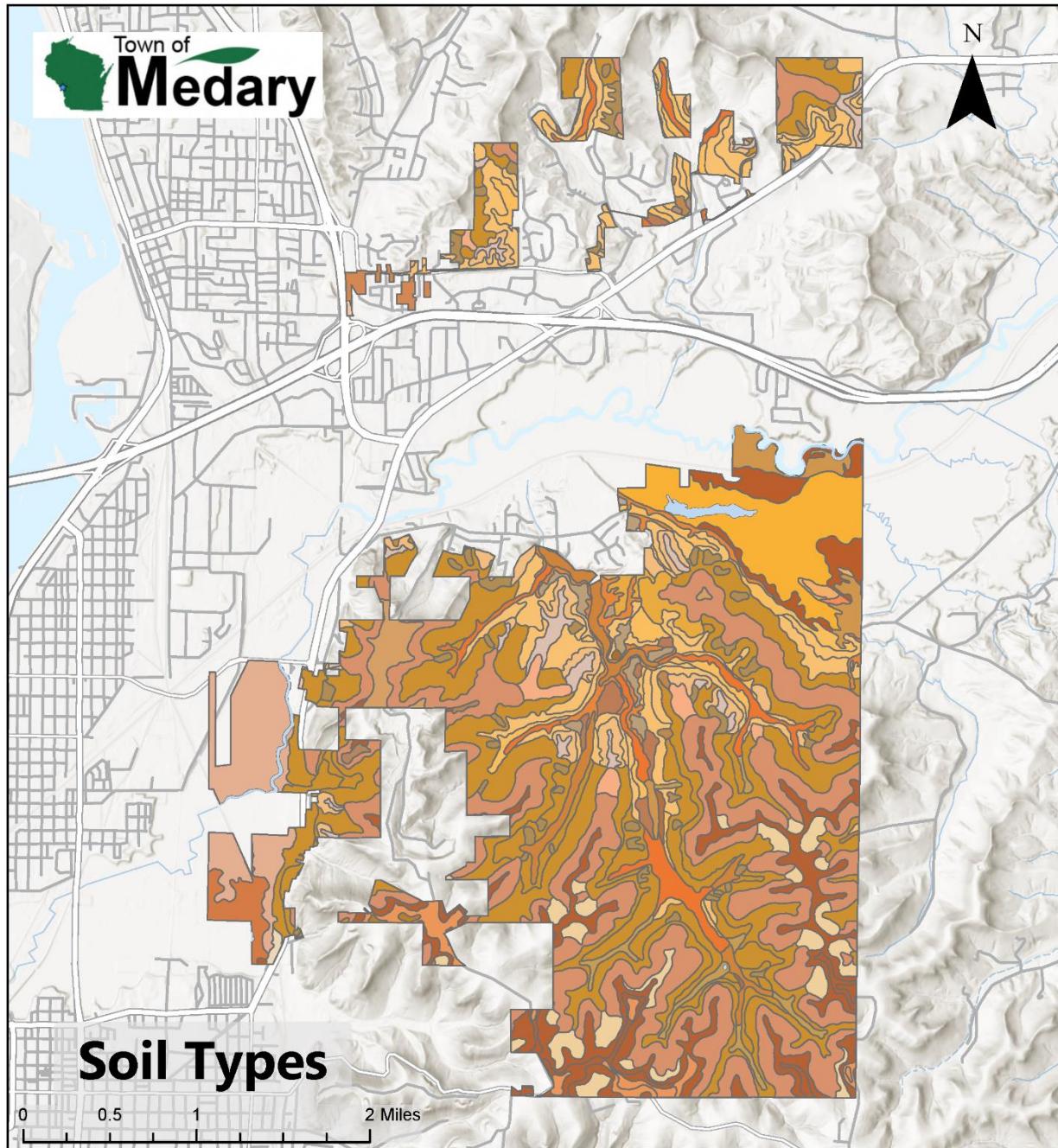




Road Class

- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Named Private Drive
- Limited Access
- Town of Medary Boundary

Potential Transportation Facilities



ALGANSEE-KALMARVILLE COMPLEX

ARENZVILLE SILT LOAM

BARREMLILLS SILT LOAM

BEARPEN SILT LOAM

BEAVERCREEK COBBLY FINE SANDY LOAM

BILSON SANDY LOAM

BRINKMAN SILT LOAM

BRODALE-BELLECHESTER-ROCK OUTCROP COMPLEX

CHESLEA FINE SAND

CHURCHTOWN SILT LOAM

COUNCIL FINE SANDY LOAM

COUNCIL-ELEVAST-NORDEN COMPLEX

DORERTON-ELBAVILLE COMPLEX

ELBAVILLE SILT LOAM

ETTRICK SILT LOAM

FESTINA SILT LOAM

GAPHILL-ROCKBLUFF COMPLEX

GOSIL LOAMY SAND

GREENRIDGE SILT LOAM

HIXTON SILT LOAM

KICKAPOO FINE SANDY LOAM

LAMBEAU SILT LOAM

MAJIK LOAMY FINE SAND

MERIMOD SILT LOAM

MERIT SILT LOAM

MT. CARROLL SILT LOAM

NORDEN SILT LOAM

ORION SILT LOAM

PALMS & HOUGHTON MUCKS

PALMS MUCK

PITS, QUARRY

SEATON SILT LOAM

TIMULA SILT LOAM

TINTSON SAND

TODDVILLE SILT LOAM

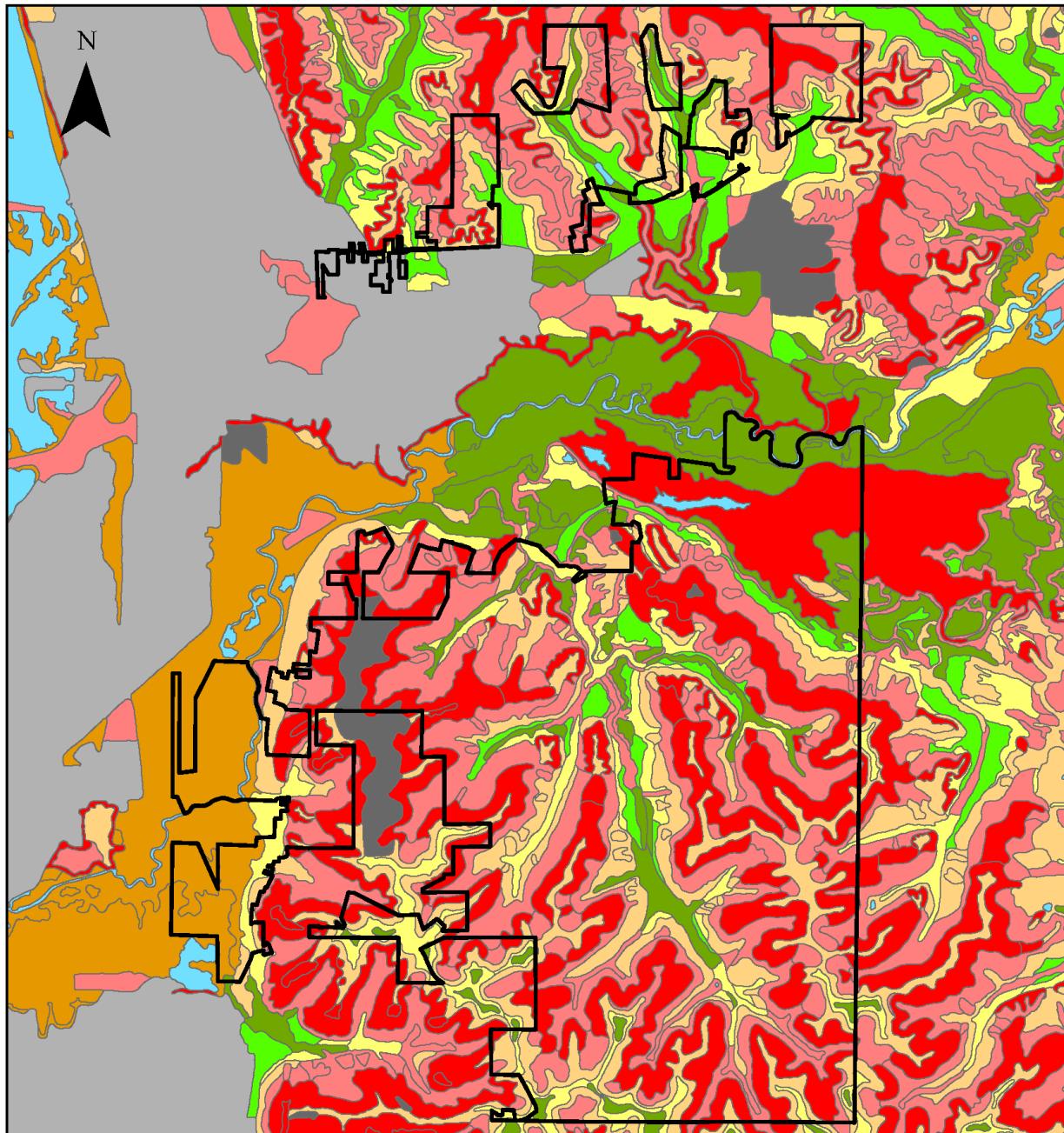
UDORTHENTS

URBAN LAND, VALLEY TRAINS

VALTON SILT LOAM

WATER

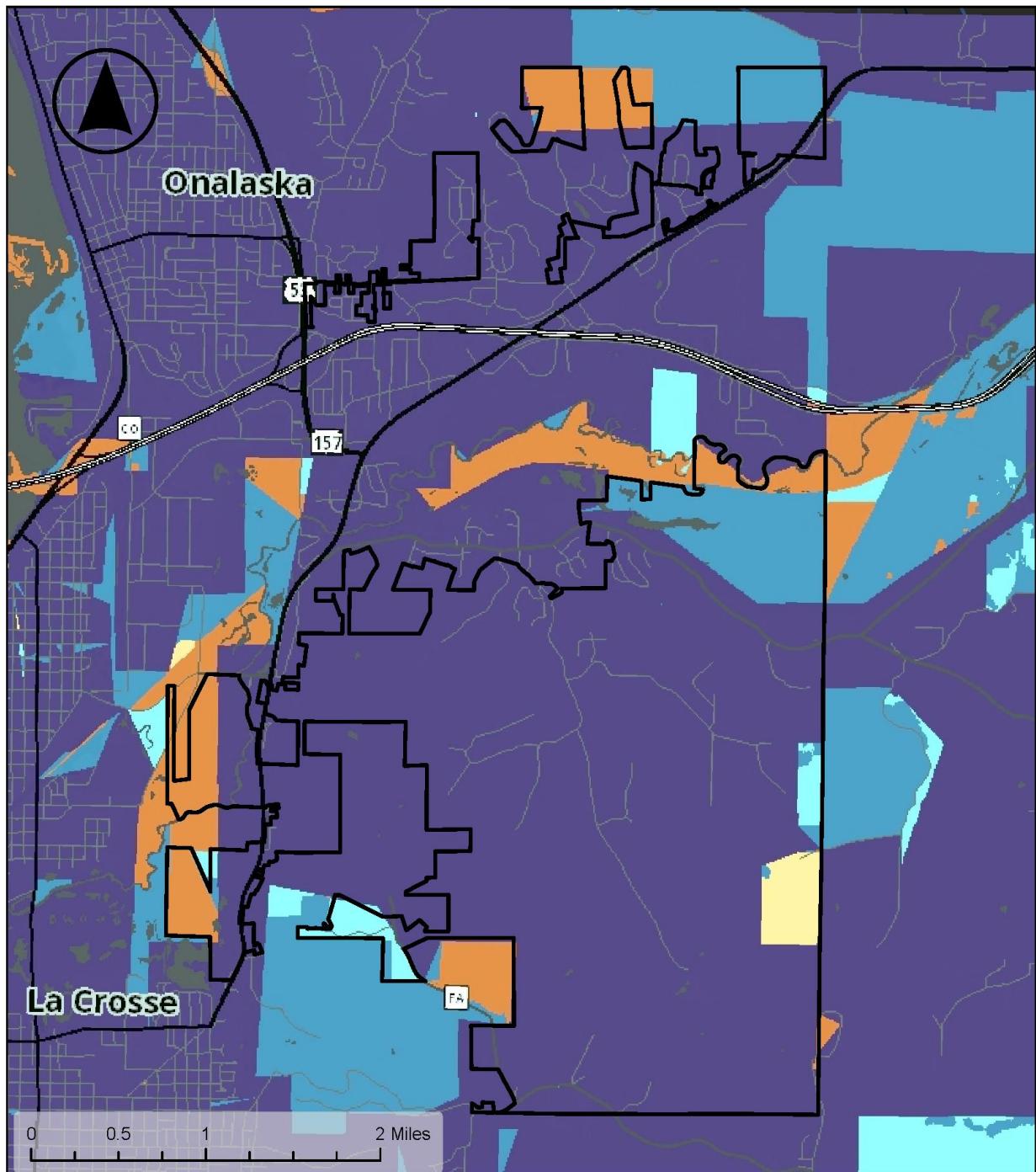
<all other values>



Soil Capability

Class

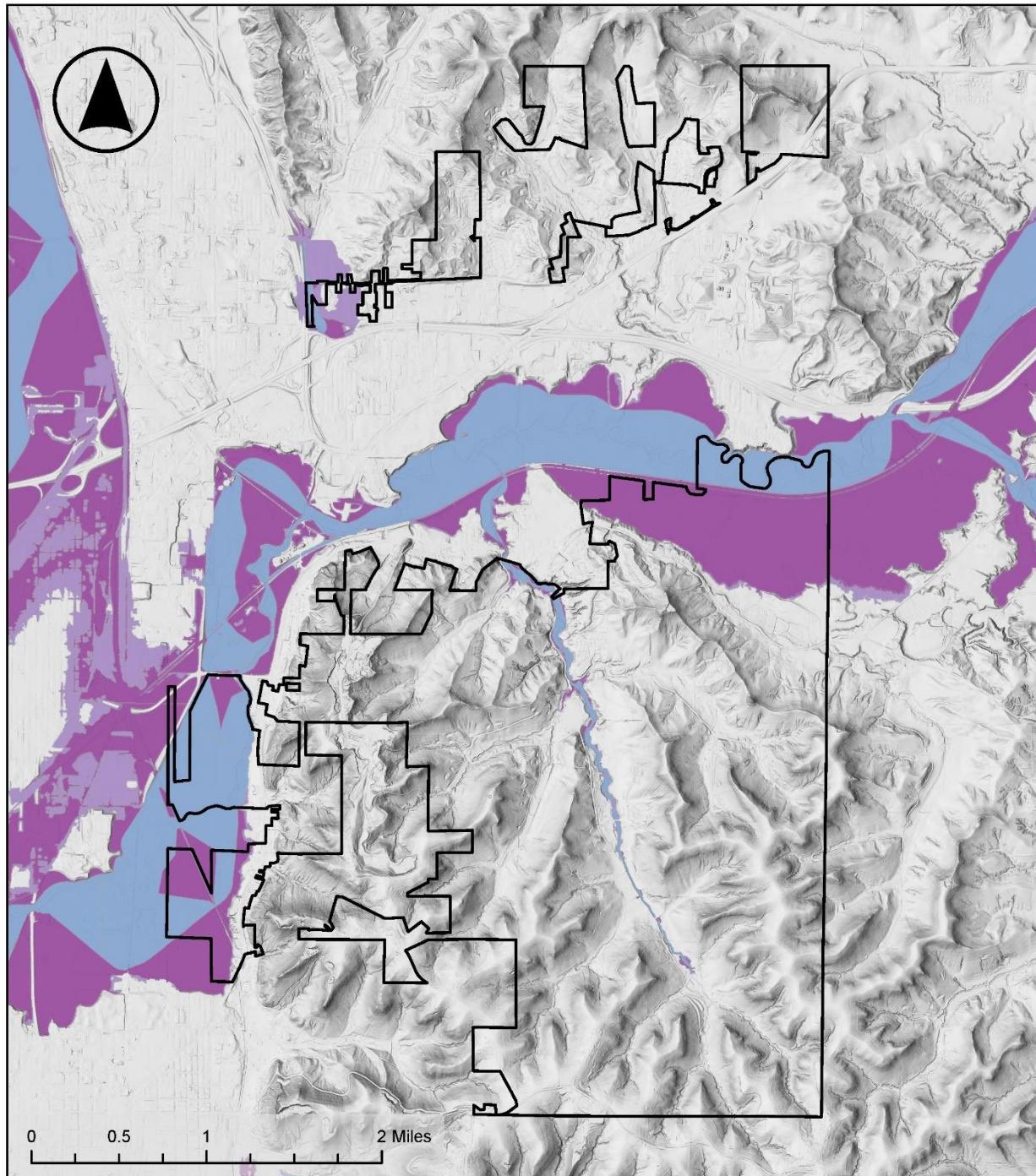
The U.S. Department of Agriculture designates soils into 8 broad categories, or "classes" based on their suitability for agriculture. For planning purposes, classes 1, 2, and 3 are considered prime soils with the rest considered generally unsuited for agriculture.



Fixed Internet Speeds

White square	Town of Medary Boundary
Purple square	100+ Mbps Down/ 20+ Mbps Up
Dark blue square	25+ Mbps Down/ 3+ Mbps Up
Light blue square	10+ Mbps Down/ 1+ Mbps Up
Orange square	<5 Mbps Down/ <0.6 Mbps Up





FEMA Flood Hazard



A) Appendices

1. Public Participation Plan (Attached)
2. La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) Long Range Transportation Plan Goals (Attached)
3. Outreach and Feedback Results (Graphs attached)
4. PASER Table
5. MioVision Smith Valley Road Traffic Count Table
6. Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations Implementation Table

A-1) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF MEDARY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS 2024

I. Introduction.

The Town of Medary has a request by a landowner to amend its comprehensive plan for the following parcel: _____

Section 66.1001(4)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes specifically requires the governing body of the local government unit to adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation, including open discussions, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage in the preparation of the comprehensive plan. These written procedures contained within this Public Participation Plan (hereinafter referred to as the "Plan") satisfy this requirement. This Plan will guide public participation throughout the Town of Medary's Comprehensive Planning Process.

This Public Participation Program offers all citizens, businesses, interest groups, housing authorities, affected units of government, and other parties a range of opportunities to participate through the planning process in a meaningful way to shape the future of the Town and region.

Our public participation process will:

- Ensure all planning decisions are open to public comment;
- Produce better planning decisions;
- Support and add credibility to all Town decision-making processes;
- Provide opportunities to disseminate information about the Plan and process to all segments of the Town;
- Strengthen the relationship between our decision makers and citizens; and,
- Develop a shared vision for the future of The Town of Medary and La Crosse County.

II. Public Participation Opportunities.

The Town of Medary has established the following list of public participation opportunities:

1. Public Comments.

The Town Board and the Planning Commission will always welcome written comments regarding issues presented. Direct written responses will be made where a response is appropriate. Comments will always be addressed and discussed at meetings.

2. Meeting Notices.

The Town of Medary will post meeting notices for each meeting and event in a timely manner at accessible locations, and the notices will meet the requirements for proper notification regarding date, time, location, etc.

3. Planning Commission Meeting.

12. Public Hearing.

The final step in the Plan adoption process is for the Town Board to hold a public hearing on the proposed “Final Comprehensive Plan” adoption ordinance and the “Final Comprehensive Plan” document. The Town Board is required to consider any comments received on the Recommended Comprehensive Plan prior to adopting a Final Comprehensive Plan. After adoption of the ordinance for the Final Comprehensive Plan, the Plan and adoption ordinance shall be distributed by the Town to recipients listed in Section 66.1001(4)(b) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

III. Adoption.

This Plan was adopted by the Town of Medary Board on this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Steve Elsen, Chairman

(SEAL)

Diane Elsen, Clerk

A-2) LAPC Long Range Transportation Goals

La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) Long Range Transportation Plan Goals

Indicate if the LAPC goals are either *Not Applicable*, *Agree*, *Disagree* (state concerns) with local unit of government comprehensive plan goals.

LAPC - Land Use Goals

- Housing and neighborhoods in the City of La Crosse will attract new investment and more residents, especially through renovation and enhancement of existing housing stock.
- Senior housing options will continue to expand, and new housing intended for residents who remain mobile and active should be located within a 10-minute walk of retail and services.
- New housing will continue to include a range of housing types and lot sizes, including a priority on single family lots smaller than 1/2-acre.
- The region places a high priority on infill development to enhance the utilization of existing urban infrastructure and enhance the concentration of uses so that more residents are within a 10-minute walk of their daily retail needs.
- New buildings and development areas will often include a mix of uses.
- Towns, villages and cities will pursue and approve boundary agreements that allow some growth in unincorporated areas.

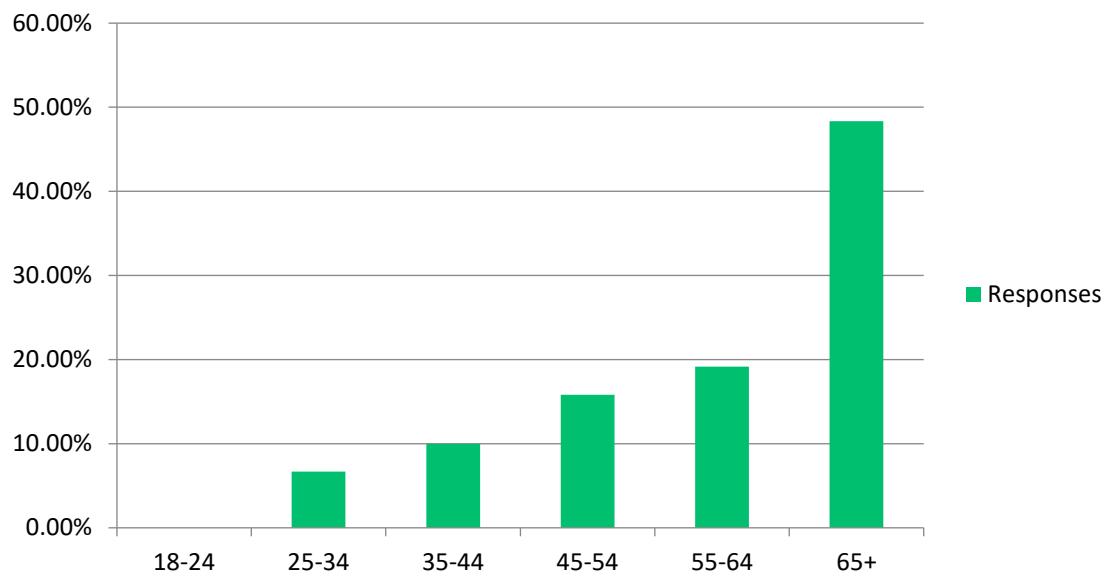
LAPC – Transportation Goals

- New roads for the primary purpose of facilitating regional commuter traffic will generally be avoided – community preference is for expansion of existing roads and transit enhancements instead.
- Road projects will be designed to improve the safety and mobility of all users, with emphasis placed on maintaining neighborhood connections and cohesiveness.
- The region will have a flexible and fully interconnected grid of streets and highways.
- A Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) will be created to fund and maintain transportation systems.
- Transit use will increase among all age groups.
- Fixed-route regional transit, such as Bus Rapid Transit, should be actively studied and pursued. Routes should be identified and necessary right-of-way protected (or gradually acquired) until implementation becomes feasible.

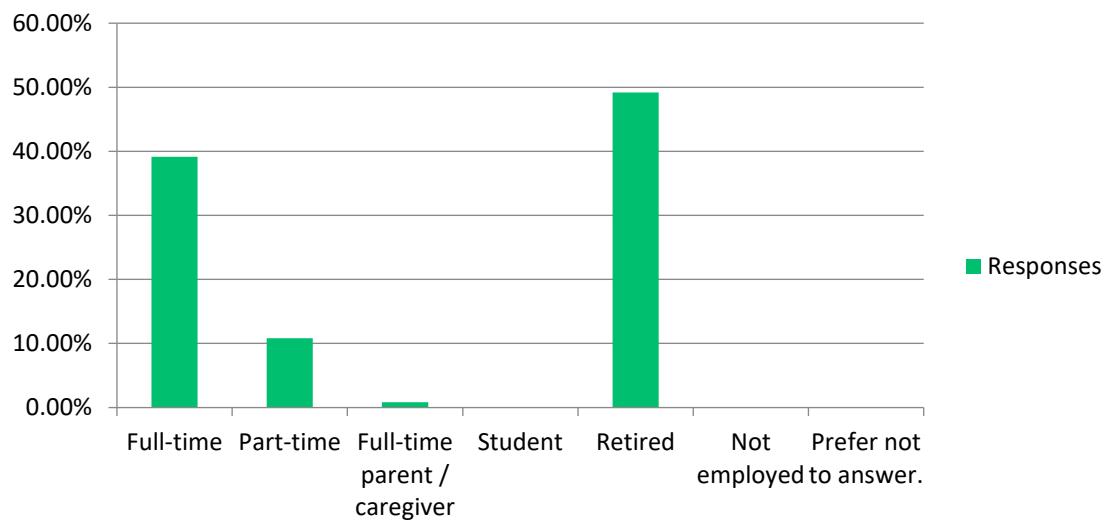
- Intelligent transportation systems and mass data gathering technologies will be utilized to the extent practicable to improve the safety and mobility of our transportation networks.
- Growth will be accommodated without a significant increase in congestion through the use of many strategies, including road and highway improvements, traffic signal timing improvements, new/enhanced transit services, enhanced and expanded bike and pedestrian facilities, scheduling adjustments by major employers, and other approaches.
- Truck routes in the region will be efficient and clearly identified, especially including those through the City of La Crosse.
- Mississippi River locks and dams will be upgraded to accommodate modern shipping requirements.
- Interstate passenger rail service to Minneapolis and Milwaukee/Chicago will increase in frequency and reliability.
- Public and private landowners will reduce their subsidy of automobile use through a mix of strategies.
- Bike and pedestrian facilities will be present everywhere.

A-3) Outreach and Feedback Results

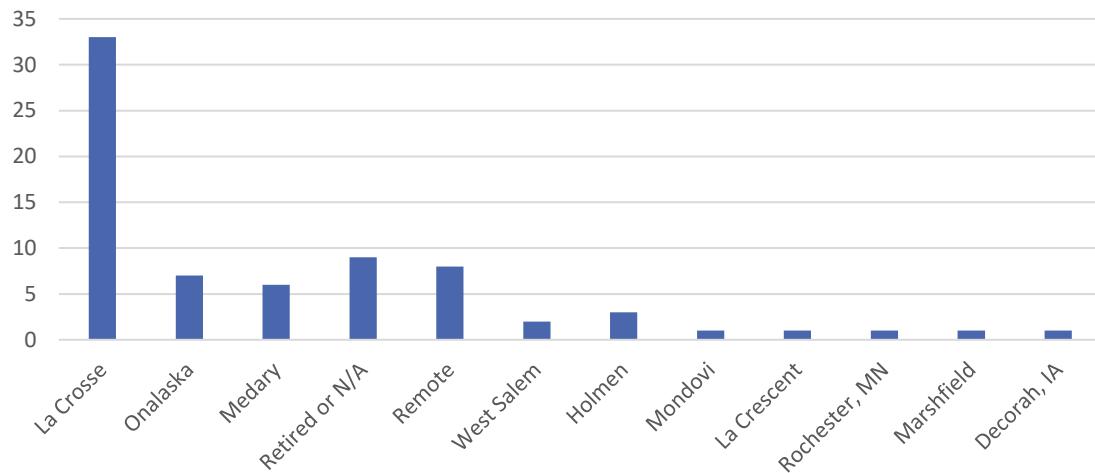
Please indicate your age bracket.



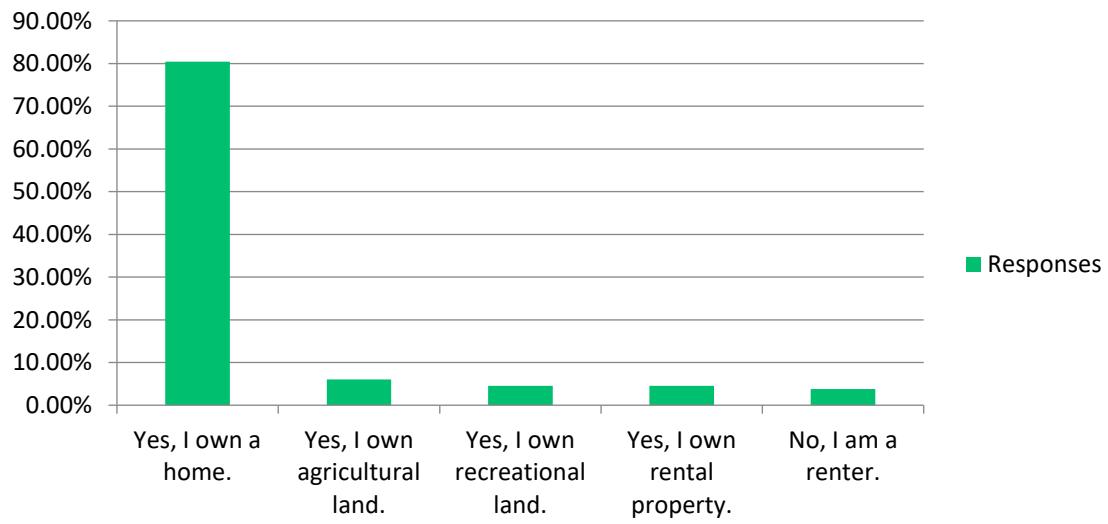
Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?



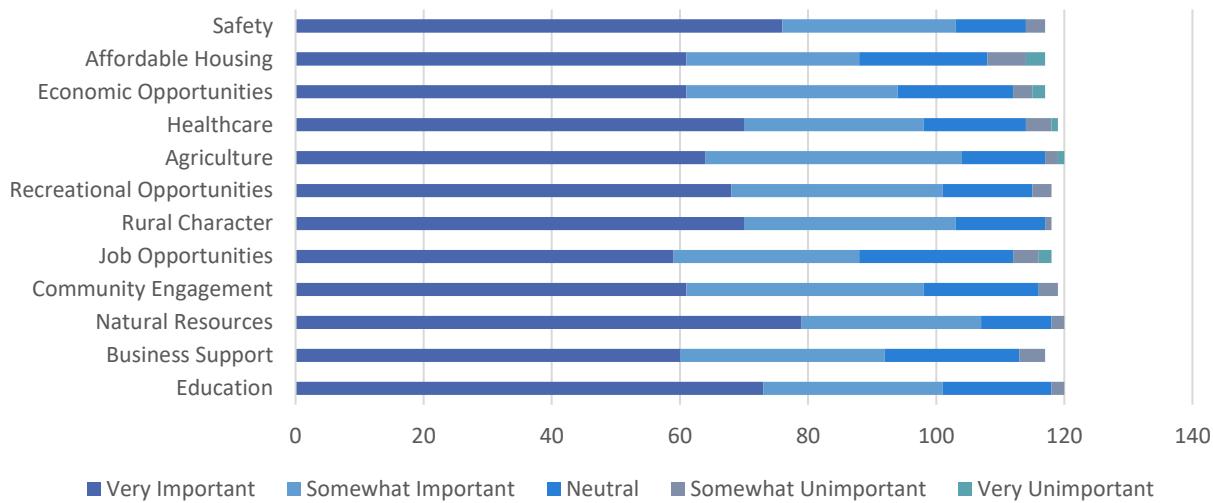
Where do you work?



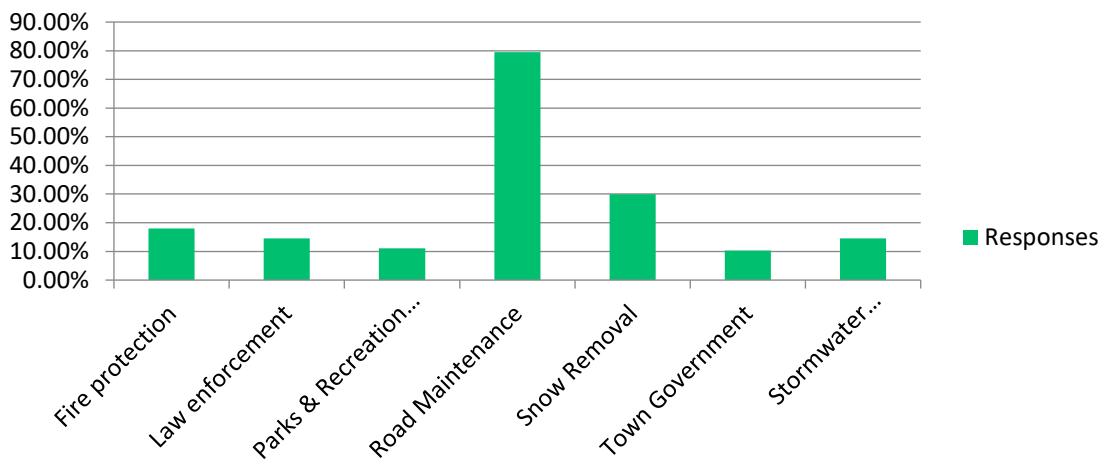
Are you a property owner in the area? Check all that apply.



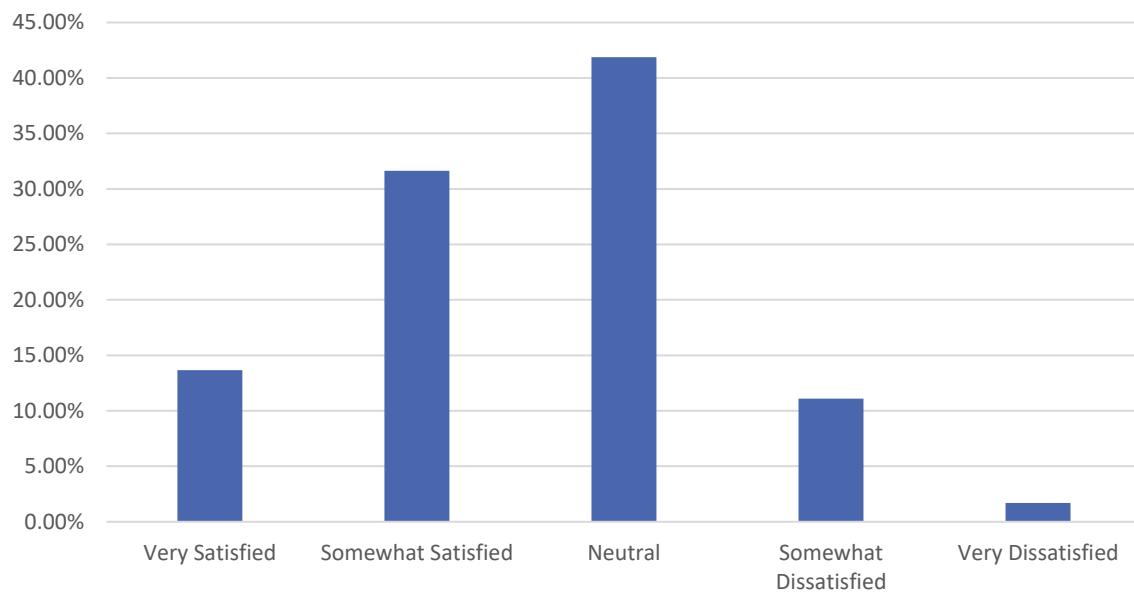
Please rate the importance of these qualities to the Town of Medary's community and character.



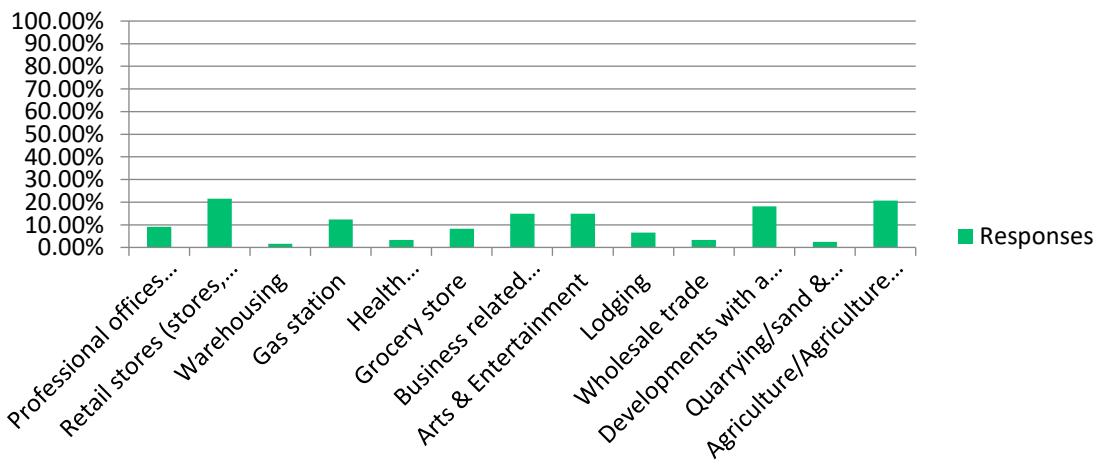
Which of the following public services and facilities needs improvement? Check all that apply.



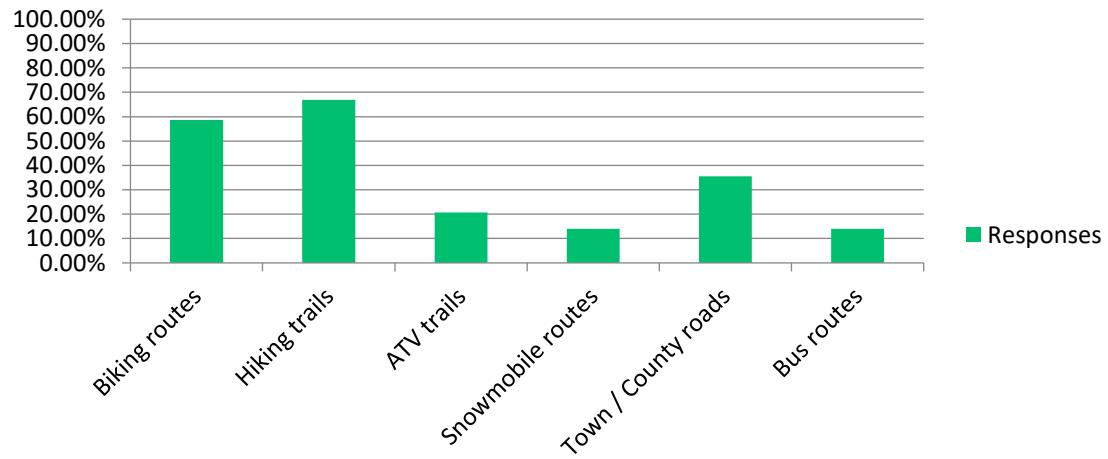
How would you rate the current efforts of the Town to regulate and guide development?



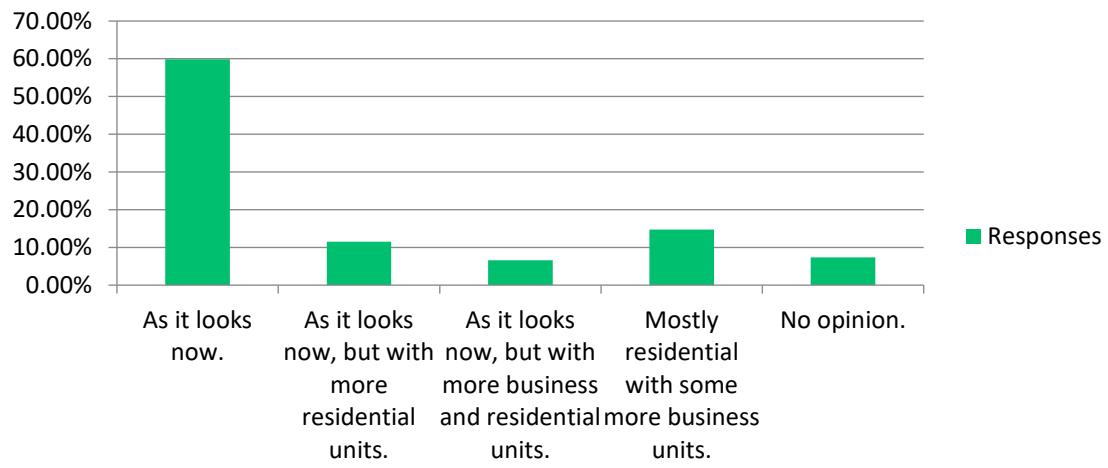
Which of the following types of new businesses would you like to see in the Town in the future? Check all that apply.



Would you support the creation or expansion of the following transportation opportunities? Check all that apply.



Which statement best describes how you would like the Town to look twenty years from now?



Which of the following best describes your idea of where new housing should be located in the Town?

