

Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045



Prepared by the Mississippi River
Regional Planning Commission

Under the Direction of the Town
Planning and Zoning Committee and
the Town Board



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Introduction and Executive Summary

The Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan was developed in accordance with Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes. This law which was enacted in 1999 has the requirement that all zoning, subdivision regulations, and official mapping align with a comprehensive plan. This Comprehensive Plan is structured into key documents: the Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Recommendations section, and the Existing Conditions Report. Together, these documents provide a clear framework for guiding the town's future development and decision-making.

Setting

Located in the north central area of Crawford County, the rural community of the Town of Utica is defined by its rich agricultural history, rolling landscapes, and the community's commitment to preserving natural character and resources. The population and economy reflect steady growth. The town embraces its agricultural roots while acknowledging its importance of having balance in development and environmental conservation.

The Town of Utica has historically thrived as a farming based close-knit community, but like many rural towns, it is now facing more modern challenges such as the need for sustainable land use, housing shortages, and a projected decline within the aging population. Despite this the town remains deeply connected to the residents and land that is reflected in the high level of ownership and strong connection. The Scenic ridges and protected trout streams continue to be one of the Town's most valuable assets.

The Town of Utica's future is in maintaining the Town's rural character while also addressing the needs of the Town's residents and strategic planning for development. With proper zoning, land preservation, and economic development, this will ensure the Town is able to adapt to future challenges. The Town of Utica aims to find a balance within its growth and preservation with careful planning that still blends community, natural resources, and agricultural vitality to ensure harmonious growth.

Planning Process

The Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan was developed under the guidance and leadership of the Town Plan Commission and with professional planning from the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, which the Town of Utica is a member of as a municipality within Crawford County. The Town distributed a community-wide survey to all Town residents, which had over 10% of the Town's population providing input. This public engagement allowed the community's priorities and goals to be reflected within the plan.

The feedback from the survey was able to develop the most crucial elements of this plan, which are the clear goals that will help guide the Town's decisions moving forward. These goals were developed last but are placed first within this document to emphasize the importance of the community's vision. The planning process for the Comprehensive Plan began with the Existing Conditions Report and was followed by the survey. This collection of data and insight is essential for developing the goals and policies. The final elements within the document are the implementation strategies and the Future Land Use Map that are to provide a framework for development and zoning for decision makers. This Comprehensive Plan serves the Town of Utica as a tool for shaping and preserving its distinct character.

The Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan is designed to be a living document that is regularly updated as new challenges or opportunities arise. As a living document, it is meant to be revisited and revised as necessary to remain aligned with the community's needs and its long-term vision. The living document allows it to evolve as the community does and to better guide the future of zoning, development, and decision-making while keeping the Town of Utica on the path of preservation and sustainable growth.

Goals

1. **Implement a Land Division (Subdivision) Ordinance:** Establish a Land Division Ordinance also known as a Subdivision Ordinance with clear guidelines and Town oversight, including fees to cover administrative and review costs.
2. **Preserve Rural Character:** Ensure that all new development aligns with the Town of Utica’s agricultural identity, preventing urban-style density and protecting the Town’s natural landscape.
3. **Establish Clearer Communication Channels:** Create regular and reliable communication between the Town Board and residents through a dedicated website, newsletters, and community updates.
4. **Promote Infill and Strategic Development:** Prioritize development in areas with existing infrastructure, focusing growth in less agriculturally valuable zones to protect prime farmland.
5. **Improve Road Infrastructure and Maintenance:** Ensure the safety and upkeep of town roads through a proactive maintenance plan, improved signage, and traffic control measures.
6. **Protect Natural Resources and Promote Sustainability:** Safeguard local water resources, promote sustainable farming practices, and encourage renewable energy use among residents and businesses.
7. **Foster Community Engagement and Regional Collaboration:** Strengthen partnerships with neighboring towns, improve emergency services, and increase resident involvement in Town decisions through outreach and engagement efforts.

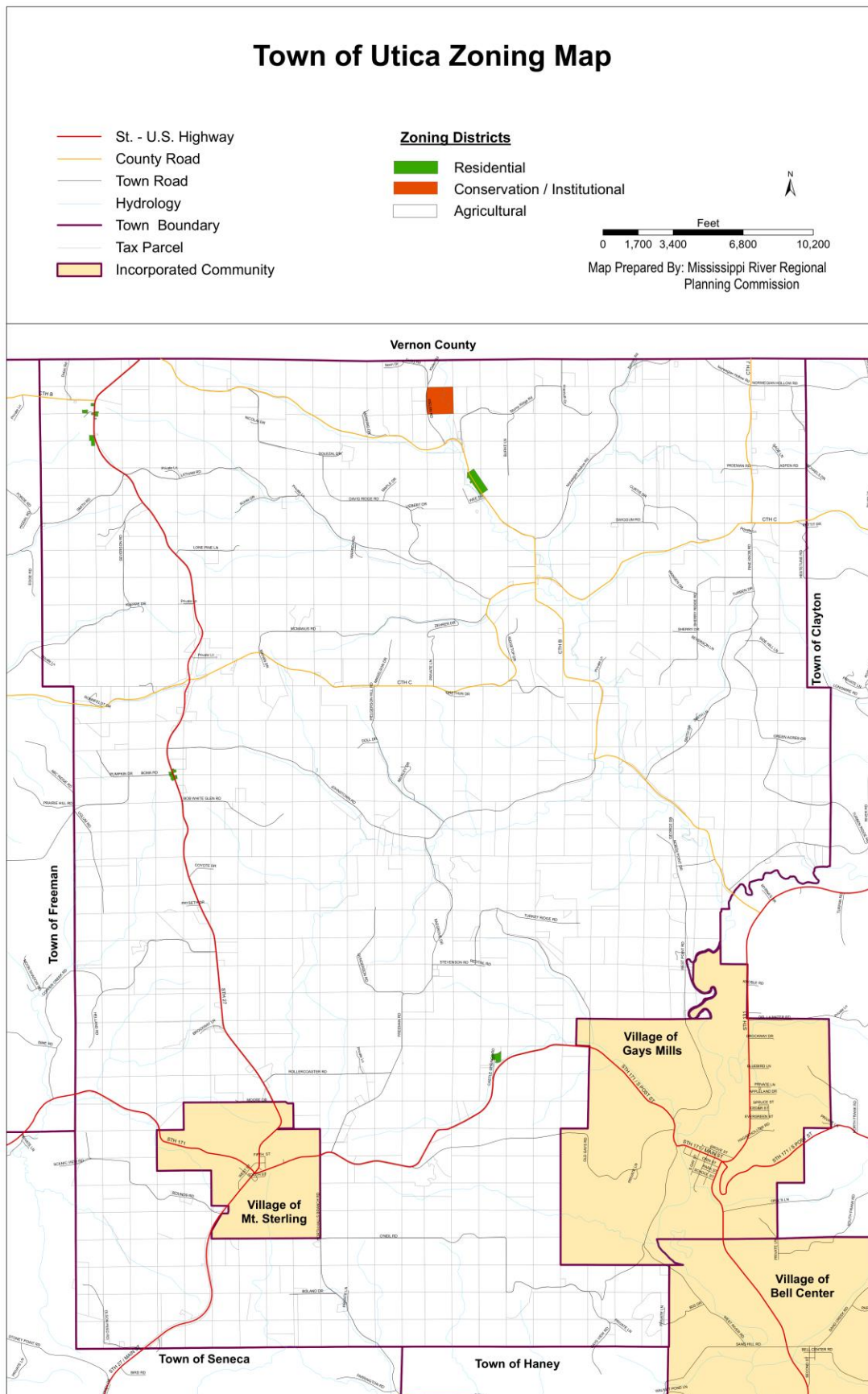
Implementation

The Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan will be implemented through consistent and structured oversight to ensure it is aligned with the Town's evolving needs and goals. The Plan Commission will need to perform a review every 5 years to measure the current status of the community, progress of goals, and to adjust the timelines if necessary. Every 10 years, a full review will be completed that looks at updated data, a new community survey, and an assessment of the current strategies and goals to assess if additional updates are needed. This review process is structured to help keep the plan dynamic and ensure that the community's vision is met with guidance for the Town's future development and as a tool for decision-making.

The Town of Utica aims to guide the community in a way that helps protect the rural character while meeting the needs of residents. This Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map will be used for updating zoning ordinances to ensure that development aligns with the Towns' long-term vision. The Town will put in place a Land Division (Subdivision) Ordinance that will provide residents and developers with clear standards and oversight, which will also ensure that administrative costs are covered while also providing guidance for land use and development. The Town of Utica prioritizes the protection of prime farmland and maintains the natural landscape while also encouraging new development and growth in areas that are suitable for it due to established and existing infrastructure. As the core of this Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Map will help guide all new development and land use decisions within the Town of Utica. Any rezoning requests will be evaluated with the Future Land Use Map to ensure that it aligns with the Town of Utica's vision. To help maintain accurate land use and parcel records between local and county planning, the Town will work with Crawford County in efforts to manage development, review processes and consistency. This review process will focus on whether any proposed changes are aligned with the future use of the parcel and long-term development goals of the Town.

Through a dedicated website, newsletter, and regular updates from the Town Board, communication and transparency will be strengthened, which will foster a stronger connection between residents. Road safety and maintenance will remain a priority and essential to help support proactive planning with improved signage and traffic control measures. Through sustainable farming practices, water protection efforts, and encouragement to use renewable energy, with these efforts, natural resources will be safeguarded with long-term environmental stewardship. This guidance is to help improve the stewardship of our natural resources, such as water quality, control of soil erosion, and protection of wildlife habitats. Finally, the Town will promote active community involvement and regional collaboration by working with neighboring jurisdictions, enhancing emergency services, and expanding opportunities for residents to participate in local decision-making.

Future Land Use Map



Existing Conditions

Issues and Opportunities

This section of the report will provide information on the demographic trends and projections that are taking place in the Town of Utica. The information has been gathered from various sources, and when possible, Town level data was utilized.

Population Trends and Projections

The Town of Utica population, according to the 2020 US Census, has declined by 7.5% from 2000 to 2020. This shows a decline of 674 residents to 623 residents. This trend contrasts with a 6.6% population decline within Crawford County and a 9.9% increase across the state of Wisconsin during the same period. According to the current projections of 2020 from the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the Town of Utica's population is expected to continue to decline by 28.7% from 2020 to 2050. According to the county-level projections for Crawford County, it is projected to decline by 25.8% while the state of Wisconsin's population is expected to decrease slightly by 3.1% during the same period.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the Amish population within the Town of Utica, which may not be reflected in the recent Census count. Amish community members often live on larger agricultural parcels and make a significant contribution to the local farming economy and rural character of the area. This growing population may also influence future land use patterns and activity within the local economy that are not fully reflected in the current available demographic projections.

Table 1.1 Population

Geography	US Census			Projections			% Change	
	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2000-2020	2020-2050 (Projected)
Town of Utica	674	661	623	563	503	444	-7.5%	-28.7%
Crawford County	17,243	16,644	16,113	14,750	13,345	11,940	-6.6%	-25.8%
Wisconsin	5,363,715	5,686,986	5,893,718	5,890,915	5,841,620	5,710,120	9.9%	-3.1%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration Population Projections, US Census 2000 – Table DP1, US Census 2010 and 2020 – Table P1

Population Characteristics

The population characteristics within the Town of Utica are that a majority of residents identify as White, with 95.8%. This percentage is slightly higher than Crawford County at 93.8% and is significantly higher than the state of Wisconsin at 80.4%. Within the community, residents who identify as two or more races account for 3.4% of the population, which is the same as in Crawford County but is lower than the state average at 6.1%. Other racial and ethnic groups are each less than 0.5% of the population. Within the Town of Utica, the median age is 53.6 years. This number is higher than both the County's 47.3% and the state of Wisconsin's median age of 40.5 years. Within the community, 33.6% of residents are over 65 years old. This percentage is higher than Crawford County at 24.8% and the state of Wisconsin at 19.2% of the population being over 65 years old. In contrast, only 15.1% of the Town of Utica's residents are under 18 years old, which shows that the area has an aging population.

Table 1.2 Race

Race	Town of Utica	%	Crawford County	Wisconsin
Population of one race	602	96.6%	96.6%	93.9%
White alone	597	95.8%	93.8%	80.4%
Black or African American alone	0	0.0%	1.7%	6.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1	0.2%	0.3%	1.0%
Asian alone	2	0.3%	0.4%	3.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race alone	2	0.3%	0.4%	3.1%
Population of two or more races	21	3.4%	3.4%	6.1%

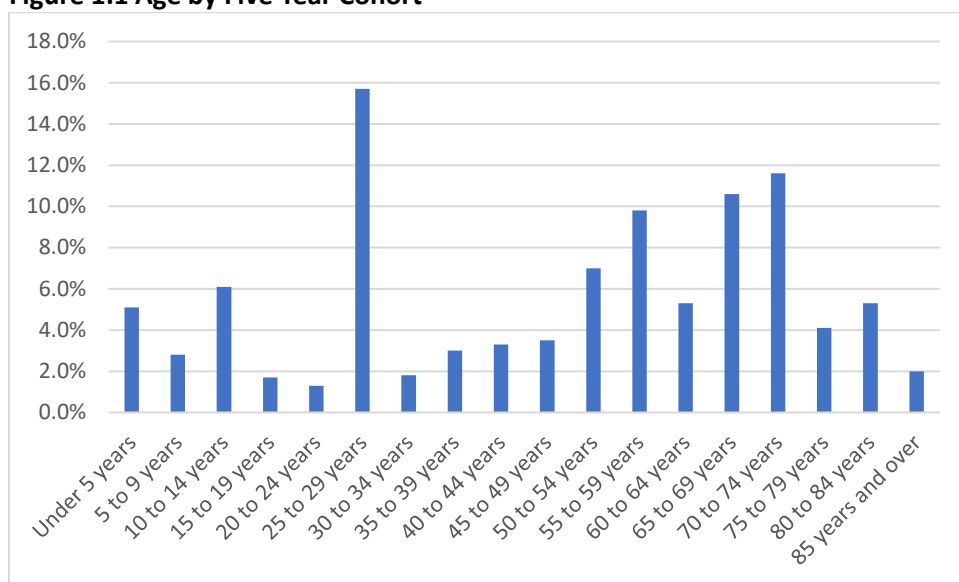
Source: US Census 2020 – Table P1 Race

Table 1.3 Age

Age	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
Under 5 years	5.1%	4.9%	5.2%
5 to 9 years	2.8%	5.4%	5.9%
10 to 14 years	6.1%	5.2%	6.0%
15 to 19 years	1.7%	6.0%	6.6%
20 to 24 years	1.3%	4.9%	6.7%
25 to 29 years	15.7%	5.1%	6.2%
30 to 34 years	1.8%	4.9%	6.4%
35 to 39 years	3.0%	6.0%	6.4%
40 to 44 years	3.3%	5.3%	6.3%
45 to 49 years	3.5%	5.3%	5.6%
50 to 54 years	7.0%	6.1%	6.0%
55 to 59 years	9.8%	8.2%	6.5%
60 to 64 years	5.3%	7.8%	7.1%
65 to 69 years	10.6%	7.8%	6.4%
70 to 74 years	11.6%	6.7%	52.0%
75 to 79 years	4.1%	4.7%	3.4%
80 to 84 years	5.3%	2.9%	2.2%
85 years and over	2.0%	2.7%	2.0%
Under 18 years	15.1%	19.4%	21.0%
65 years and over	33.6%	24.8%	19.2%
Median age (years)	53.6	47.3	40.5

Source: ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates – S0101 Age and Sex

Figure 1.1 Age by Five Year Cohort



Source: ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates – S0101 Age and Sex

Educational Attainment

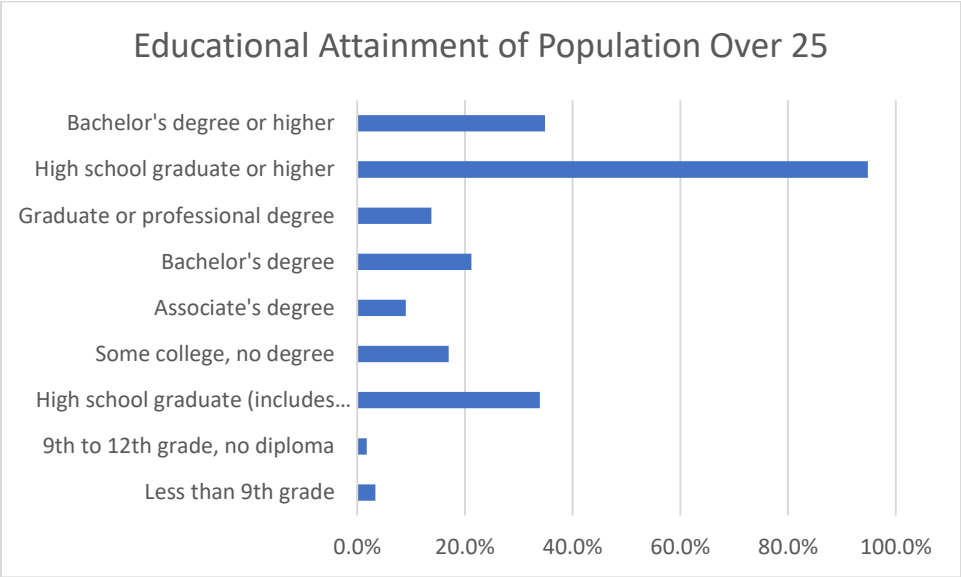
The Town of Utica residents have a high level of education attainment compared to the county and state. Nearly 35% of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher which is significantly higher than Crawford County at 18.3% and the state of Wisconsin at 33.8%. Within the Town of Utica residents with an associate's degree is lower compared to the county and state. The Town also has a higher percentage of residents with graduate or professional degrees at 13.8% compared to Crawford County at 5.8% and the state of Wisconsin at 11.5%.

Table 1.4 Educational Attainment of Population Over 25

Educational Attainment	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
Less than 9th grade	3.4%	2.1%	2.4%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	1.8%	5.5%	3.9%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	33.9%	41.2%	29.5%
Some college, no degree	17.0%	19.7%	19.2%
Associate's degree	9.0%	13.2%	11.2%
Bachelor's degree	21.2%	12.5%	22.2%
Graduate or professional degree	13.8%	5.8%	11.5%
High school graduate or higher	94.8%	92.4%	93.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	34.9%	18.3%	33.8%

Source: ACS 2022 – Table S1501 Educational Attainment

Figure 1.2 Educational Attainment of Population Over 25



Source: ACS 2022 – Table S1501 Educational Attainment

Land Use

In order to properly plan for the future land use within the Town of Utica, it is necessary to understand the current land use within the area. Existing land uses, density of residential areas, and the supply and demand for land are discussed below.

The Town of Utica is located in the Driftless Area which is characterized by dramatic and varied topography that is seen in the steep slopes covering much of the landscape. Slopes over 20% are widespread, leaving limited areas of relatively flat land. Development is largely concentrated along the low-slope ridgetops, particularly near major roads like State Highways 27 and 171. These ridgetop areas stand out even on topographical maps, as they are among the few places in the Town suitable for both development and agriculture.

Outside of these narrow ridgetop corridors, much of the land is unsuitable for intensive use due to the steep terrain. The valley areas, while hosting some development and agriculture, are often located in or near floodplains, which pose risks for flooding. Much of the steeper land remains forested and undeveloped. This distinctive land use pattern, with concentrated development on the flatter ridgetops and natural areas on steep slopes, reflects the challenges posed by the Town of Utica's unique topography.

Zoning and Land Use Regulations

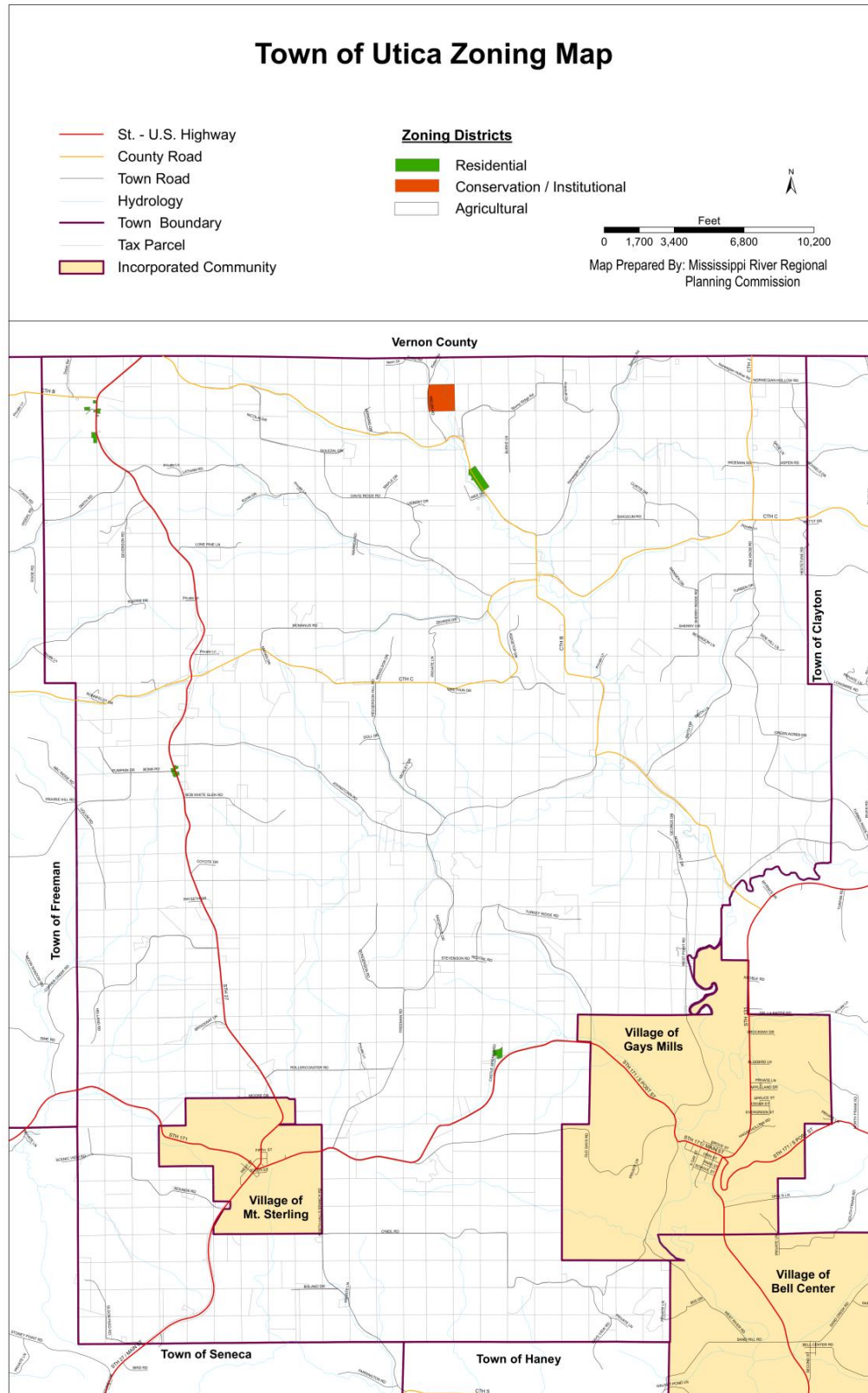
The Town of Utica will use this Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map as a foundation for updating, maintaining, and administering its local ordinances to ensure that regulations align with the community's goals and priorities. The Town utilizes and encourages the state of Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) and standards to preserve Wisconsin rural land by means of local planning, land use, and conservation practices. These conservation practices and standards help protect farmland, soil, and water resources. The Town of Utica will use the Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Map, and the state of Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program during the reviewing process and adopting of the Land Division Ordinance and other development-related codes. These documents and programs will serve as a guiding framework for decision making and directing future growth in a way that preserves the community's rural character and natural beauty. The Land Division Ordinance is intended to limit the fragmentation of agricultural and forest lands, promote orderly and well-planned development, and discourage suburban style subdivisions that are inconsistent with the Town's long-term vision.

The Town of Utica is governed by a zoning ordinance that divides the town into four districts: Agricultural, Residential, Conservation/Institutional, and Commercial, each with specific regulations.

- **Agricultural District:** Focuses on preserving farmland, managing residential development, and supporting a viable agricultural economy. The ordinance outlines permitted and conditional uses for agricultural and residential activities, with an emphasis on minimizing conflicts between farm and non-farm uses. It sets limits on non-farm dwelling density and includes provisions for livestock facilities and other agricultural operations.
- **Residential District:** Aims to protect low-density residential areas while allowing for community and recreational services. The ordinance specifies permitted and conditional uses, including home occupations and accessory buildings.
- **Commercial District:** Established space for commercial activities, excluding heavy manufacturing and residential development to avoid conflicts. Permitted and conditional commercial uses are listed, with board approval required for certain activities.
- **Conservation/Institutional District:** Dedicated to preserving natural areas and providing space for institutional uses. It emphasizes the protection of natural and aesthetic values for future generations.

For all districts, the minimum lot size is 1 acre, except for residential construction on publicly sewerer lots, where the minimum is 12,750 square feet (0.29 acres).

Town of Utica Zoning Map



Existing Land Use

Data from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue provides insight into current land use classifications in the Town of Utica. The classifications system that the Wisconsin Department of Revenue uses may put some types of land into different categories. This can be seen in the category of rural residential parcels which will often be categorized as “Other”. This data can be found in Table 1.5. Agricultural areas make up 76.08% of the Town’s land, while forested areas, which include agricultural and non-agricultural forests, cover 19.16% of the Town’s land, highlighting the Town’s rural and agricultural character.

The Town of Utica’s zoning map reveals that most of the Town is classified as “Agricultural,” primarily supporting farmland and farmhouses, with there actually being more houses here than in the limited “Residential” zones. Commercial and Conservation zoning are minimal, reflecting the Town’s focus on preserving agricultural land under the farmland preservation zoning adopted in 2019.

Land Use Trends

Between the years of 2015 and 2023, there were several land use changes in the Town of Utica. The category of agricultural land decreased by 194 acres (-0.8%). In contrast, agricultural forest land increased by 188 acres (+4.1%), likely due to reclassification. Residential land increased by 5 acres (+5.0%). These shifts reflect broader trends within land use management which include the reclassification of agricultural land and slight increases in residential development.

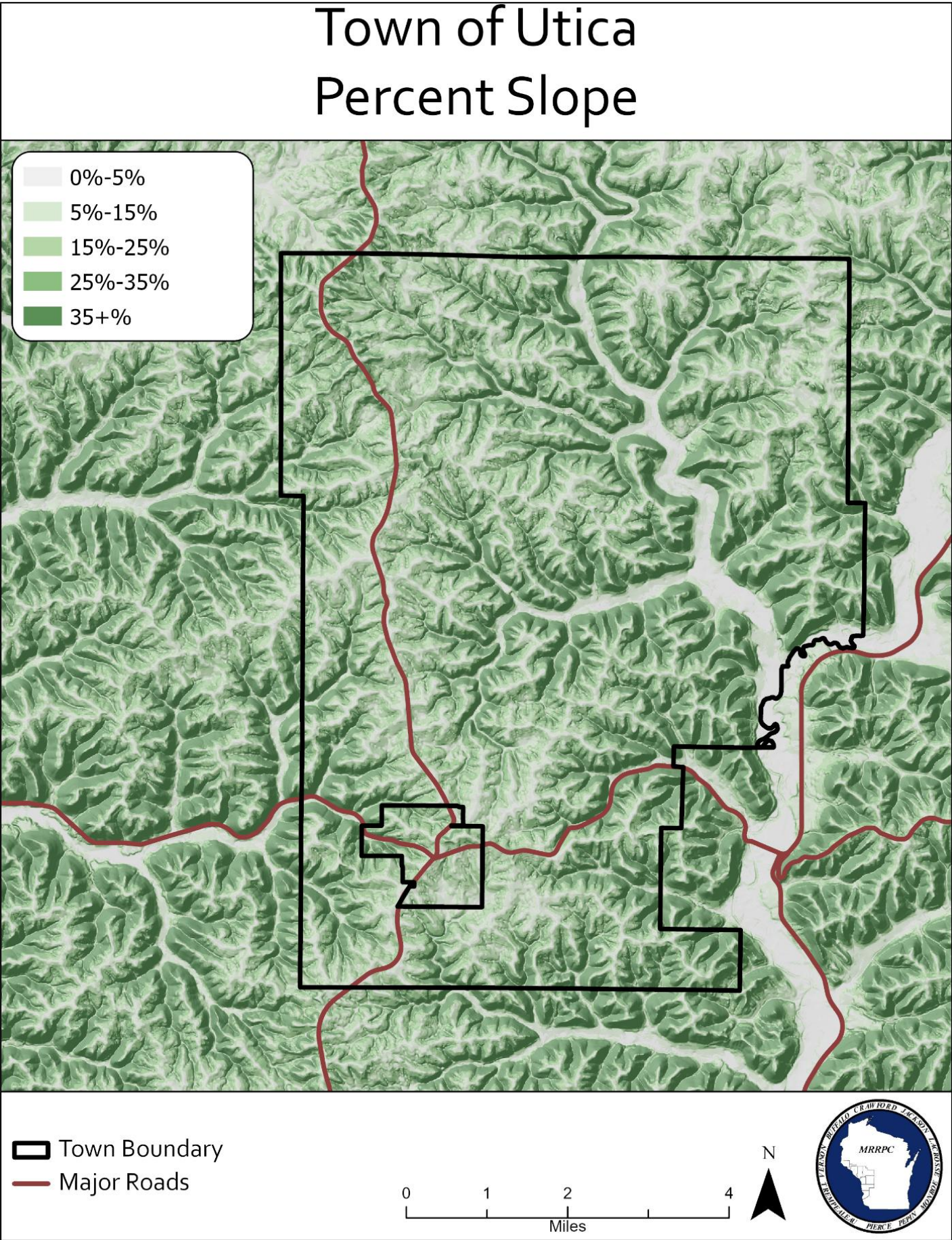
Future Land Use Needs

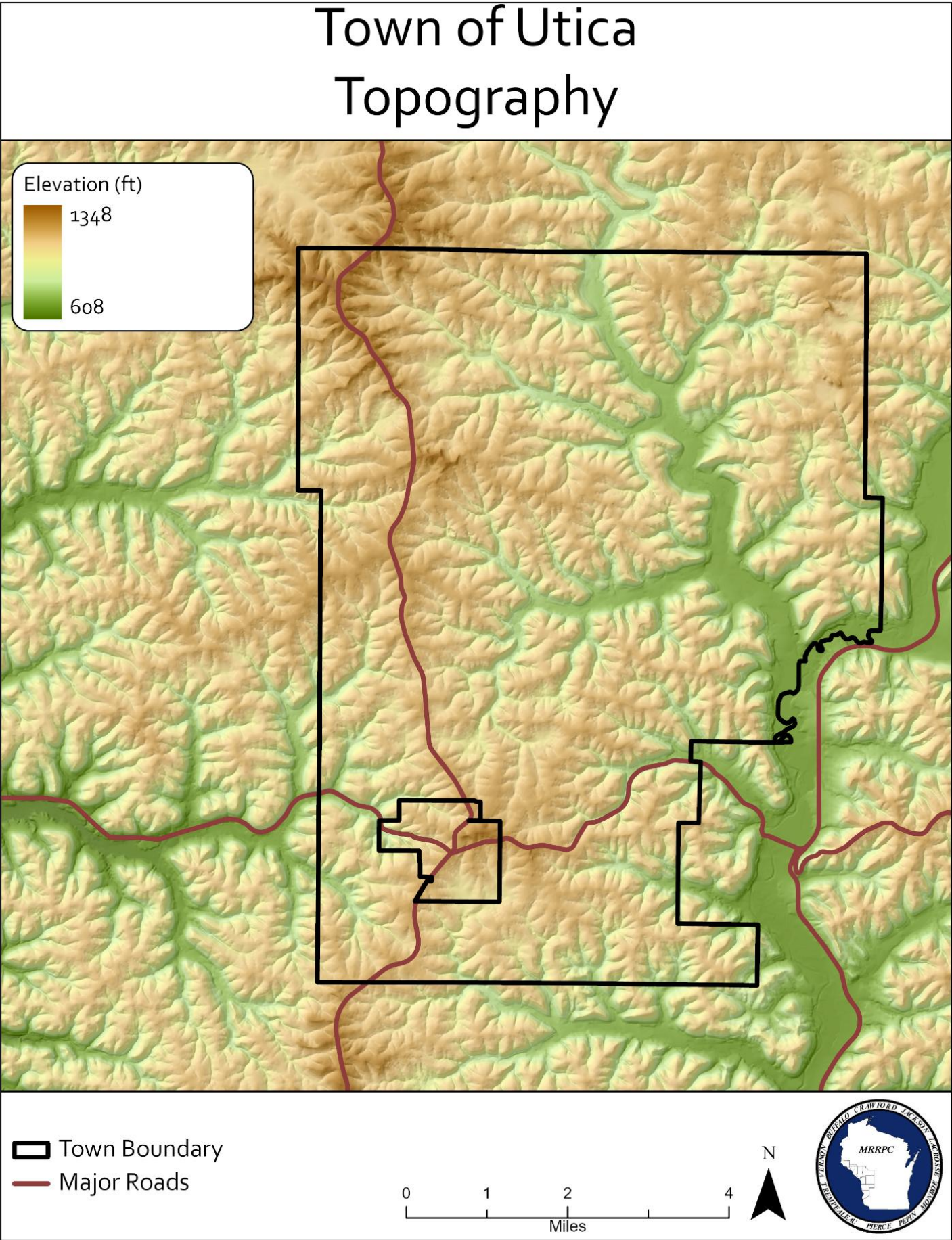
Projections of future residential land needs depend on population growth. Within the Town of Utica this data is currently reflected with variability in population projections. There will need to be more time and data to make a more precise prediction about the population and residential need for future land use.

Table 1.5: Land Use

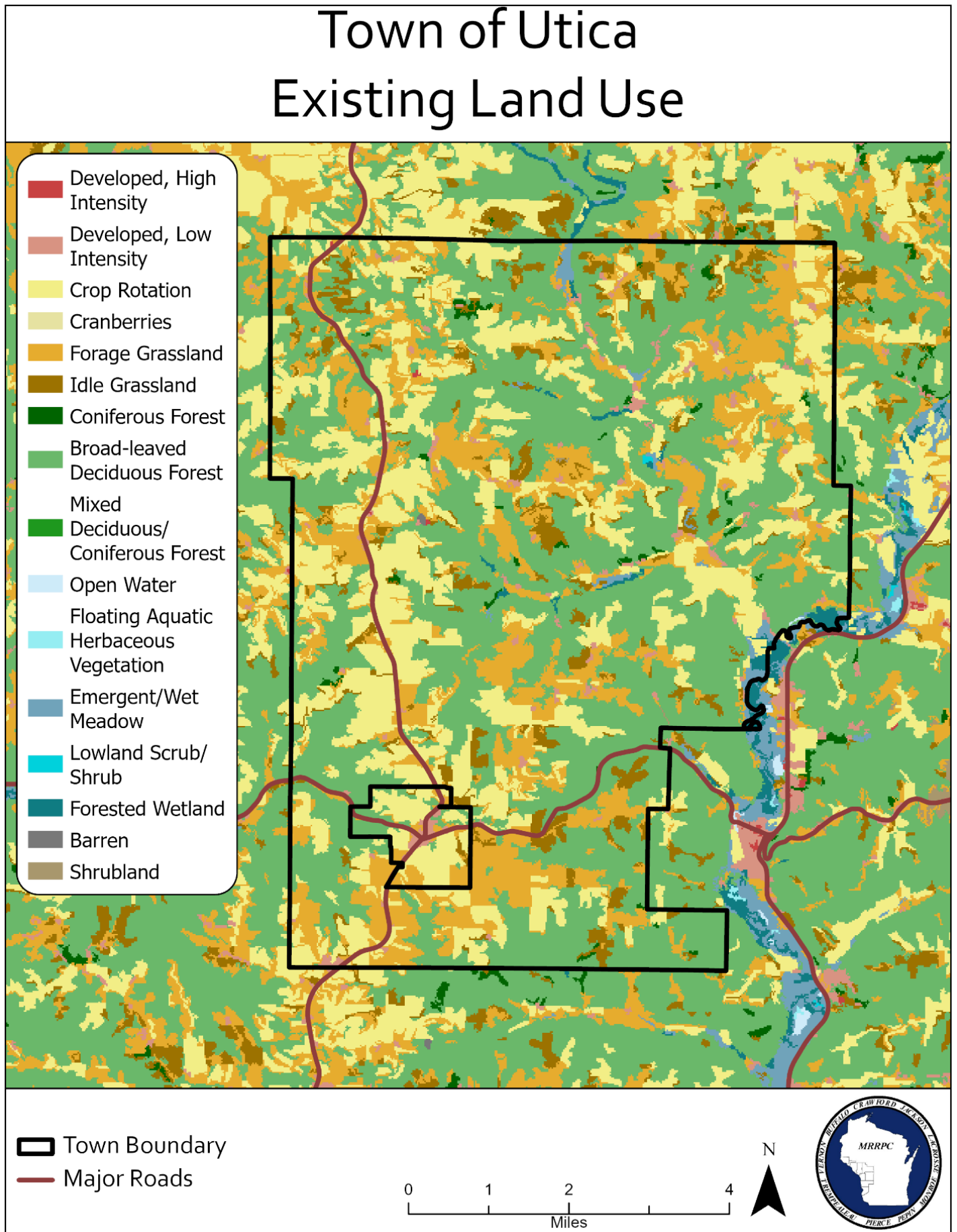
Land Use	Acres		% of Land (2023)	Changes from 2015 to 2023	
	Acres (2015)	Acres (2023)		Acres	%
Residential	101	106	0.35%	5	5.0%
Commercial	5	12	0.04%	7	140.0%
Manufacturing	14	14	0.05%	0	0.0%
Agricultural	23,134	22,940	76.08%	-194	-0.8%
Undeveloped	910	922	3.06%	12	1.3%
Agricultural Forest	4,562	4,750	15.75%	188	4.1%
Forest Lands	956	1,027	3.41%	71	7.4%
Other	391	383	1.27%	-8	-2.0%
Total	30,073	30,153	100.00%	80	0.3%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue 2015 and 2023 Statement of Assessment for Crawford County





Town of Utica Existing Land Use Map



Housing

Housing Units by Type and Year Built

The Town of Utica's housing stock remains mostly composed of single family detached homes, which is a residential building designed to house one household and is not attached to another dwelling unit. The Town's total for this category is at 96.6% of the current housing stock. Only nine units are in the category of mobile homes at 3.4%. This high amount of single family detached development is much higher than in Crawford County at 78.2% and in the state of Wisconsin at 66.1%. This low density residential housing stock shows the rural character of the Town of Utica.

Between the years of 2021 and 2023, the Town of Utica added 19 housing units which was a 5.7% increase that outpaces the growth seen in Crawford County at 0.21% and the state of Wisconsin at 2.5%. Despite this increase, new housing construction remains limited. Since the year 2000, only 20.1% of the Town of Utica's homes were built, compared to 17.1% within Crawford County and 22.5% statewide in Wisconsin. With 34.1% of housing units being constructed before 1940, giving the area a large portion of current homes to be considered aging, which is above the rates within Crawford County at 20.2% and the state of Wisconsin at 17.5%. Many of these older constructed homes were originally built for farming families and may not meet the needs of today's smaller and more diverse households. With this current housing stock, there are opportunities for growth. The recent units suggest emerging opportunities for growth.

Table 1.6 Housing Units

Year	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
2021	332	8,686	2,718,369
2023	351	8,705	2,787,388
Percent Change	5.7%	0.21%	2.5%

Source: ACS 2021 and 2023 5-Year Estimates, B25001 Housing Units

Table 1.7 Housing Structures by Type

Type	Town of Utica		Crawford County	Wisconsin
	#	%		
1, detached	255	96.6	78.2	66.1
1, attached	0	0	1.8	4.5
2 apartments	0	0	3.6	5.6
3 or 4 apartments	0	0	0.7	3.6
5 to 9 apartments	0	0	2.2	5.1
10 or more apartments	0	0	2.9	12.6
Mobile home or other type of housing	9	3.4	10.8	2.6

Source: ACS 2021 5- Year Estimates, S2504 Physical Housing Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units

Table 1.8 Housing Structures by Year Built

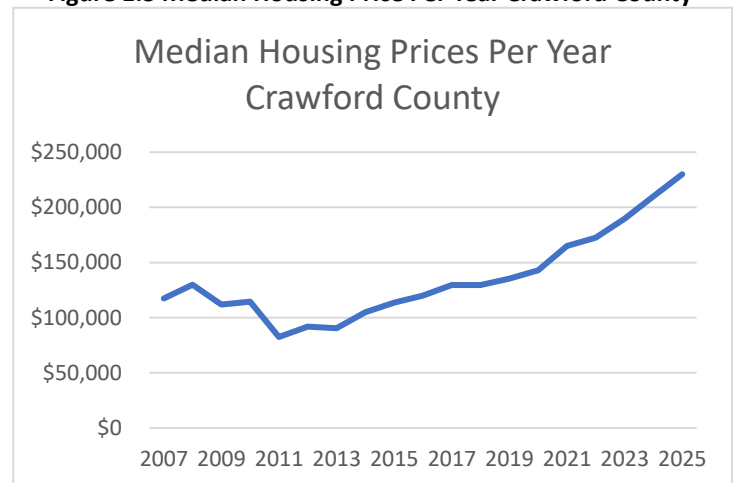
Year Built	Town of Utica (Count)	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
2020 or later	0	0.0%	0.6%	2.2%
2010 to 2019	9	3.4%	4.8%	7.5%
2000 to 2009	44	16.7%	11.7%	12.8%
1980 to 1999	72	27.3%	24.7%	21.5%
1960 to 1979	21	8.0%	22.9%	23.3%
1940 to 1959	28	10.6%	15.0%	15.1%
1939 or earlier	90	34.1%	20.2%	17.5%

Source: ACS 2023 5- Year Estimates, S2504 Physical Housing Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units

Median Housing Value

According to the 2023 American Community Survey, the median home value in the Town of Utica was \$273,600, reflecting a 6.8% increase since 2021. While this growth is more modest than the previous years, the Town of Utica's median home value is still higher than both Crawford County at \$164,200 and the state of Wisconsin at \$253,800. Between the years of 2011 and 2021, the Town of Utica experienced a sharp increase of 67.7% in median home value that was over \$100,000 which is higher than Crawford County at 25.4% and the State of Wisconsin at 18.1%. In recent years this growth has slowed but the increase in the past decade has remained significant.

The Wisconsin Realtors Association reported that the median housing values in Crawford County have experienced significant changes over the past two decades. These changes are reflected in both the impacts of the 2008 housing crisis and the strong recovery that the regional housing market has experienced in recent years. In 2007, the County's median home value was \$117,500, that had peaked slightly at \$129,950 in 2008 before dropping sharply to \$82,500 in 2011. Values began to steadily recover after 2012 and eventually surpassed the pre-recession levels by 2016 and reaching \$135,500 in 2019. In recent years primarily starting in 2020, the market has experienced accelerated growth, climbing from \$143,000 in the year 2020 to \$230,000 in the year 2025. This recent increase reflects heightened demand, limited housing supply, and broader statewide trends of rising housing costs. This demand and trend has positioned Crawford County with a much stronger housing market compared to what residents experience with the post recession lows.

Figure 1.3 Median Housing Price Per Year Crawford County

Source: Wisconsin Realtors Association, Housing Statistics July 2025

Table 1.9 Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units

Year	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
2021	256,100	145,600	200,400
2023	273,600	164,200	253,800
Percent Change	6.8%	12.8%	26.6%

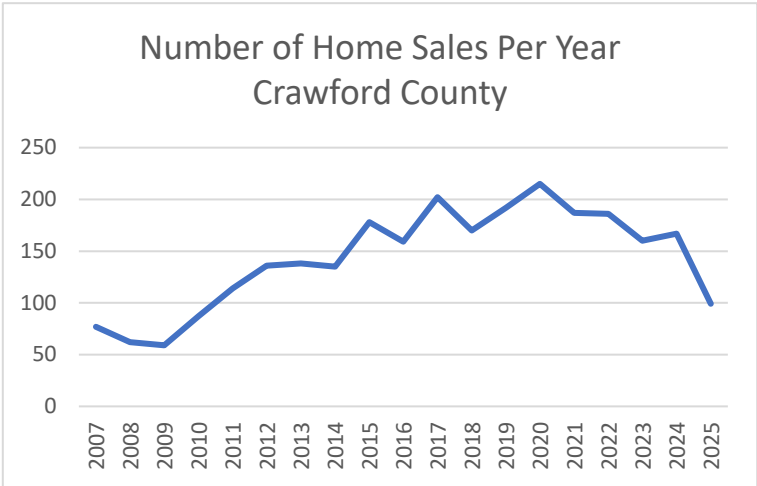
Source: ACS 2021 and 2023 5-Year Estimates, B25077 Median Value (Dollars)

Occupancy Characteristics

In the Town of Utica, most residents own their homes. According to the American Community Survey, 92.8% of homeowners are occupied and only 7.2% are renter occupied, reflecting a pattern common of rural communities. In Crawford County 24.1% of homes are renter occupied units and 32.1% of homes statewide in Wisconsin.

As of the 2023 American Community Survey, the Town of Utica continues to experience extremely low housing vacancy, with virtually no units available for sale or rent. A balanced housing market typically sees vacancy rates at around 5%, and rates below 2-3% are considered to be an indication of a housing shortage. The Town of Utica’s 0.0% vacancy rate underscores a lack of available housing. While both Crawford County and Wisconsin face limited availability of homes for purchase, rental housing remains more accessible in those broader areas than in the Town of Utica.

Figure 1.4 Number of Home Sales Per Year Crawford County



Source: Wisconsin Realtors Association, Housing Statistics July 2025

Table 1.10 Housing Unit Occupancy Rates

Occupancy Type	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
Percent Owner Occupied	92.8%	75.9%	67.9%
Percent Renter Occupied	7.2%	24.1%	32.1%

Source: American Community Survey 2023 5-Year Estimates - Table DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Table 1.11 Housing Unit Vacancy Rates

Vacancy Type	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.00%	1.1%	0.6%
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.00%	7.6%	4.5%

Source: American Community Survey 2023 5-Year Estimates - Table DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Affordability of Housing

The affordability of housing within the Town of Utica is a significant concern. The most common standard for affordability is spending no more than 30% of a household income on housing costs which include mortgages, taxes, insurance, utilities, and fees. In the Town of Utica, school district mill rates, which is the tax rate applied to property to calculate a property owners property tax amount that helps fund the local public schools, also impacts affordability. The Town of Utica belongs to the North Crawford School District's rate at 6.71 and the Seneca School District's rate at 5.52. Both of these districts are considered standard according to Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction for the years of 2024 and 2025 Levy Rates.

Among the Town of Utica homeowners with a mortgage, 42.4% spend 30% or more of their income on housing and when broken down as 4.7% spending 30-34.9% and 37.7% spending more than 35%. This is significantly higher than Crawford County at 29.4% and the state of Wisconsin at 22.9% which highlights the affordability burden. Only 5.7% the Town of Utica’s homeowners without a mortgage spend more than 30% on housing,

compared to 12.9% in the county and 13.9% statewide. In the Town of Utica 36.7% of homeowners are mortgage free and spend less than 10% of their income on housing costs.

Rental affordability is more difficult to analyze due to the small number of renters. With only 11 households paying rent and 90.9% of these residents spend less than 15% of their income on housing. With 9.1% of households spending 30-34.9%. No households reported spending more than 35% on rent. These numbers suggest that rental costs are relatively affordable in the Town of Utica.

Table 1.12 Percent of Household Income Spent on Owner-Occupied Units

Category	Town of Utica (Count)	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
Housing units with a mortgage	106	(X)	2,382	1,026,368
Less than 20.0%	38	35.8%	48.1%	52.6%
20.0 to 24.9%	4	3.8%	14.6%	15.3%
25.0 to 29.9%	19	17.9%	7.9%	9.2%
30.0 to 34.9%	5	4.7%	8.1%	5.9%
Greater than 35.0%	40	37.7%	21.3%	17.0%
Housing units without a mortgage	139	(X)	2,625	656,691
Less than 10.0%	51	36.7%	42.4%	42.7%
10.0 to 14.9%	29	20.9%	18.8%	20.9%
15.0 to 19.9%	10	7.2%	13.9%	11.5%
20.0 to 24.9%	40	28.8%	9.4%	7.1%
25.0 to 29.9%	1	0.7%	2.6%	3.8%
30.0 to 34.9%	2	1.4%	2.5%	3.0%
Greater than 35.0%	6	4.3%	10.4%	10.9%

Source: ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates, DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Table 1.13 Percent of Household Income Spent on Renter-Occupied Units

Category	Town of Utica (Count)	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
Occupied units paying rent	11	(X)	1,337	751,453
Less than 15.0 %	10	90.9%	28.6%	15.5%
15.0 to 19.9 %	0	0.00%	12.4%	14.7%
20.0 to 24.9 %	0	0.00%	16.2%	14.2%
25.0 to 29.9 %	0	0.00%	9.9%	11.5%
30.0 to 34.9 %	1	9.1%	6.7%	8.8%
35.0 % or more	0	0.00%	26.1%	35.3%

Source: ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates, DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Housing Tenure

The housing tenure looks at how long residents have lived in their homes, and it is an important indicator of community stability. Looking at the history of when households moved in within the Town of Utica can offer valuable insights. Between the years of 2021 and 2023, housing tenure in the Town of Utica shifted modestly. The share of homeowners who moved within the past 13 years increased slightly from 1.3% to 2.7% after 2021. Durning the year 2010, there was 8.5% of residents who moved in, and comparing it to the year 2017 data shows that 14.0% moved in. These trends suggest that while some new households are arriving, many long-term residents continue to stay in place. This reflects strong community ties and stable ownership patterns. The pace of new residents inflow remains low, and additional efforts may be needed to attract younger homeowners and support future population stability.

Table 1.14 Year Householder Moved In (Owner Occupied Units)

Housing Tenure	2021	2023
Moved in 2021 or later	1.3%	2.7%
Moved in 2018 to 2020	6.4%	6.8%
Moved in 2010 to 2017	8.5%	14.0%
Moved in 2000 to 2009	23.5%	25.8%
Moved in 1990 to 1999	35.9%	31.1%
Moved in 1989 and earlier	24.4%	19.7%

Source: American Community Survey 2021 and 2023 5-Year Estimates, B25026 Total Population in Occupied Housing Units by Tenure by Year Householder Moved into Unit

Transportation

The transportation system in the Town of Utica includes a combination of state highways, county highways, and town roads. This section provides an overview of existing transportation facilities and future considerations, addressing key topics required under Wisconsin Statute SS66.1001.

Inventory of Existing Transportation Facilities

The Town of Utica's transportation network is centered on State Highways (STH) 27 and 171, along with County Highways (CTH) B, C, and J, which offer access to neighboring communities. Other modes of transit, such as light rail or air transport, are not present and are unlikely to be developed in the near future due to limited demand.

Walking & Bicycling

Opportunities for walking and bicycling are restricted to low-traffic country roads, most of which lack shoulders and have speed limits of 45 miles per hour or higher. These conditions limit pedestrian and cyclist safety. Due to the rural nature of the Town, most goods and services are located several miles away, making walking to daily destinations impractical for most residents. Limited pedestrian and bicycle access is available to the Villages of Bell Center, Gays Mills, and Mt. Sterling in the southern portion of the Town of Utica.

Trails

There are no state or local trails currently within the Town of Utica.

Railroad Corridors

There are no rail lines running through the Town of Utica. However, the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad operates a freight line along the east bank of the Mississippi River, about five miles west of Town, and the Chicago/Milwaukee/St. Paul Railroad operates a line on the west bank of the river in Iowa.

Snowmobile Trails

Snowmobile trails in the region are managed by the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs in coordination with the Crawford County Land Conservation Department. Trail routes rely on agreements with private landowners. Further information is available from the Crawford County Land Conservation Department.

Mass Transit

There are no public transit services currently operating in the Town of Utica, and given the Town's low population density, mass transit options such as buses or rail are unlikely to be established within the next 20 years. As the population ages, there may be a growing need for some form of public transportation, though no immediate plans are in place. While the Town has no local transit, Crawford County's SMRT Red Route offers three daily routes starting in Prairie du Chien and stopping at Lynxville, Ferryville, De Soto, Genoa, and Stoddard, ending in La Crosse before returning along the same path. The service includes early morning, midday, and afternoon options. Additional routes connect Prairie du Chien with Viroqua, West Salem, Sparta, and Tomah, expanding regional access.

Water Transportation

None of the Town of Utica's streams or surface waters are suitable for water transportation. The closest port facility is located on the Mississippi River in Iowa.

Truck Transportation

Truck traffic on local roads is a concern for residents, particularly with regard to speed, noise, and volume. State and county highways are designated as truck routes based on factors such as their ability to handle truck weights and their proximity to key destinations. Currently, the Town of Utica has not designated any roadways as "Class B Highways," which would impose additional restrictions on truck sizes.

Airports

There are no airports in the Town of Utica. The nearest airports are:

- Boscobel Airport (General Utility)
- Dane County Airport, Madison (Air Carrier/Air Cargo)
- La Crosse Municipal Airport (Air Carrier/Air Cargo)
- Prairie du Chien Municipal Airport (General Utility)
- Richland Airport, Richland Center (Basic Utility B)
- Viroqua Municipal Airport (Basic Utility B)

These facilities meet current resident needs for air travel and business freight. The state of Wisconsin classifies airports based on the types of aircraft they accommodate, from major air cargo facilities to small utility airports.

Streets and Highways

The Town of Utica's roadways are classified based on their primary function. Arterial roads facilitate the movement of vehicles between areas, while local roads provide direct access to properties. Collector roads connect arterials and local roads, handling both through traffic and local access.

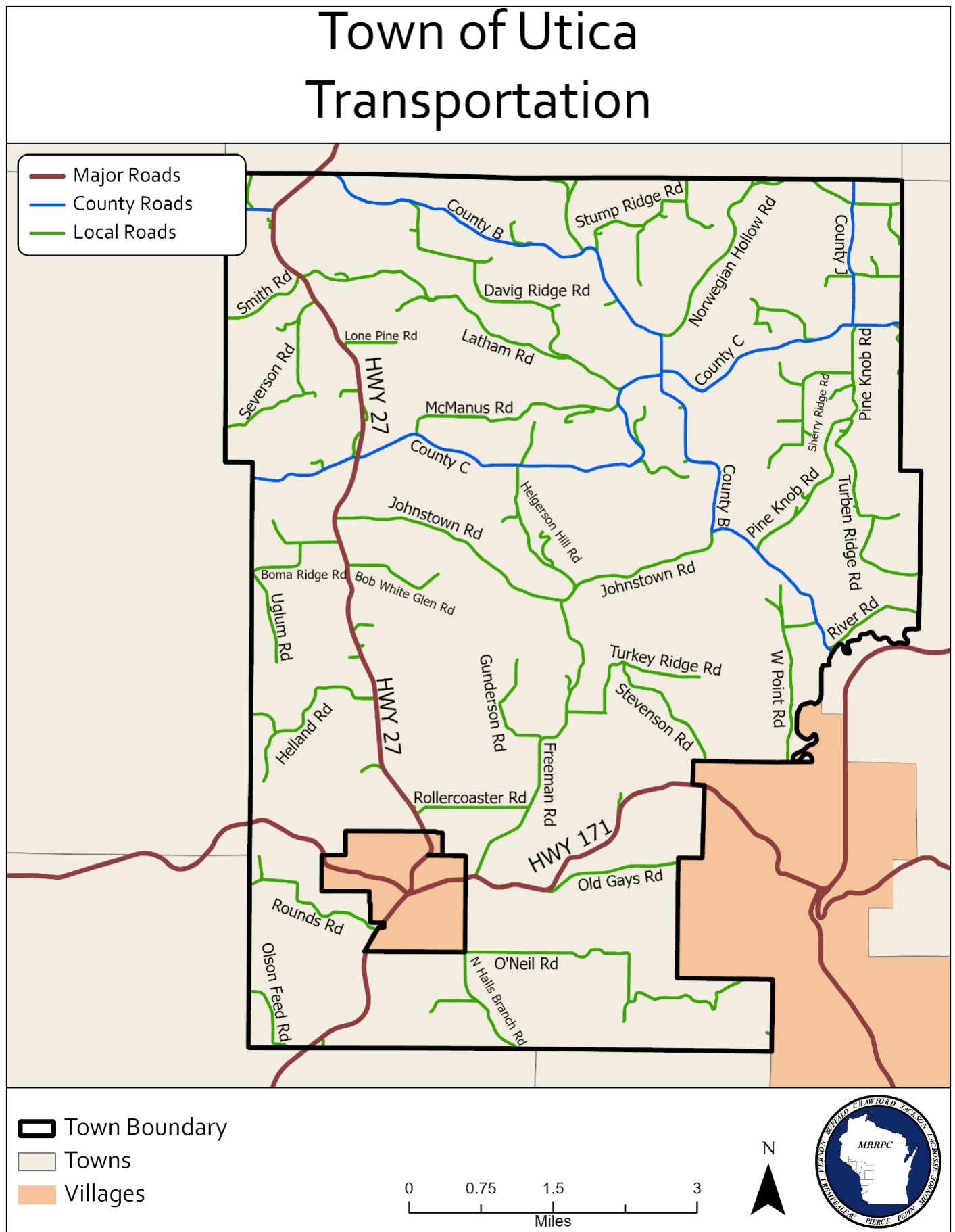
Certain roads in the Town, such as county and state highways, qualify for federal and state aid for construction and maintenance projects. This aid is essential for funding capital improvements and is based on a three-year average of expenditure. In addition to roadway maintenance, the Town is committed to ensuring that its signage remains clear, consistent, and up to date. Ongoing review of existing signs, as well as consideration of new signage where needed, helps improve safety, navigation, and community appearance. The Town of Utica continues to work toward updating its signage system to better serve residents and visitors. With focus on concerning areas such as Helgerson Hill Rd and Johnstown Rd, County Road B and Highway 27, and the intersection of Sherry Ridge and Pine Knob Rd.

State and Regional Transportation Plans

Several state and regional plans influence the future of transportation in the Town of Utica:

- **Active Transportation Plan 2050:** Focuses on promoting walking and bicycling opportunities statewide and aligns with Wisconsin's broader transportation goals in Connect 2050.
- **Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030:** Outlines the long-term plan for airport infrastructure in the state, building on the policies of Connections 2030.
- **Wisconsin State Freight Plan:** Addresses freight transportation needs and provides a vision for the state's freight program through 2028.
- **Connect 2050:** A multimodal vision plan that sets transportation goals across all sectors, including roads, transit, biking, walking, rail, aviation, and water transport.
- **Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050:** A long-range plan focusing on freight rail, passenger rail, and rail crossing safety, supporting the broader goals outlined in Connect 2050.

Town of Utica Transportation Map



Economic Development

The Town of Utica has a civilian labor force of 263 residents, with employment spread across a variety of industries. The largest occupation sector is agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining which employs 59 workers, underscoring the community's strong rural and agricultural identity. Manufacturing and education services and health care are also major employment sectors, each employing 45 residents. While agriculture remains the cornerstone of the local economy, the Town's workforce is diverse with employment in construction, retail trade, professional services, and hospitality related industries. The mix of industries support economic resilience by providing opportunities across multiple sectors.

Table 1.15 Industry by Class of Worker

Class of Worker	Number of Workers
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	59
Construction	25
Manufacturing	45
Wholesale trade	4
Retail trade	18
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	2
Information	0
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	10
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	12
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	45
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	25
Other services, except public administration	6
Public administration	12
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	263

Source: ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates, S2407 Industry by Class of Worker for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

Income and Poverty

The Town of Utica continues to experience lower poverty levels than both Crawford County and the state of Wisconsin. As of 2023, 6.5% of the Town's population lives below the poverty line, compared to 12.6% in Crawford County and 10.7% statewide. While this marks a slight increase from 2022 (4.8%), the Town of Utica remains well below regional and state averages.

Despite lower poverty levels, the Town's median household income of \$58,438 remains below that of Crawford County which is \$63,496 and significantly lower than the state of Wisconsin's median income of \$74,631. This income gap reflects the Town's concentration of moderate income households. Notably, 24.6% of the Town of Utica households earn between \$35,000 and \$49,999, which is more than double the statewide share with 11.4% of residents who are in the same income bracket. At the higher end of the income spectrum, only 1.5% of households in the Town of Utica earn between \$150,000 and \$199,999, compared to 8.7% in the state of Wisconsin. However, the proportion of households earning \$200,000 or more in the Town of Utica at 6.4% which is slightly higher than that of Crawford County at 4.7%.

Table 1.16 Percentage of Population below Poverty Level

Year	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
2022	4.8%	12.4%	10.7%
2023	6.5%	12.6%	10.7%

Source: ACS 2022 and 2023 5-Year Estimates, S1701 Poverty Status in the Past 12 months

Table 1.17 Percentage of Households within Income Categories

Income Categories	Town of Utica	Crawford County	Wisconsin
Less than \$10,000	2.3%	3.6%	4.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1.9%	3.8%	3.3%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	8.0%	8.6%	6.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	5.3%	11.5%	6.9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	24.6%	12.5%	11.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	22.3%	17.9%	17.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.4%	16.3%	13.8%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	13.3%	15.6%	18.8%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.5%	5.6%	8.7%
\$200,000 or more	6.4%	4.7%	8.5%
Median income (dollars)	58,438	63,496	74,631
Mean income (dollars)	80,140	80,220	97,894

Source: ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates, S1901 Income in the Past 12 months (in 2021 in Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

Commuting to Work

The majority of employed residents that live in the Town of Utica commute to work by driving alone, which accounts for 72.6% of the workforce. Residents reported 7.2% arrived at work by carpooling. No residents reported using public transportation or walking to work. A small percentage at 3.4% commute using alternative means such as motorcycles, bicycles, or taxis. Notably, 16.7% of the Town of Utica's workforce reports working from home. This broad category may include remote employees, self-employed individuals, or farmers. The American Community Survey does not further define the nature of what at-home work is, but its high share is consistent with the Town's rural character and economic structure.

32 How did this person usually get to work LAST WEEK? Mark (X) ONE box for the method of transportation used for most of the distance.

<input type="checkbox"/> Car, truck, or van	<input type="checkbox"/> Taxicab
<input type="checkbox"/> Bus	<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle
<input type="checkbox"/> Subway or elevated rail	<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle
<input type="checkbox"/> Long-distance train or commuter rail	<input type="checkbox"/> Walked
<input type="checkbox"/> Light rail, streetcar, or trolley	<input type="checkbox"/> Worked from home → SKIP to question 40a
<input type="checkbox"/> Ferryboat	<input type="checkbox"/> Other method

Source: <https://censusreporter.org/topics/commute/>

Table 1.18 Means of Commuting to Work

Means	Number of Workers	Percent of Workers
Car, truck, or van - drove alone:	191	72.62%
Car, truck, or van - carpooled:	19	7.22%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab):	0	0.00%
Walked:	0	0.00%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, or other means:	9	3.42%
Worked from home	44	16.73%
Total	263	(X)

Source: American Community Survey 2023 5-Year Estimates, B08101 Means of Transportation to Work by Age

Industry Projections

According to projections from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development for the Western Workforce Development Area gives industry employment projections for the years of 2022 to 2032. These projections are at the county level and give insight into Crawford County's long-term economic trends that can be expected between 2022 and 2032. Overall, the regional economy is projected to see growth across most sectors, with particularly strong increases in construction at 12.1%, trade, transportation, and utilities at 11.2%, and professional and business services at 11.1%. The leisure and hospitality sector is expected to lead all industries with a projected growth rate of 15.1%, reflecting continued expansion in tourism and service oriented businesses. Education and health services at 7.7%, financial activities at 10.1%, and other services at 9.2% which are also expected to experience steady growth. This growth can help support both workforce development and community needs. Natural resources and mining, a sector more directly tied to rural and agricultural economies, is projected to grow by 8.5%, while manufacturing is expected to see more modest growth of 4.2%. Government employment is projected to increase by 3.2%, which is the smallest growth among the major industries. These projections highlight important trends for workforce development, education, and economic planning, particularly as communities like the Town of Utica consider future employment opportunities.

Table 1.19 Long-Term Industry Projections for Western Workforce Development Area

Industry	Projected Change from 2022 to 2032
Natural Resources and Mining	8.5%
Construction	12.1%
Manufacturing	4.2%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	11.2%
Information	7.4%
Financial Activities	10.1%
Professional and Business Services	11.1%
Education and Health Services	7.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	15.1%
Other Services (except Government)	9.2%
Government	3.2%
Self-Employed	7.7%

Source: Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, WIOA Industry Employment Projections Long-Term Projections 2022 to 2032

Utilities and Community Facilities

Utilities Inventory

This section documents those utilities provided by the Town of Utica, Crawford County, neighboring communities, and private providers.

Wastewater Treatment

All properties in the Town of Utica rely on private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS), which must comply with state plumbing code (COMM 83) to protect groundwater resources and ensure system longevity. Waste from these systems, primarily septic, is transported to nearby treatment facilities. Given current soil conditions, development densities, and existing technologies, a municipal sanitary system is not needed.

Water Supply

Homes and businesses in the Town of Utica are served by private wells. Well installation costs depend on soil conditions, water table depth, and casing requirements. While individual wells are common, shared or clustered wells may be an option for small developments, though they require agreements to manage usage and placement. For larger subdivisions, community wells may provide a cost-effective and safer water supply solution.

Electricity and Natural Gas Transmission

Electricity and natural gas in the Town of Utica are supplied by several providers, including Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, Alliant Energy, Wisconsin Power and Light Company, Richland Electric Co-op, WE Energies, Consumers Cooperative, New Horizons, and Tru-Gas.

Alternative Energy Sources

While no alternative energy generation facilities are currently located in the Town of Utica, some electricity provided by the above suppliers comes from renewable sources.

Local Park and Recreation Facilities

The Town of Utica currently has no public parks.

Communication Facilities

Communication services in the Town of Utica are provided by several companies:

- Telephone: Richland Grant Cooperative supplies landline services and U.S. Cellular provides mobile service with a tower located in Rising Sun.
- Internet: Richland Grant Telephone Cooperative offers internet to most of the Town, though some residents may use satellite providers. Internet speeds are fairly slow in the Town, with significant portions with speeds about 2.0 Mbps.
- News Media: The Crawford County Independent, Vernon County Times, and the Courier Press are the primary newspapers.
- Television and Radio: No television or radio stations are located in the Town of Utica, but signals from surrounding communities are accessible. Cable and satellite services are available to residents.
- Postal Service: Mail is delivered by post offices in Viroqua, Ferryville, Gays Mills, Mt. Sterling, Seneca, and Soldiers Grove.

Cemeteries

The Town of Utica contains several cemeteries, including Towerville Cemetery, Evergreen Cemetery, South Kickapoo Cemetery, Utica Church Cemetery, and Rising Sun Cemetery. Each of these sites has unique significance, from small rural burial grounds to larger cemeteries that remain active today. Current capacity across all cemeteries is adequate to meet the Town's long-term needs.

Health Care Facilities

There are no medical or healthcare facilities located within the Town of Utica. The nearest medical and healthcare providers can be found in the City of Viroqua (Vernon Memorial Hospital and Gundersen Lutheran Clinic) and in the City of Prairie du Chien (Crossing Rivers Health, Mayo Clinic Health System Franciscan Healthcare, and Gundersen Health System Prairie du Chien Clinic).

Childcare Facilities

There are no licensed childcare facilities within the Town of Utica. Residents typically rely on providers near their homes or workplaces, as well as informal childcare networks.

Libraries

The closest public libraries to the Town of Utica are in the Village of Gays Mills, the City of Prairie du Chien, and the Village of Soldiers Grove.

Senior Services

While there are no senior facilities in the Town of Utica, a senior club meets regularly in the Village of Ferryville, and Meals on Wheels is available through Crawford County. Ferryville Manor, located in Ferryville, offers low-income housing for seniors.

School Districts

The Town of Utica is served by the North Crawford and Seneca School Districts. Most of the Town falls within the North Crawford District with the Seneca District covering the western portion. Student enrollment in both districts has fluctuated, reflecting larger trends within rural Wisconsin.

- North Crawford School District provides 4K–12 education at its facilities in Soldiers Grove.
- Seneca School District offers K–12 education at its facility in Seneca.

Town Facilities and Equipment

The Utica Town Hall, located at 15600 Freeman Rd, Gays Mills, houses the town office, town shop, salt storage shed, and recycling center.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

The Town of Utica collects waste and recyclables at the Town Hall, contracting with Town & Country Sanitation of Boscobel for disposal services.

Police Protection

Crawford County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement which is based in the City of Prairie du Chien. The Sheriff's Department also assists incorporated areas within Crawford County.

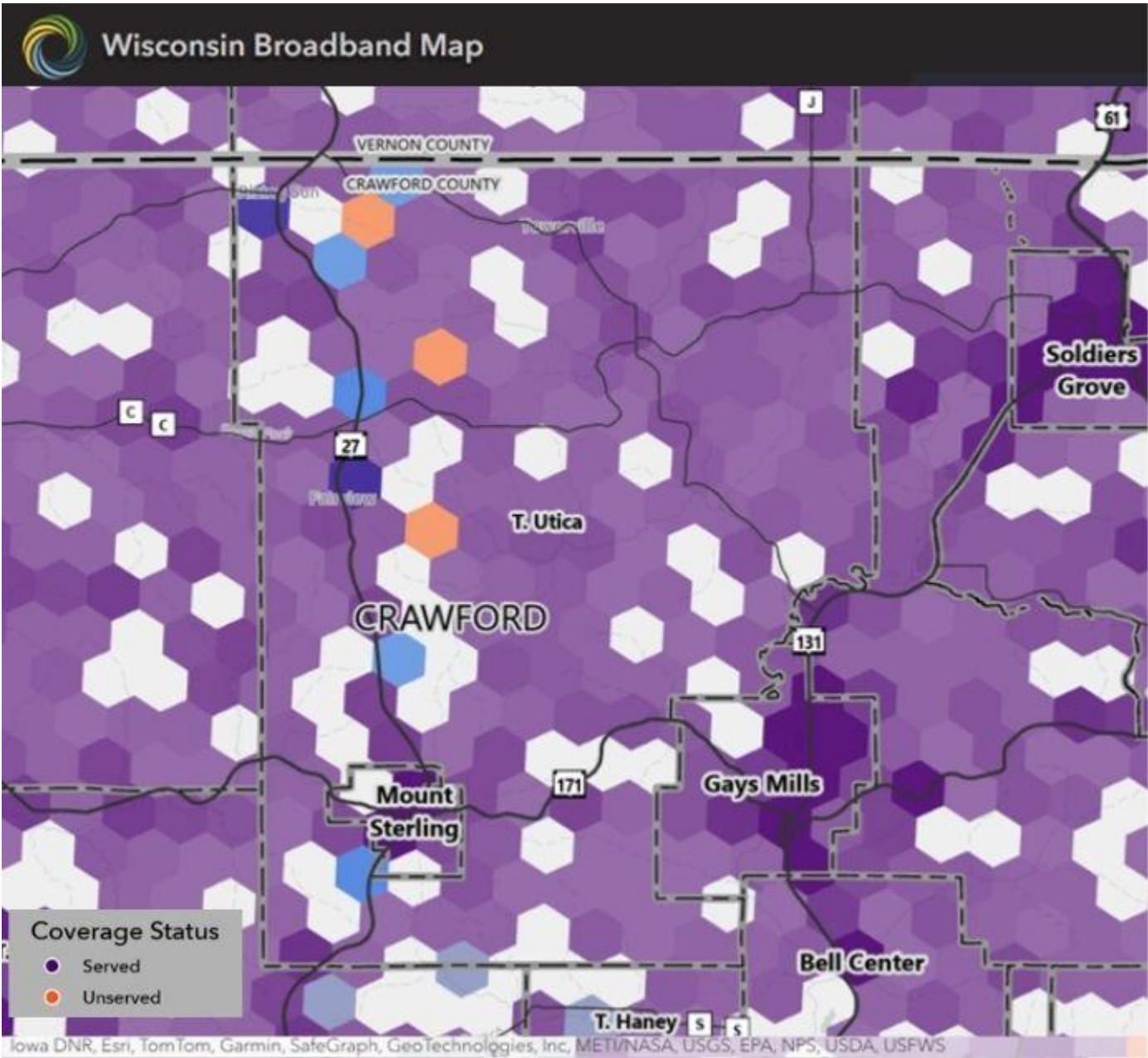
Fire Protection

Fire protection services are provided by the Gays Mills, Seneca, and Soldiers Grove Fire Departments.

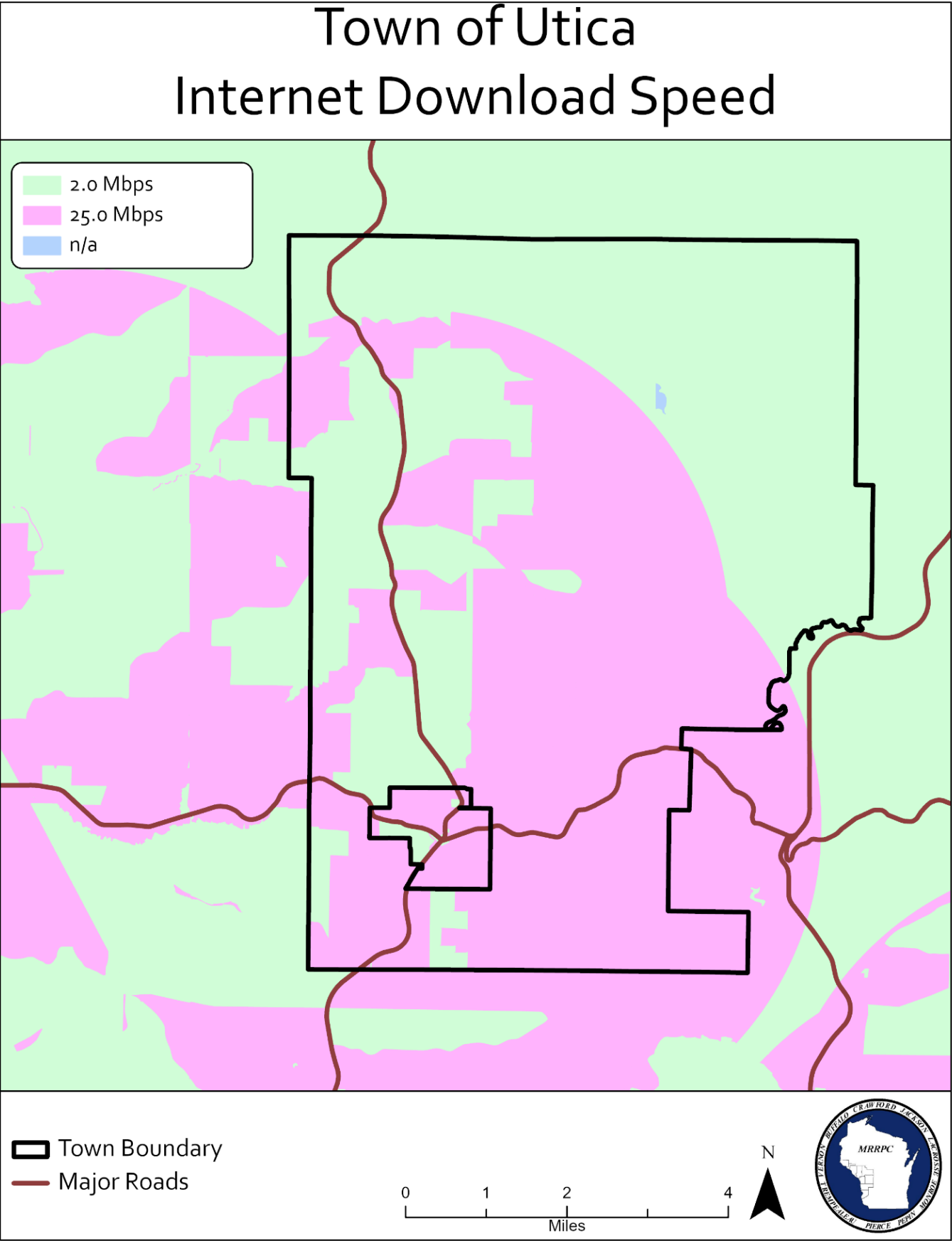
EMS/Rescue Services

Emergency medical services are provided by Ocooch Mountain Rescue in Gays Mills and the North Crawford Rescue Squad in Soldiers Grove.

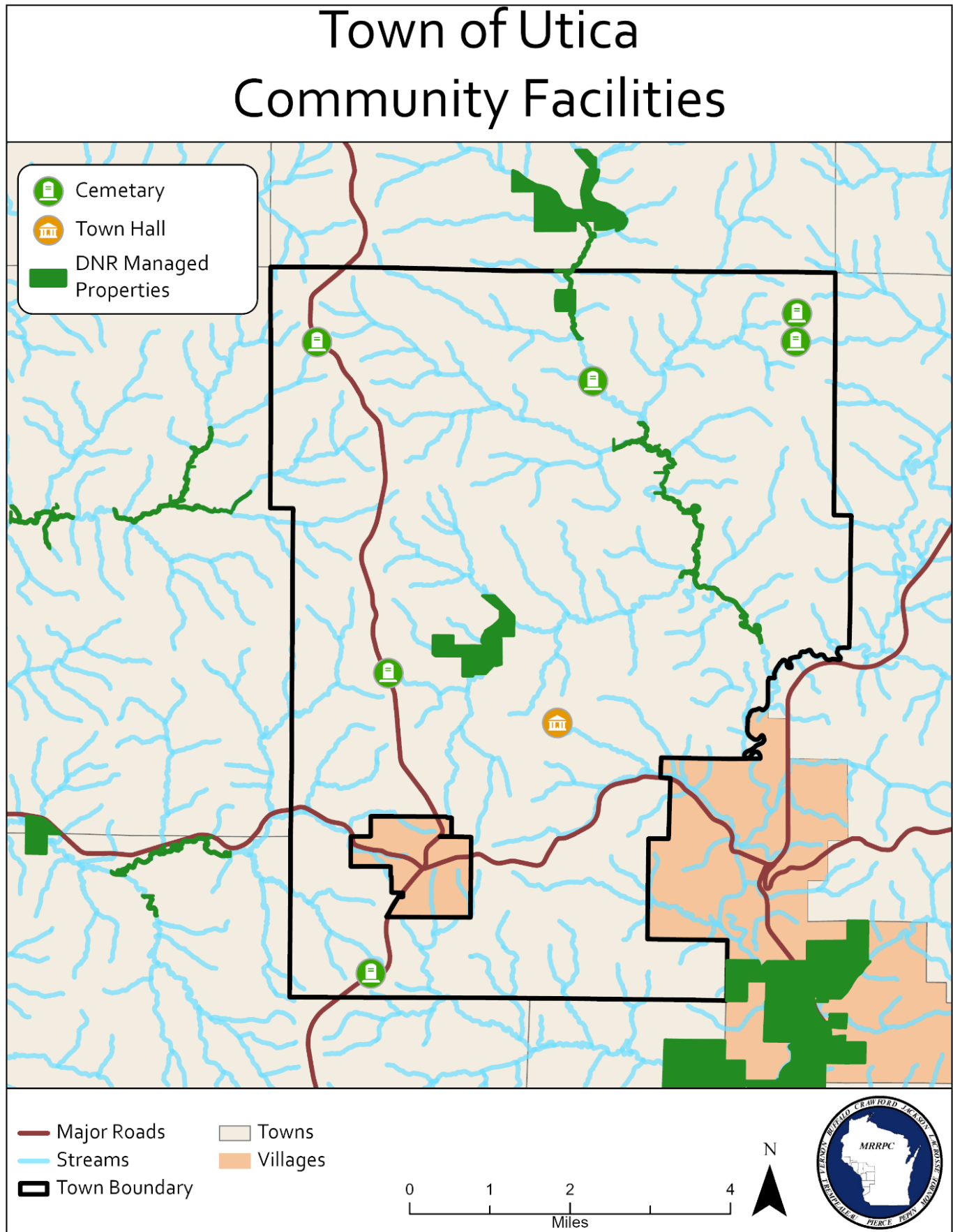
Town of Utica Broadband Map



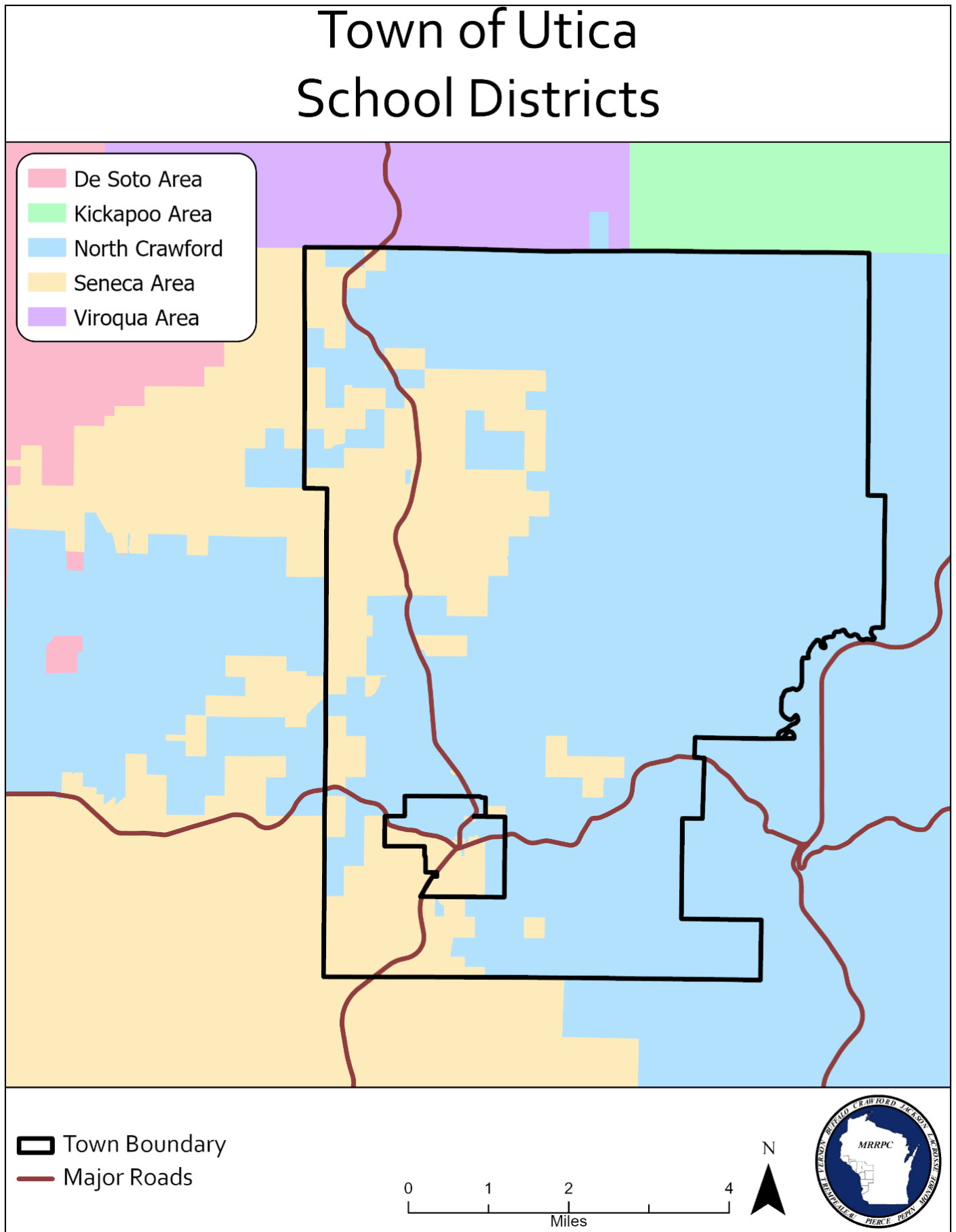
Town of Utica Internet Download Speed Map



Town of Utica Community Facilities Map



Town of Utica School Districts Map



Intergovernmental Relationships and Coordination

Intergovernmental cooperation is essential for the Town of Utica. Collaboration will be involved with neighboring communities, Crawford and Vernon Counties, and state agencies. This coordination helps ensure that future planning activities align and address shared challenges and opportunities. At the minimum, this includes sharing and reviewing plans with adjacent municipalities and agencies.

Neighboring Townships

The Town of Utica shares boundaries with the Towns of Clayton, Franklin, Freeman, Haney, Kickapoo, Seneca, and Sterling. These towns share a common rural history and character with the Town of Utica, fostering a relationship of mutual respect. Since towns in Wisconsin cannot annex land from one another, boundary disputes are not a concern. The Town of Utica remains open to considering shared services with neighboring towns when mutually beneficial opportunities arise.

Neighboring Villages

The Town of Utica shares boundaries with the Villages of Bell Center and Gays Mills, and the Village of Mt. Sterling is entirely within its boundaries. These villages serve as key destinations for the Town of Utica's residents and act as the Town's "downtowns" in many respects. Although relationships between the town and villages are generally positive, annexation of town land by the villages could become a future issue, particularly if demand for municipal services such as sewer and water systems increases. However, with low population growth expected in the coming decades, significant annexation activity is unlikely.

School Districts

The Town of Utica is served by the North Crawford and Seneca School Districts. Both the Town and school districts recognize the importance of working together to ensure long-term sustainability. Strengthening the relationship between the Town and school districts was identified as a priority during the planning process.

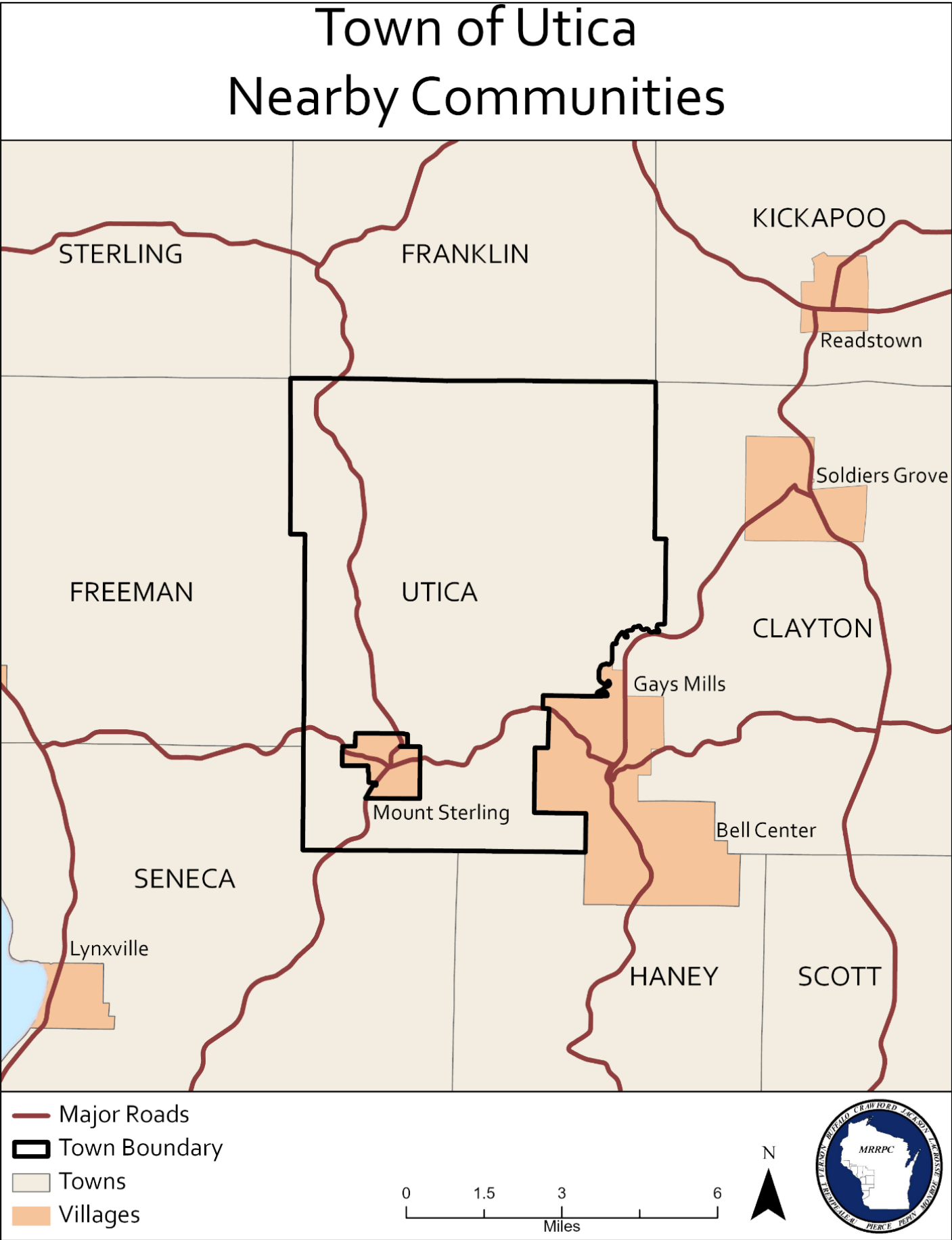
Crawford and Vernon Counties

Crawford County provides several essential services to the Town of Utica, including highway maintenance, library funding, social services, and land use planning assistance. In areas where the county has jurisdiction, such as shoreland zoning, it consults the Town before making decisions. Communication between the Town and county, particularly regarding road improvements and stormwater management, was identified as a key area for future coordination. Additionally, regional challenges such as housing, senior services, and environmental issues benefit from a multi-jurisdictional approach.

The Town of Utica also shares its northern border with the Town of Franklin in Vernon County. Coordination with Vernon County will be necessary to ensure compatibility in future land use and development activities across the shared border.

Regional Planning Commission

The Town of Utica and Crawford County are part of the Mississippi Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC), which supports regional planning and economic development. The MRRPC provides a range of services, including comprehensive planning, zoning assistance, economic development support, and grant writing. The Town will continue to collaborate with the MRRPC to maintain its eligibility for economic development, funding and access to planning resources.



State Agencies

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) are key state agencies with whom the Town of Utica coordinates. WDNR is responsible for wildlife protection, stormwater regulations, and management of woodlands and wetlands. Given the Town's focus on natural resource preservation, WDNR plays an important role in ongoing planning efforts. WisDOT is a crucial partner in highway and transportation infrastructure planning, particularly regarding the STH 27, 131, and 171 corridors. The Town maintains a positive relationship with WisDOT and will continue to work closely with the agency on transportation-related projects.

Existing Plans

Currently, the North Crawford and Seneca School Districts have no plans to construct new facilities in the Town of Utica, but the Town will continue to collaborate with the districts on future enrollment and facility needs. This plan has been shared with the districts to assist in predicting future student enrollment from the Town.

The WDNR's planning documents on wildlife and natural resource management are incorporated into the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources section of this plan. WisDOT's statewide transportation plans, including those for highway, bicycle, and rail corridors, are incorporated into the Transportation section of this plan.

Infrastructure to Support Town Success

The Town of Utica has historically operated with minimal hired staff, but future growth may necessitate the addition of staff to manage increasing demands. Any staffing changes will be considered within the context of a broader organizational structure designed to meet the Town's evolving needs. Additionally, the Town's ability to provide adequate space for government functions and intergovernmental coordination, such as the Town Hall and park facilities, is an important factor in maintaining effective relationships with neighboring communities.

Relationship to Other Comprehensive Plan Chapters

Intergovernmental cooperation is a recurring theme throughout this plan. Regional housing demand, transportation improvements, and economic expansion are all influenced by coordination with neighboring communities and state agencies. The Town's ability to provide quality services and support development at its boundaries depends on strong intergovernmental partnerships with adjacent towns, villages, counties, and regional and state entities.

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources

Agriculture

Agriculture remains a central feature of the Town of Utica’s landscape, but it faces growing pressures from development. In rural communities like the Town of Utica, residential and commercial expansion typically occurs through "greenfield" development, which involves building on previously undeveloped land such as woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, and agricultural areas. A significant portion of the Town of Utica’s undeveloped land consists of forested wetlands or steep slopes, which limits the available space for agriculture and other uses.

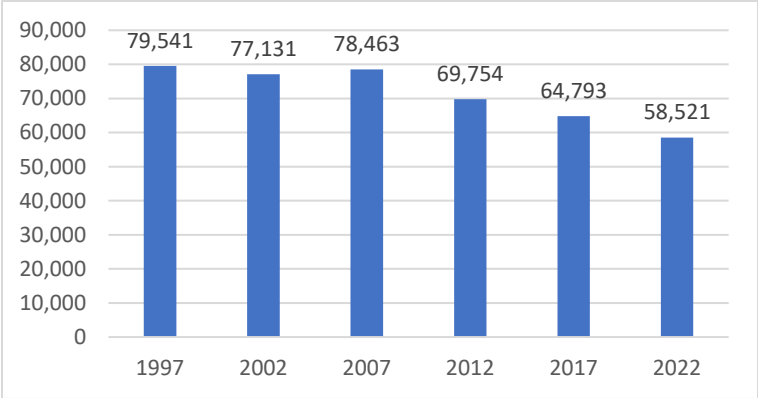
Prime farmland in the Town of Utica is mainly found along the ridgetops, particularly near Highways 27 and 171, as well as County Highways B, C, and J. In some floodplain areas, farmland is also productive when drained, and these areas are currently farmed, as shown in aerial imagery.

Factors influencing the agricultural landscape in the Town of Utica include the development of vacation and seasonal homes, the demand for large-lot residential properties, and the aging population of farm operators, with fewer younger individuals entering the farming profession. These conditions are shaping the current agricultural land use in the Town.

According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, the State of Wisconsin has experienced a steady decline in the total number of farms over the past 25 years, reflecting broader national trends in agriculture. In 1997, the state reported 79,541 farms, but by 2022 that number had decreased to 58,521 farms, a reduction of more than 21,000 farms. The largest drop occurred between 2007 and 2012, when the number of farms fell by nearly 9,000 in just five years. Since then, farm numbers have continued to decline, reaching their lowest point in the most recent census.

This decline highlights the consolidation of farming operations, as smaller family farms have become less sustainable in the face of rising costs, land use pressures, and market volatility. At the same time, larger operations have expanded, resulting in fewer farms but often larger in acreage and production scale. For rural communities such as the Town of Utica, this trend underscores the importance of supporting agricultural land preservation, promoting farm viability, and recognizing the evolving nature of Wisconsin’s agricultural industry.

Figure 1.5 Number of Wisconsin Farms



Source: Wisconsin Farming: Insights from the 2022 census of agriculture

Natural Resources

The Town of Utica's natural environment is a defining feature of the Town's landscape. The presence of woodlands, grasslands, streams, wetlands, and diverse topography provides essential wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities, contributing to the community's overall character. These natural resources also serve as buffers to development, improve the Town's visual appeal, and support local tourism activities such as hunting and fishing.

The Town's rugged landscape plays a significant role in shaping where development can occur. The Town of Utica's steep ridges and valleys leave limited land for development, and shallow, erodible soils restrict agricultural and construction activities. Historically, the ridgetops have supported agricultural activities, but much of the land has reverted to woodlands after extensive logging and farming in the late 19th century.

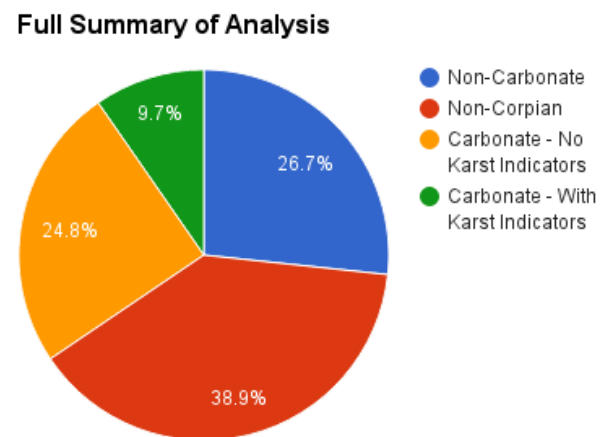
Geology and Topography

The Town of Utica is located in the Driftless Area of southwestern Wisconsin, an unglaciated region characterized by dramatic topographic relief. Unlike the surrounding areas, which were shaped by glaciers, the Town of Utica's landscape remains as it was prior to glaciation, featuring exposed limestone and sandstone bedrock, thin layers of loess, and steeply dissected ridges and valleys.

This rugged topography limits both agriculture and construction. Large portions of the Town have slopes too steep for development, making these areas more suitable for open space or very low-density residential use. Agricultural activities are mostly concentrated on the flatter ridgetops, with some farming occurring on valley floors.

Crawford County bedrock which is classified as 9.7% carbonate rock with karst indicators, 24.8 percent carbonate rock without karst indicators, 26.7% non-carbonate rock, and 39.9% non-corpian. Areas underlain by carbonate rock with karst indicators are of particular importance, as they often feature sinkholes, springs, and underground drainage systems. These types of landscapes that contain karst can contribute to rapid infiltration of surface water into groundwater systems, enhancing groundwater recharge but also increasing vulnerability to contamination. Carbonate areas without karst features are generally more stable while non-carbonate formations, such as sandstone and shale, do not dissolve easily but continue to shape the local drainage patterns and soil properties. The non-corpian formations that make up the largest share of Crawford County's geology consist of mixed sedimentary and weathered rock types that contribute to the rolling hills and narrow valleys that define the Town of Utica's landscape.

Figure 1.6 Summary of Crawford County Bedrock



Source: Crawford Stewardship Project

The Town of Utica's unique geology and topography that form its natural character are the foundation for influencing land use, agricultural potential, drainage, and groundwater resources. Land use practices in these areas must have careful planning and management to protect the groundwater quality. Having a better understanding of the geological and topographic conditions is essential for guiding things such as sustainable growth, minimizing environmental impacts, and preserving the community's natural integrity. The Town encourages conservation minded practices to support these goals. These practices can be things such as contour farming and the preservation of green waterways, which help reduce soil erosion, prevent runoff, and help protect the water quality from loss or contamination.

Streams and Watershed Drainage Areas

The Town of Utica’s surface water resources are valuable both environmentally and economically. The Town’s streams, which drain to either the Mississippi River or the Kickapoo and Wisconsin Rivers, are typically short, cold, and fast-moving, providing ideal conditions for trout habitat. Most watersheds in the Town of Utica contain class 2 or class 3 trout streams, with the upper reaches classified as class 2 and the lower reaches as class 3.

Historically, agricultural practices, particularly logging and cropping, caused significant siltation and runoff issues in the area’s streams. Soil conservation efforts introduced in the 1930s, such as contour planting and terracing, have improved water infiltration and reduced sedimentation. Modern stream restoration efforts focus on removing silt, creating stable banks, and re-establishing riparian buffers.

Wetlands, Floodplains, and Bluffs

Wetlands in the Town of Utica act as natural filters for sediment and nutrients while providing wildlife habitat, flood control, and groundwater recharge. Floodplains in the Town, particularly those associated with the Kickapoo River, serve crucial functions in managing floodwater and protecting water quality. Development in floodplain areas is limited due to the risks of flooding and erosion.

Wisconsin’s shoreland zoning regulations apply within 300 feet of the ordinary high-water mark of navigable rivers and streams or to the landward side of the floodplain. These regulations help prevent water pollution, protect fish habitats, and preserve the natural beauty of the Town of Utica’s water bodies.

Woodlands

The Town of Utica’s landscape has changed over time. Like most of Wisconsin during the middle of the 19th century, much of the area was used for logging and lumber industries with the ridgetops cleared and used for agriculture. By the middle of the 20th century much of this land reverted back to forest. Today, a large part of these woodlands are protected under the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Managed Forest Law (MFL) Program, which provides tax incentives to landowners who maintain forested land for long term conservation, recreation, and sustainable timber production.

According to data accessed in 2025 from WDNR, the Town of Utica has 4,070.28 acres that have been enrolled in the Managed Forest Program. This program includes 126.63 acres of “open” land which is accessible to the public for use in recreation such as hunting, fishing, and hiking. There is a reported 3,943.65 acres of land that is “closed”, which is privately managed often for timber and conservation purposes and is not open for public use.

Table 1.20 Managed Forest Land

Town of Utica Managed Forest Lands	
Opened Acres	126.63
Closed Acres	3,943.65
Total Acres	4,070.28

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Accessed 2025

Wildlife Habitat

The Town of Utica’s combination of farmland, oak-hickory woodlands, and water resources creates ideal habitats for a variety of wildlife, including deer and turkey. The Town’s difficult terrain provides additional protection for these species. Trout streams and the Kickapoo River also support high-quality aquatic habitats.

Threatened and Endangered Species

While Crawford County contains several threatened and endangered species, no specific list or map is available for the Town of Utica. County-level maps provided by the WDNR give a general idea of habitat locations but do not provide precise information. The state and federal government have various programs in place to protect these species.

Exotic and Invasive Species

Non-native invasive species pose a threat to the Town of Utica's native habitats. The WDNR regulates the introduction of non-native species through a permit process. Public education and the promotion of native plant species in landscaping are common approaches to controlling the spread of invasive species.

Metallic and Non-Metallic Mining Resources

Wisconsin's NR 135 Administrative Code governs the reclamation of non-metallic mines, such as gravel pits and quarries. While the siting of a mine is handled through local zoning processes, the reclamation process must comply with Wisconsin state-level regulations. Landowners with marketable non-metallic deposits may register their site for mining, although local zoning authorities retain the right to object to such applications if non-metallic mining is not an approved use.

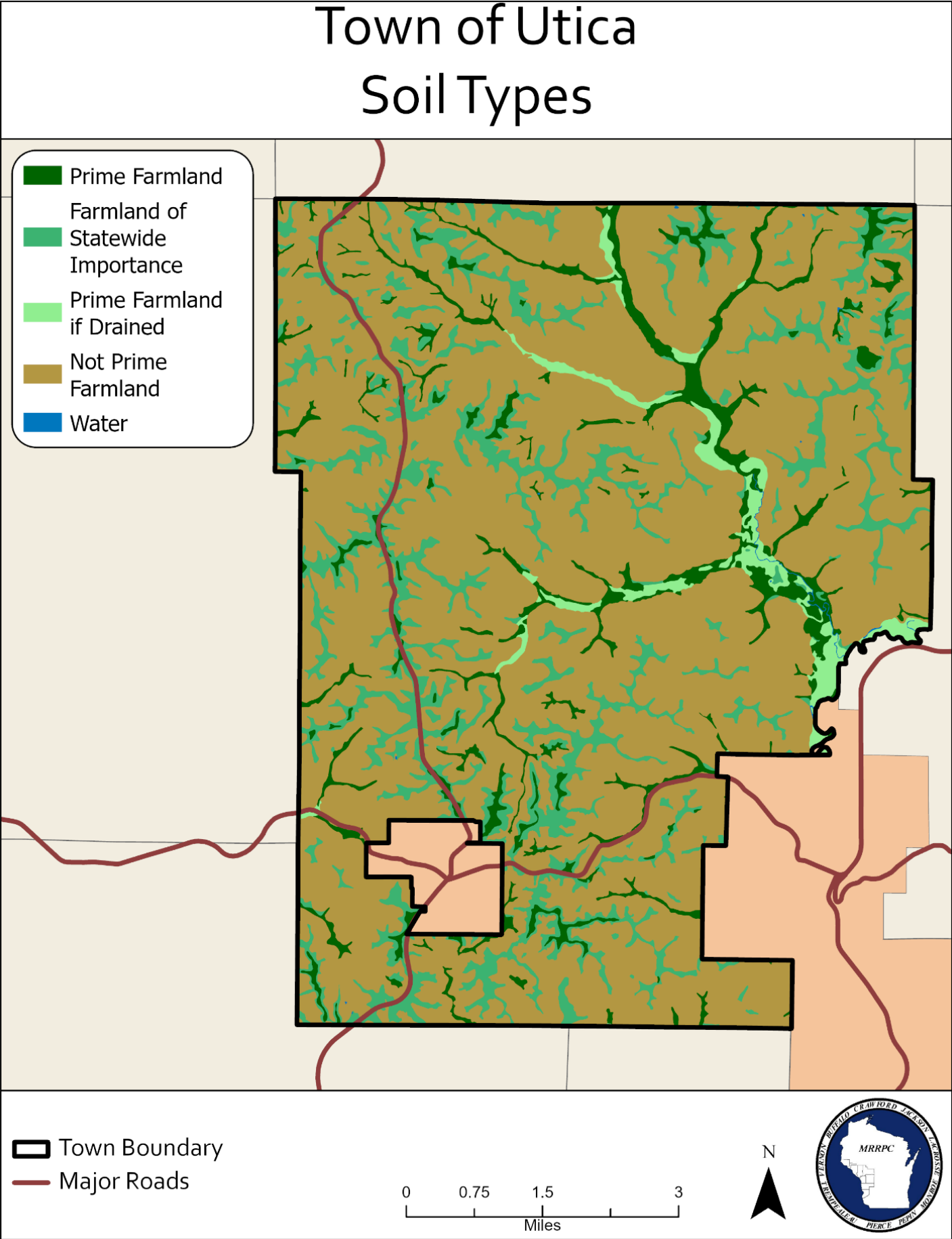
Air Quality

Crawford County is classified as an attainment area by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), meaning the county meets all health-based air quality standards. There are no air quality concerns in the Town of Utica at present, and the Town benefits from clean, pollutant-free air.

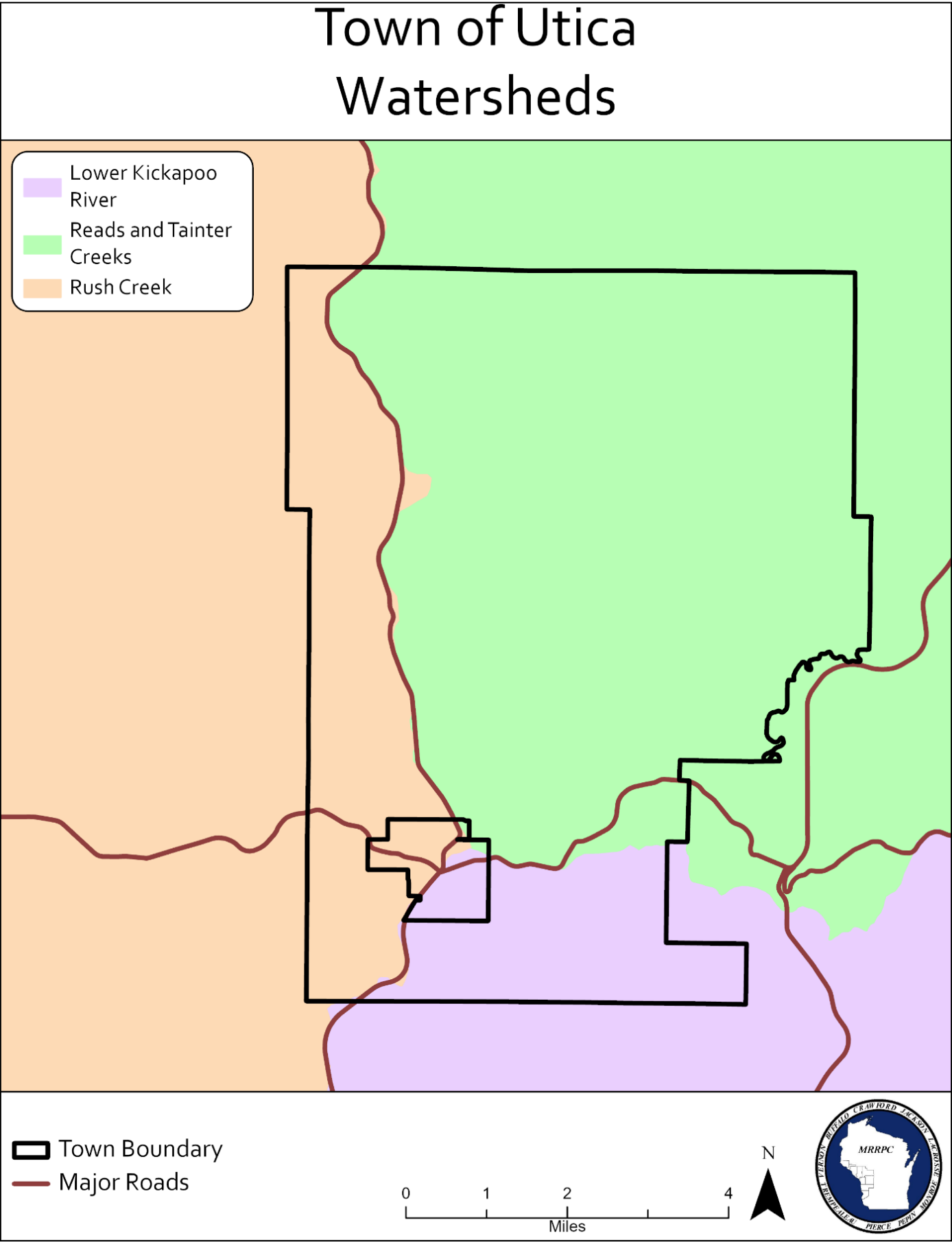
Cultural and Historic Resources

Cultural and historic resources are an essential element of the Town of Utica's identity that contributed to its sense of place and community heritage. The areas on and inland along the Mississippi River reflect both Indigenous and European American history. The Indigenous people who have inhabited the area for thousands of years can be seen in artifacts such as arrowheads, spear points, and remnants of sites. The European American culture can be seen in the area as historic churches, school sites, and farmsteads that date back to the 19th and early 20th centuries. Scattered throughout the Town of Utica these structures have historically provided spaces for educational, spiritual, and community gatherings which have had a significant impact on the Town's local culture.

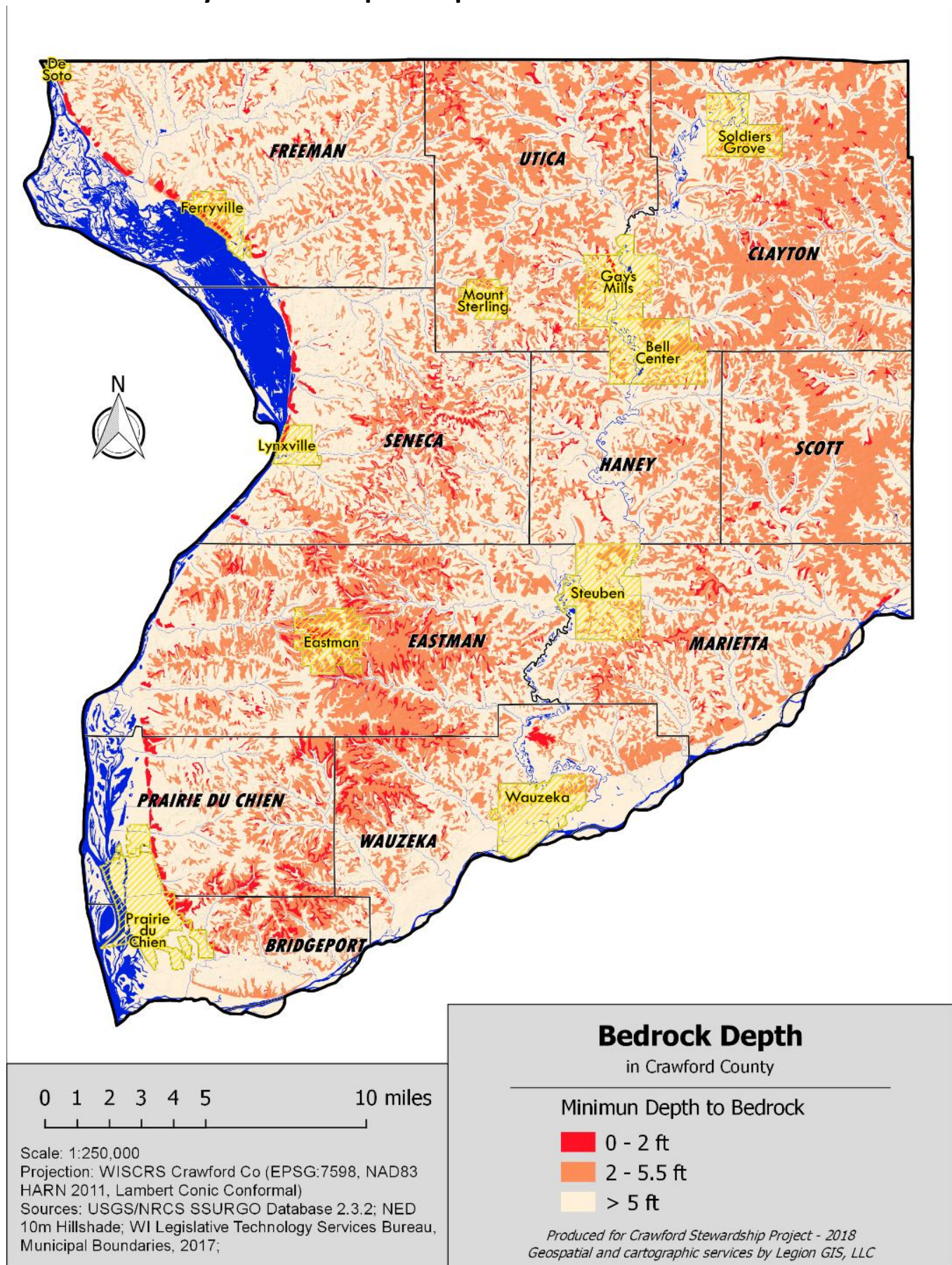
Town of Utica Soil Types Map



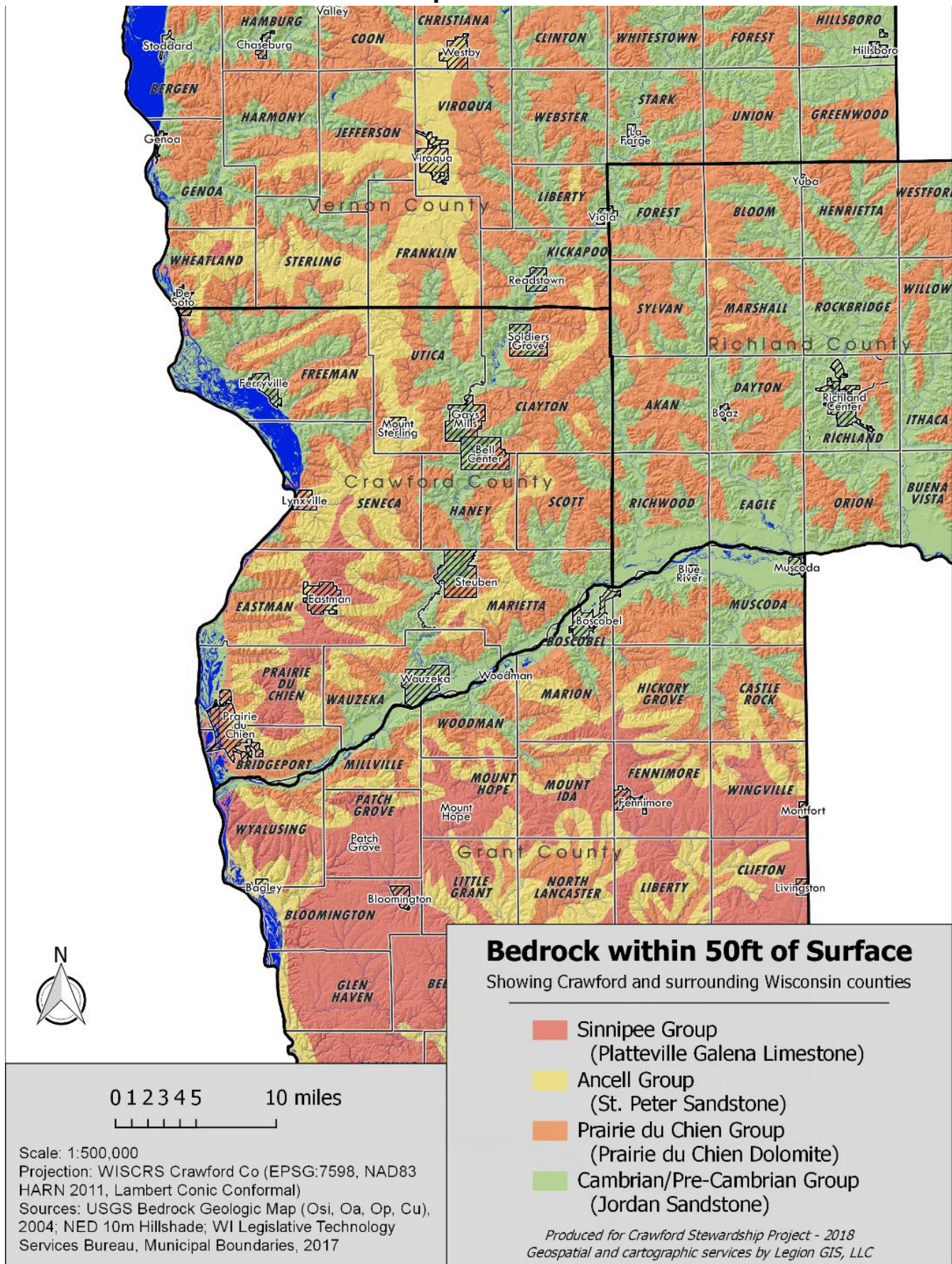
Town of Utica Watersheds Map



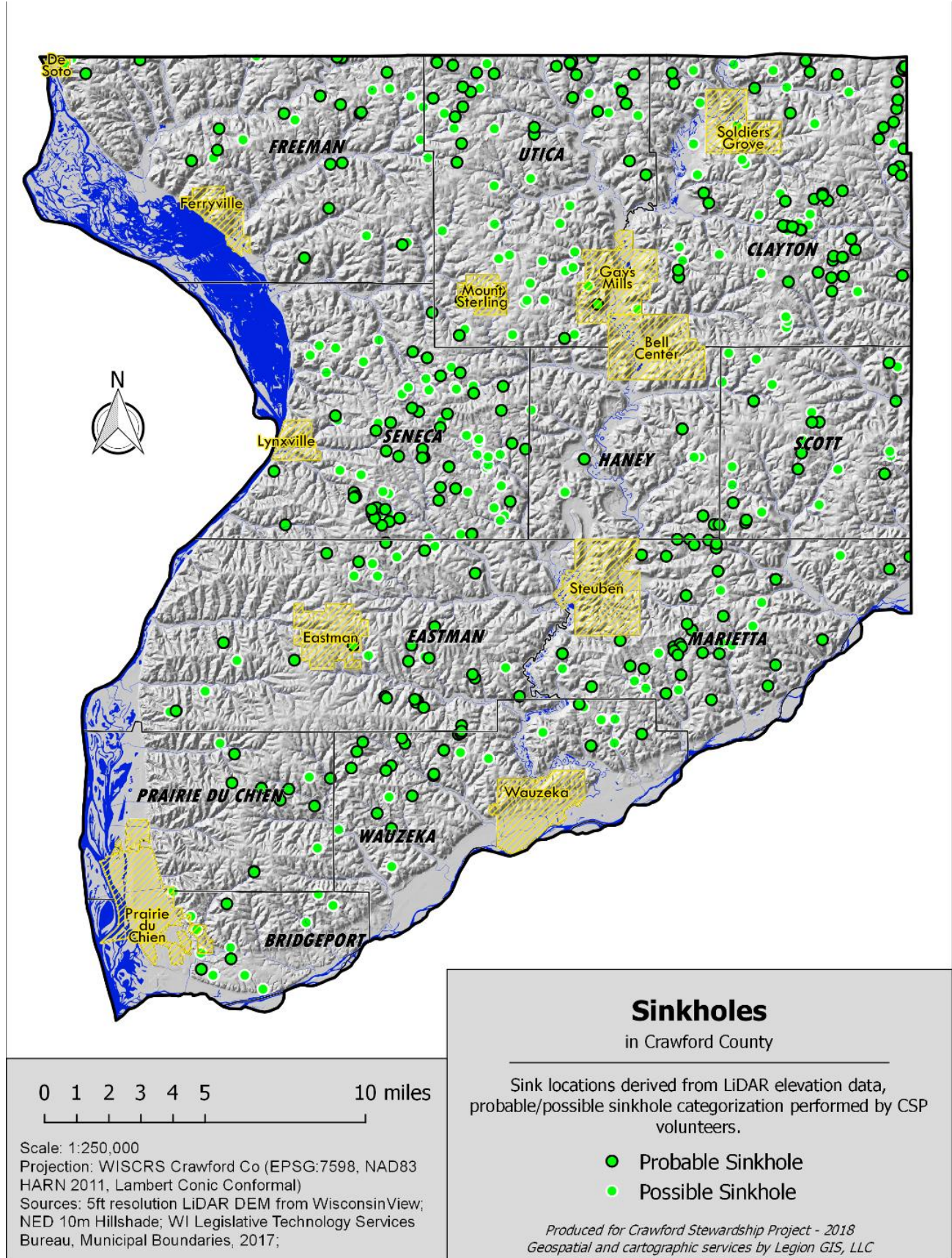
Crawford County Bedrock Depth Map



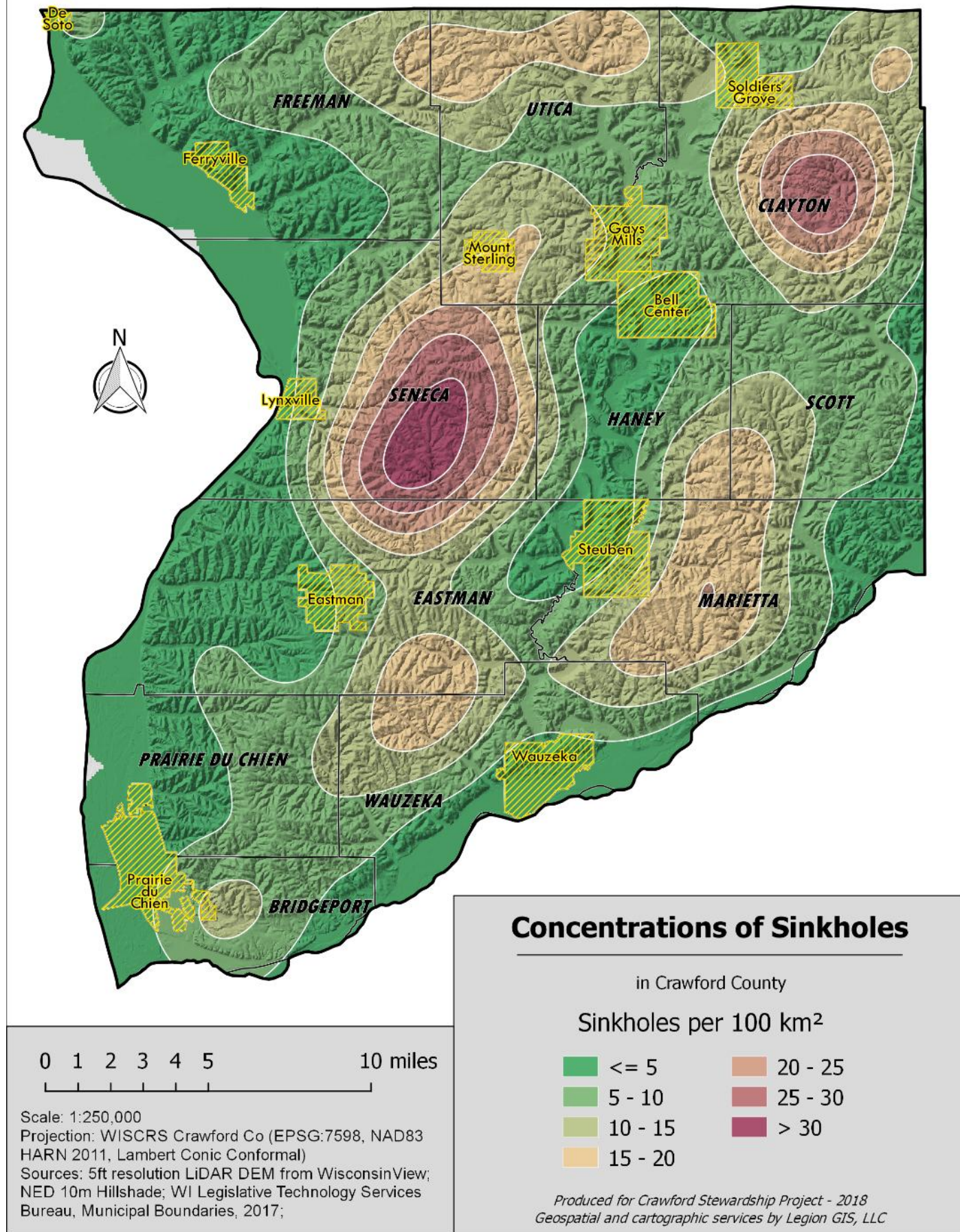
Bedrock within 50ft of Surface Map



Sinkholes in Crawford County Map



Concentrations of Sinkholes in Crawford County Map



Appendices

Appendix A - Ordinance to Adopt the Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan

Ordinance to Adopt the Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan

Ordinance No. 102025

An Ordinance to Adopt the Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Utica, Wisconsin.

The Town Board of the Town of Utica, Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to section 62.23(2) and (3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Utica, is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in section 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 2. The Town Board of the Town of Utica, Wisconsin, has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by section 66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 3. The plan commission of the Town of Utica, by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to Town Board of the Town of Utica the adoption of the document entitled "Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045," containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 4. The Town has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 5. The Town Board of the Town of Utica, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045," pursuant to section 66.1001(4) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 6. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the Town Board and posting as required by law.

Adopted this 17th day of November, 2025

Signed:


Town Board Chairman, Jim Wedeberg

Attest:


Town Clerk, Tanya Peterson

Appendix B - Public Participation Plan

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

for the Update of the Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan 2023-2024

1. Introduction

Section 66.1001(4)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes 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 is provided, in every stage in the preparation of the updated comprehensive plan. These written procedures contained within this Public Participation Plan have been developed to meet this requirement. This Plan will guide public participation throughout the Town's Comprehensive Planning Update Process.

This Public Participation Program offers all citizens, businesses, other 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. Effective public input is critical for the success of this planning process because it is the citizens, businesses, and other organizations that will experience the results of the objectives, policies, goals and programs of the Comprehensive Plan in the future.

The participation program is designed to be inclusive. It encourages people to participate in the process and to maximize the effectiveness of their contributions. The opportunities are open to everyone.

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, residents, and stakeholders.

2. Public Participation Methods and Opportunities

Town of Utica has established the following list of public participation methods and opportunities.

a. Open Plan Commission Meetings

Plan Commission meetings scheduled during the Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan update process will have an agenda item providing the opportunity for any public comment on or regarding the Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan.

b. Review and Distribution of the Planning Documents

During the Comprehensive Plan update process the public may review and obtain copies of proposed, alternative, or amended elements of the Town's Comprehensive Plan from the Town upon request. This information may also be distributed through the Town's website.

c. Website

The Town will post on its website information related to the Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan update planning process. This information may include agendas, minutes, draft plan elements, amendments, reports, maps, and photographs.

d. Written Comments

The Town will always welcome and consider written comments and will respond either in writing or by public comment during public meetings and/or through the media.

e. Meeting Notices

The Town 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 purpose of meeting, date, time and location.

f. Public Hearing

The Comprehensive Planning Law requires local units of government to hold at least one (1) formal public hearing with a Class 2 public notice prior to adoption of a revised Comprehensive Plan resolution or ordinance. Prior to adoption of the revised Comprehensive Plan, the Town will conduct this required public hearing.

g. Plan Recommendation Resolution

The Plan Commission or other body of the Town that is authorized to amend the Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan may recommend the adoption or amendment of the Comprehensive Plan only by adopting a resolution by a majority vote of the entire commission or other body. The vote shall be recorded in the official minutes of the committee or other body. The resolution shall refer to maps and other descriptive material that relate to one or more elements of a comprehensive plan. Upon adoption of the plan amendment, the Plan and its resolution shall be distributed by the Town to recipients listed in Section 66.1001(4)(b) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

h. Plan Adoption by Ordinance

No comprehensive plan that is recommended for adoption or amendment may take effect until the Town Board enacts an ordinance that adopts the comprehensive plan or amendment. Upon adoption of this ordinance, it shall be filed with all the entities specified in Section 66.1001(4)(b) of the Statutes.

i. Other

Planning is a continuous process that does not end with the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan. Since new issues and unforeseen circumstances will always arise the Town may amend its Comprehensive Plan with proper public input and in accordance with Town policies and State Statutes at any time.

3. Adoption

Town of Utica adopted this Public Participation Plan on this 19 day of June, 2023.


Town of Utica Board Chair


Town of Utica Clerk

Appendix C – Town of Utica Affidavit of Publication

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

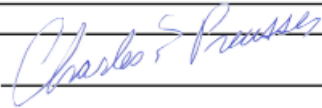
State of Wisconsin,
Crawford County

ss.

Charles Preusser, of said county,
being duly sworn, deposes and says that she (he) is an
authorized representative of the Crawford County
Independent & Kickapoo Scout, a public weekly
newspaper printed and published in the Village of Gays
Mills, in the County of Crawford and that the notice (of
which the annexed is a printed copy taken from the paper
paper in which it was published) was inserted and
published in said paper.

September 18, 2025

Signed
Editor



Title

Subscribed and sworn to before me this

17th day of October 2025 A.D.



Notary Public, Crawford County, Wisconsin

My Commission expires 5/29/29

TOWN OF UTICA NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

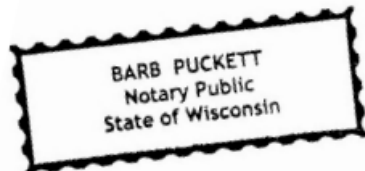
The Town Board of the Town of Utica, Crawford County, Wisconsin, will hold a special meeting on Monday, October 20, 2025 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall at 15600 Freeman Road, Gays Mills.

The Town of Utica will be adopting the 2025 - 2045 Comprehensive Plan and is seeking public input. Residents are welcome to attend this informational meeting and provide input or ideas before the final comprehensive plan is adopted. If you would like a draft copy of the comprehensive plan, please email the Town Clerk Tanya Peterson at petentanyap@yahoo.com.

Tanya Peterson, Town Clerk

(Pub. 9/18/25)

WNAXLP



Appendix D – Town of Utica Plan Commission Resolution

Town of Utica Plan Commission Resolution

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Town of Utica

Crawford County

The Plan Commission of the Town of Utica, Crawford County, Wisconsin, by this resolution, adopted by a majority of the town plan commission on a roll call vote with a quorum present and voting and proper notice having been given, resolves and recommends to the Town Board of the Town of Utica as follows:

Adoption of the Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan.

The Plan Commission of the Town of Utica, by this resolution, further resolves and orders as follows:

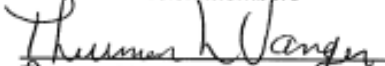
All maps and other materials noted and attached as exhibits to the Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan are incorporated into and made a part of the Town of Utica comprehensive Plan.

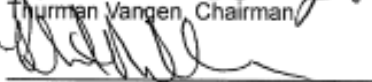
The vote of the town plan commission in regard to this resolution shall be recorded by the clerk of the town plan commission in the official minutes of the Plan Commission of the Town of Utica.

The town clerk shall properly post and publish this resolution as required under s. 60.80, Wis.stats.

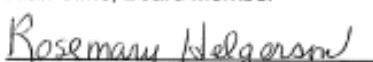
Adopted this 10th day of November, 2025.

Plan Commission Members


Thurman Vangen, Chairman


Phil Mueller, Board Member


Alan Sime, Board Member


Rosemary Helgersen, Board Member

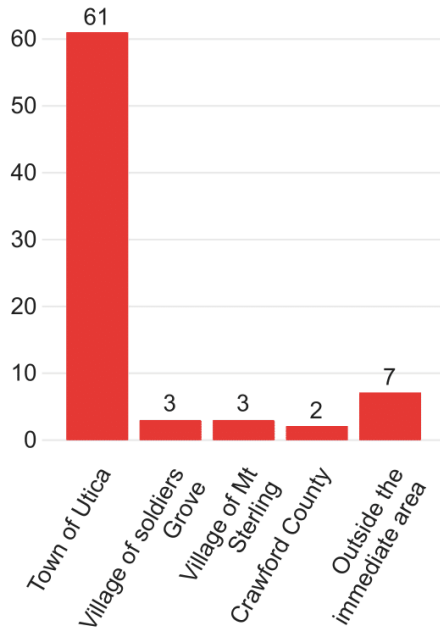
Attest:


Tanya Peterson, Town Clerk

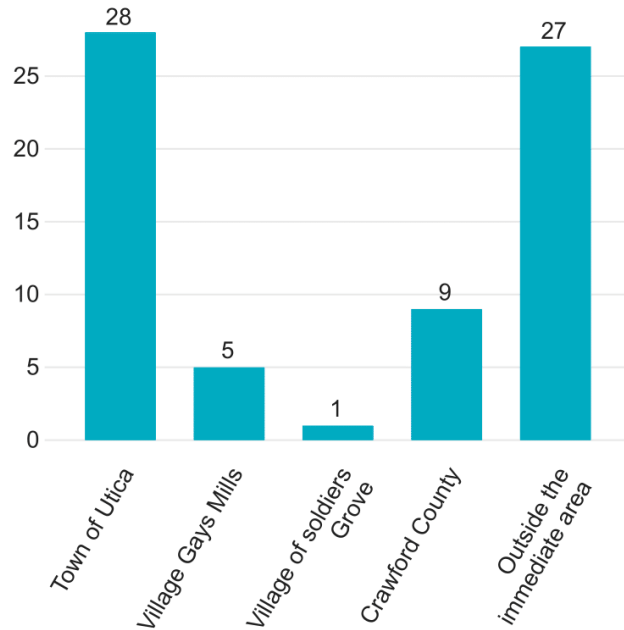
Town of Utica Comprehensive Plan Survey



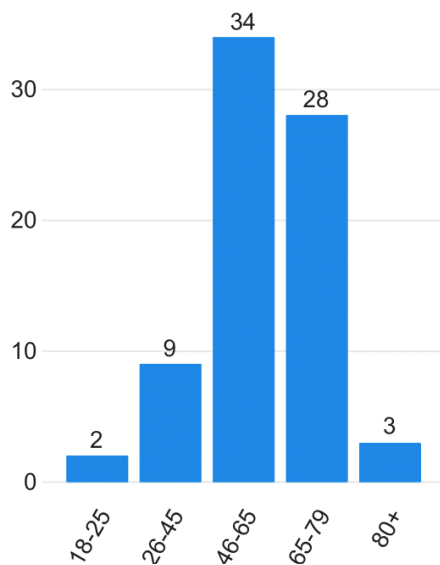
Indicate the Town, Village, or City where you live



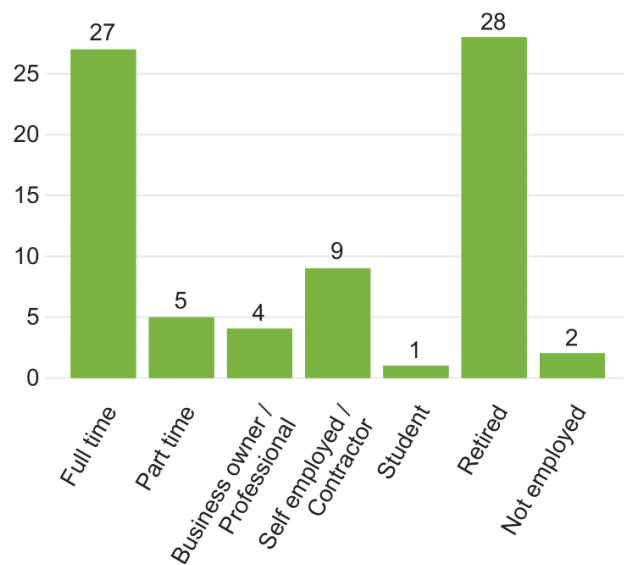
Indicate the Town, Village, or City where you work



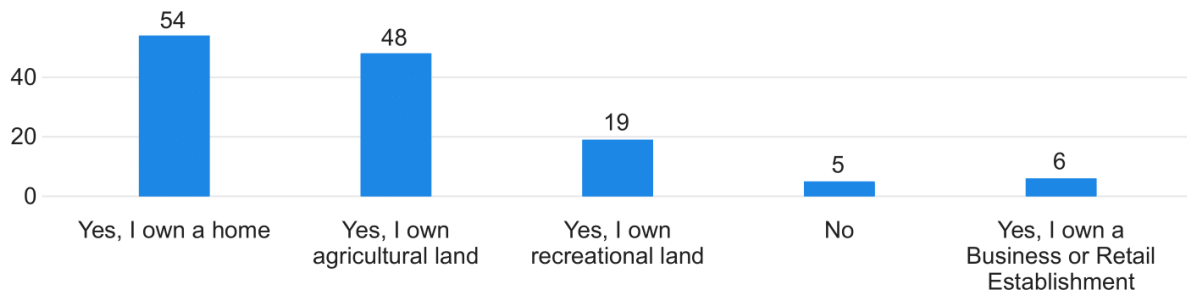
Please indicate your age bracket:



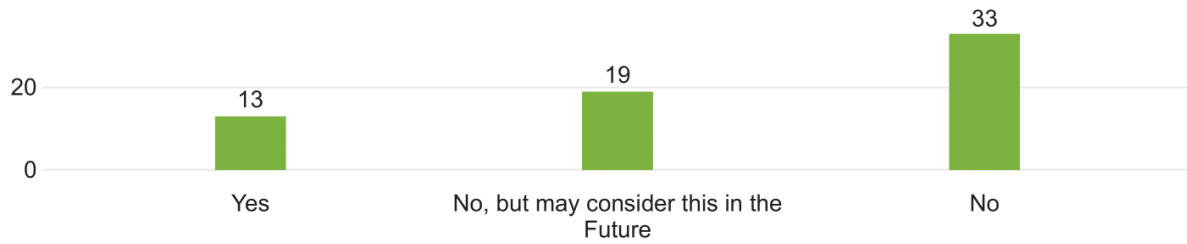
What is the status of your employment?



Are you a property owner in the area?



If you own agricultural land, do you currently participate in the Farmland Preservation Program to receive tax credits?



Which of the following business sectors do you feel fit the Town of Utica...

Field	Mean	Responses
Agriculture	73	75
Leisure / Recreation / Entertainment	50	55
Tourism	40	57
Education	38	33
Information / Computer / Technology / Communication	34	32
Arts and culture	34	35
Retail / Service	28	48
Real estate and development	27	31
Healthcare	27	33
Financial / Banking	26	28
Industrial manufacturing	24	31

Other – please specify - Text

Journalism

peace

Conservation practices (or lack there of).

road maintes

Nature Preserves, Farmer's Markets

None of the above

What types of new businesses do you believe would fit the character of the Town of Utica or that you would like to have in the area?

What types of new businesses do you believe would fit the character of the Town of Utica or that you would like to have in the area?

Guide services

Tourism, recreation and service businesses for landowners: ecological restoration, sustainable farming, etc. It would be nice to have more hvac, plumbing services, well repair. Manufacturing that would not pollute and provide jobs, including sustainable energy (solar).

Livestock grazing

Canoeing, trout fishing, bicycling, hiking, rustic camping, agri-tourism, virtual remote work, organic farming, timber harvesting.

More retail and restaurants. No subdivisions

Ag. Support, Land Management,

Restaurant

ag, forestry/lumber/telecommunications/healthcare/retirement community

grocery

Tap room (like former Driftless Brewing), swimming pool

Recreational

B&Bs

green industries, tourism

small locally owned shops

Small stores

Anything to make the Town of Utica more convenient.

Something that we don't have

Small individually owned business. Agricultural based business.

more organic farming

Farm based business like wineries, distilleries, or cafes. Farm to table. More public land to allow for recreational opportunities like hiking, hunting and fishing.

What are some qualities of the Town of Utica that you feel are highlights? (shown in rank order)

Field	Responses
Education	64
Business support	64
Natural resources	71
Community engagement	65
Job opportunities	62
Rural character	72
Recreational opportunities	70
Agriculture	73
Healthcare	64
Economic opportunities	65
Affordable housing	65

Other – please specify - Text

Trout fishing, natural beauty, low density, little urbanization

small scale, value-added ag related businesses: organic veggies, flowers, grapes, maple syrup, beekeeping

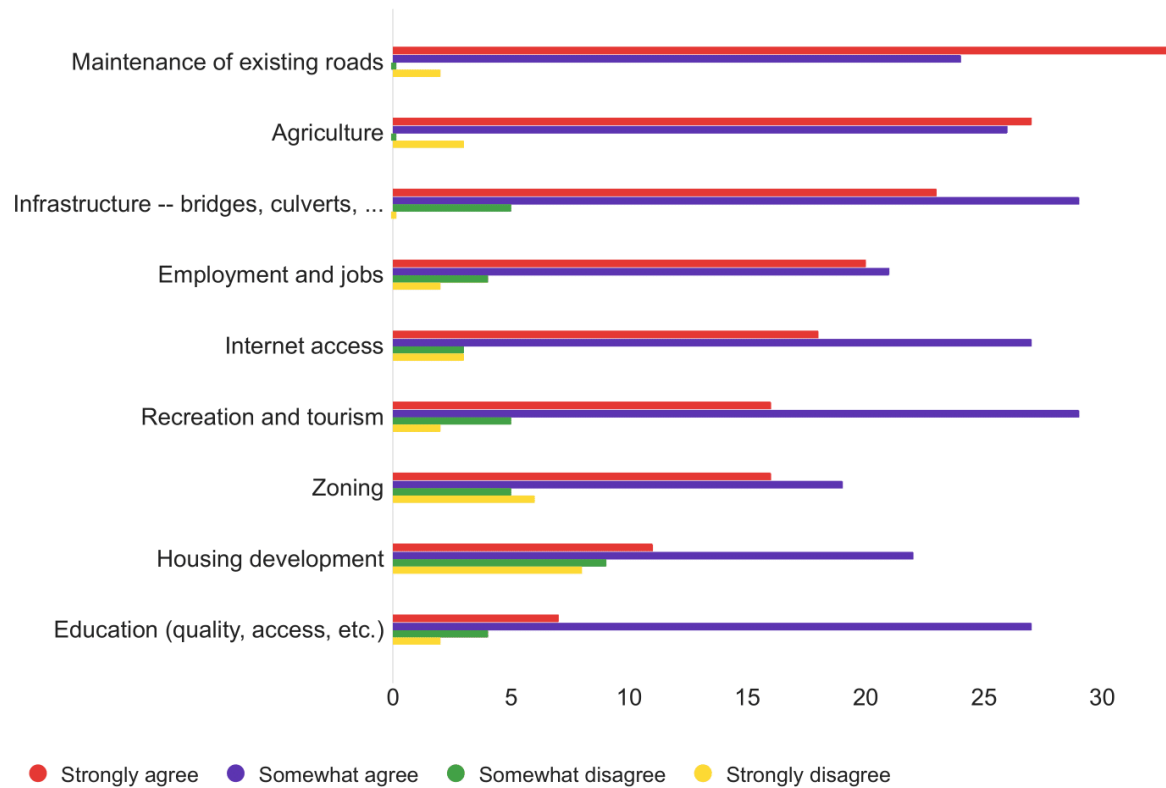
Beauty of the Landscape

goodroads

i am confused about the phrasing of this question...are there what I would LIKE to see, or what I believe are already present?

Fiber Optic along Hwy 27

What issues do you think need to be addressed in the near future?



Other – please specify - Text

Water quality, land use that protects ground and surface water quality, land use that protects infrastructure

create zoning ordinances which maintain rural character

Ag. Plastic Recycling

Natural Resource Stewardship and Conservation

Environmental conservation

none

industry

Please expand on ideas or concerns from above choices.

I'm concerned about the availability of housing for low to moderate income residents. We've had a lot of millionaires buying up land at high prices, flipping houses at double their worth, and creating an increase in absentee landowners which doesn't always ensure a sense of community in your neighborhood when they're absent most of the year. It's also getting harder to have local medical care, shopping, and services.

Utica Township, due to the DAWS well water quality study and testing by the Tainter Creek Watershed Council is already showing signs of drinking water quality problems - I think our town should do everything possible to protect and enhance this item of natural capital. I also think, given the kinds of infrastructure damage seen in the Tainter Creek Watershed in 2007, 2008 and 2016, that everything possible that we can do to encourage conservation land use that increases water infiltration and reduces stormwater runoff should be done to protect our infrastructure. I think our town should encourage Crawford County to participate in the DAWS water quality study with Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey, to demand bedrock geology maps more up to date than 1870 from the same. I also think we need to encourage the county to develop the same types of data about our crossings and culverts that Monroe County has done to aid the town in securing resources to make our crossings more resilient, so that they are less vulnerable to flooding events. I think maintaining our zoning to ensure we don't experience a proliferation of small parcels, with lots of little cabins, driveways, sheds, etc. will help to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces in the town which can contribute to stormwater runoff and contribute to threats to our infrastructure. Also, with lots of little parcels, we run the risk of more problems with non-regular septic systems, which could contribute to drinking and surface water quality problems. I think we also need to establish clear expectations with respect to the spreading of manure from animal livestock, and do it proactively, before there is a large scale problem - I'm all for manure, but opposed to the dumping of excess quantities of it as industrial waste rather than appropriately as a valuable agricultural input. I would like to see the town call on the county - or the region - to initiate an agricultural and municipal composting system to reduce the amount of methane-producing organic waste in our garbage stream, and to convert manure and municipal organic waste into a valuable agricultural input that is locally-produced, and with less climate impacts than either commercial fertilizers or liquid slurry industrial waste.

No subdivisions allowed in the future

Keeping the Township rural and pristine is of importance. The natural beauty of the area needs to be maintained. This area is unique to the whole Midwest. We must work to keep it that way.

While I believe land should be protected for agriculture some flexibility could be given to landowners for family development, housing, etc. Not multi family or commercial development.

I would like to see more support for education in the area and addressing social issues prevalent in the area.

small locally owned business opportunities

use whatever means we have to prevent large scale industrial ag from coming into Utica

Zoning for large agriculture enterprises, not family farms

Some internet access and maintenance of existing state roads has been done, but there is a need for more throughout the township.

We need to make sure that land is not being parceled off into smaller sections than 35 acres for homes. We do not need Utica to look like Freeman township or Seneca township. One home/35 acres unless it is for a resident to take care of a family member. (not a new resident)

Many of the above like education and employment are available in neighboring townships, villages, and cities. They are important but just not offered in Utica and that is fine. Internet is fantastic here. The township does a good job with roads. Status quo and continuing with the way things are is fine with me. The biggest issue I can think of is Ag. Plastic recycling. What can we do with all of this plastic.

More opportunities for young people trying to find jobs, and grants for business start-ups.

All waterways are dead with the exception of transplanted trout. Never seen it this bad. Either poor management by the DNR and/or chemical/biological waste runoff from farms/agriculture.

If it ain't broke don't fix it, prioritizing production ag over hunting ought to be a high priority: those who only hunt here are not invested in the community.

I am very concerned about INDUSTRY that calls itself AGRICULTURE but is not really farming or stewarding the land. To my mind preserving this area as agricultural and farmland means protecting it from INDUSTRIAL "farming" such as large-scale CAFOs. Also frac-sand mining. I would like to see the farms and businesses in Utica remain "human-scale" and locally owned owner-occupied.

I think property maintenance should be enforced more. Too many abandoned properties. Garbage on property cleaned up. Campers etc

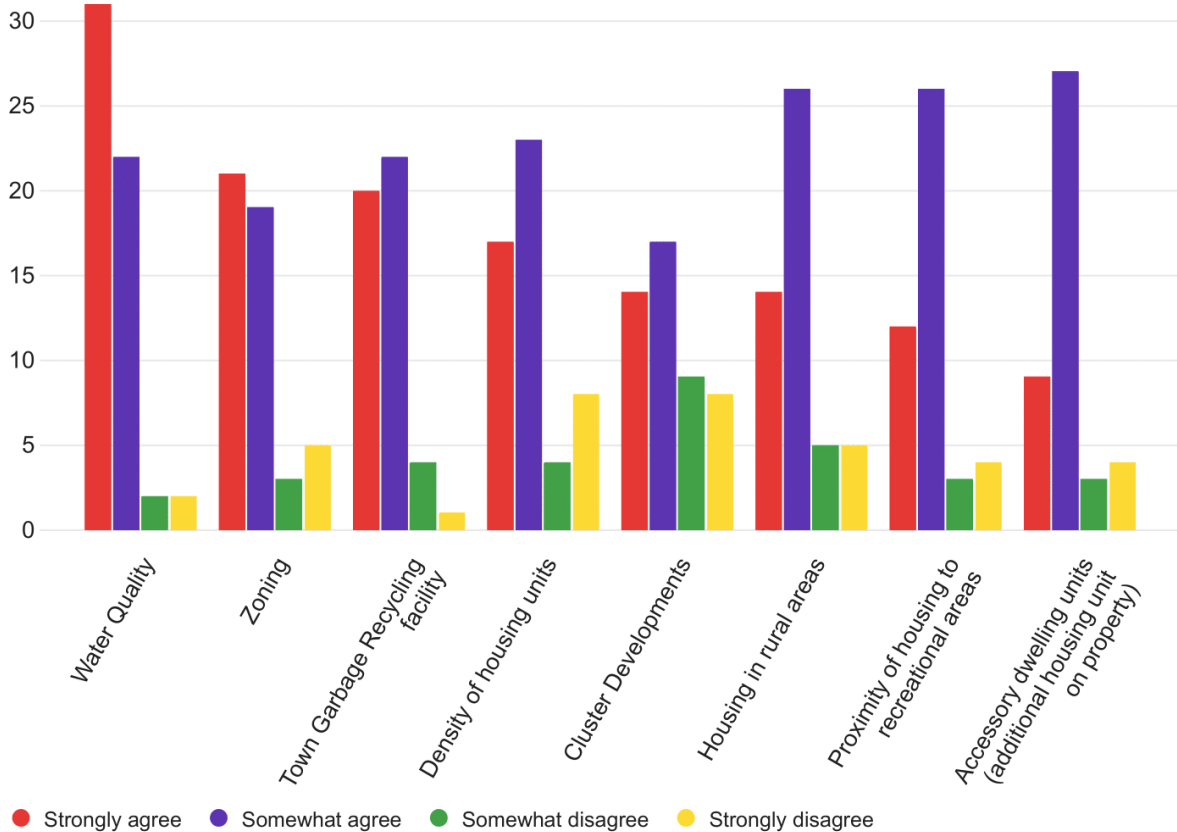
Other communities in Wisconsin are fighting factory farms specifically hog operations. Utica should be proactive in preventing these from being established and causing air and water pollution and lowering property values. Also increase fiber optic internet and place a prohibition on any more cell towers.

affordable housing

Don't lower zoning restrictions(i.e. acreage size) for new property owner' development. Don't be like town of Clayton zoning, which allows for smaller acreage to build a new residence.



What issues regarding housing do you think the town government should address...



Other – please specify - Text

I'm starting to see clusters of RVs near waterways, permanently. Is this legal?

The main thing is to maintain or improve our ratio of impervious surfaces to total acres of land, and to reduce the total number of septic systems, especially non-regular septic systems often associated with recreational cabins that are not primary residences.

preventing a proliferation of "shouses"

none

the above terms need to be defined...I don't completely understand what is meant by them

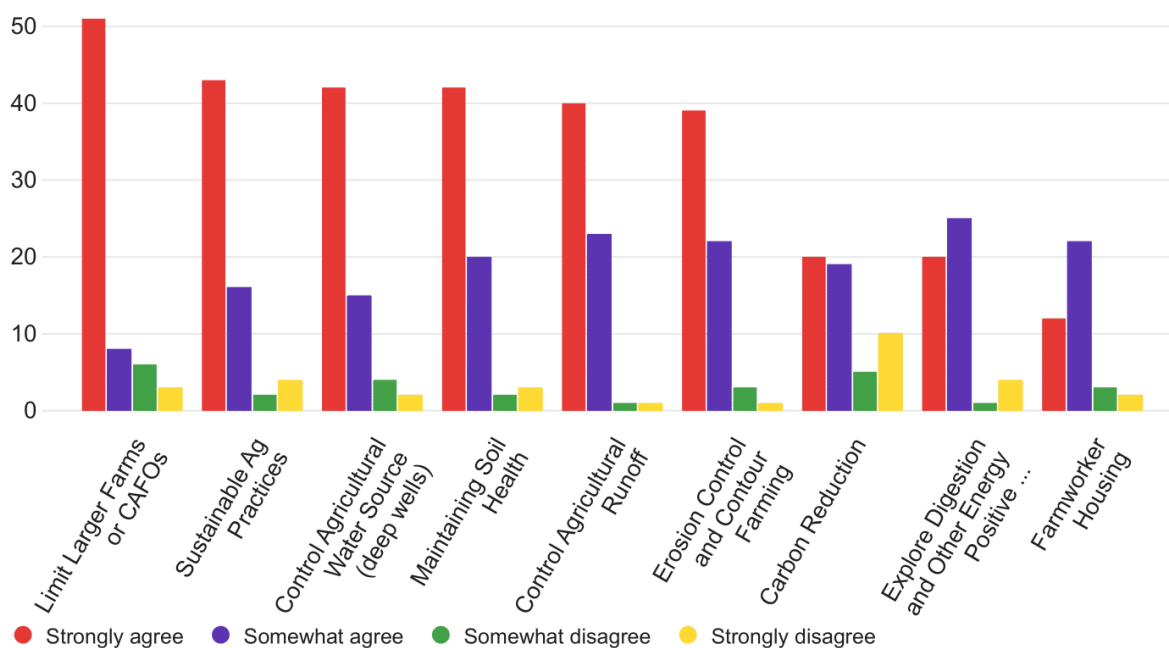
Don't want more housing

People cannot afford high rents like the housing in Gays Mills.

Are you aware that Town of Utica's Zoning Ordinances allow residents to enroll in the Farmland Preservation Program?



What issues regarding agriculture and rural land use do you think the town support...



Other – please specify - Text

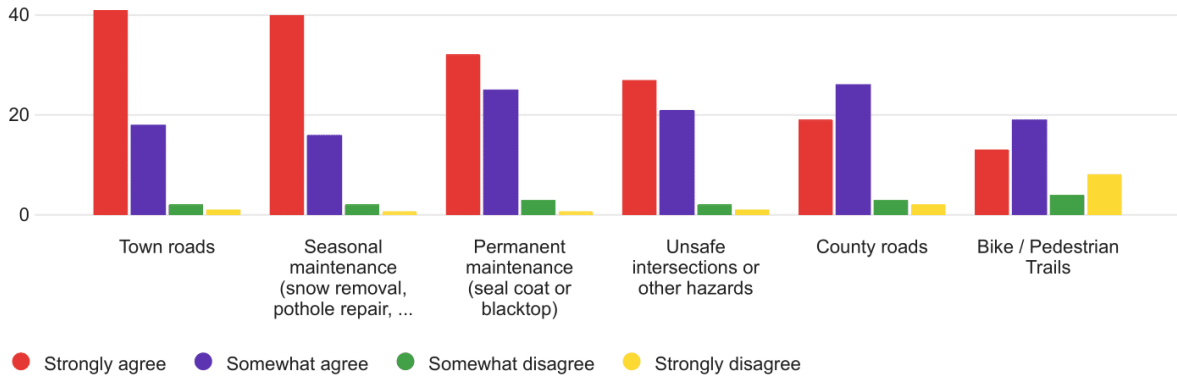
Digesters aren't the answer - we need to move forward with composting.

These are all things the DNR and the ASCS office are already doing. Most farmers need no more over site. We also do not need Utica to do a zoning like Freeman did with the Farm land Preservation. This will hurt the value of our property in the long run....

none

weeds

What issues relating to roads and trails do you think the town government should address...



Other – please specify - Text

The intersection of Pine Knob Road and Sherry Ridge Road is very dangerous, saved only due to relatively low traffic volumes. However, there is still a lot of truck traffic, using it as a short cut to Viroqua. I think something should be done with signs to warn people that the intersection is there - people drive too fast on Pine Knob Road. Also, I really worry about the ditch side integrity of Pine Knob Road on the stretch at the bottom of the hill from Turben Ridge to about the Lohmillers - there are a couple of spots where the erosion is right up to the edge of the road.

none

again - phrasing of this question is unclear...are you asking if I think these need to be addressed NOW or if I think they should address them in general?

Please expand on any concerns or issues from above. (Roads needing attention or dangerous intersections for example)

With the cutback in mowing, it would be nice to at least have intersections clear. High grass blocks the intersection at CTH B & C in Star Valley, for example.

Many roads and intersections were built many years ago. Newer vehicles and large trucks are traveling at higher speeds and take up more area of the roadways. Simple adjustments could make our roads safer.

current road maintenance is adequate, if somewhat lacking in some details
focus should be on getting the "most bang for our buck"

development of bike trails would help with tourism dollars into the area for example. also would like to see the township be more conscious about spreading of invasive weeds by roadside mowing.

I think our patrolmen do an excellent job of town road maintenace

We have some back roads which need attention.

Some roads could be switched from STOP to YEILD. County B and Jones Rd is one example.

The intersection of Hwy 27 and Boma Ridge in Fairview is a dangerous place to get on the hwy.

Establish a more strategic approach to UTV trails/access, i.e. designated trails vs. broad access to most roads or continued broad access but with different trails open on different days/times to sustain the recreational opportunity while also limiting landowner disturbance, etc.

Pleas don't encourage biking on the town and county roads. Sharp curves, hills, no shoulders. Have had some close calls that could have ended in tragedy

The roadpartrolmen are out working when they do not need to be on the weekends and for things that can wait until the work week starts. There is no rason to be our cutting trees or salting and sanding when it is not necessary.

Many county and town roads are in poor shape and need maintenance or should be resurfaced entirely. The Township should look into paving all gravel roads which would mitigate future maintenance costs in my opinion. The intersection of Highway 27 and County B is dangerous at both locations. I'm surprised a fatal accident has not happened there yet.

no coment

I've been pleased with the road upkeep, nice work!

Signage for Fairview... We have more kids and pets in the neighborhood now and the 40mph signs don't seem to affect many people continuing to cruise through 60+mph. A lower speed limit, radar "your speed" sign, or flashing yellow light sign warning of children and/or the lower speed limit would be nice.

I have seen hiking trails listed on County Maps that really don't amount to anything. Utica could work to improve those sites already designated for public access: Parking, toilets, signage for trail.

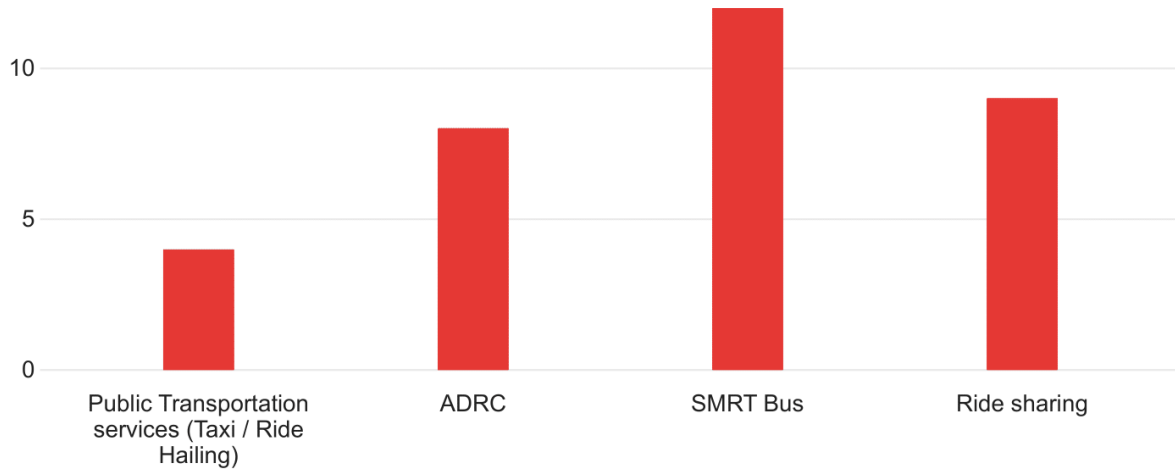
Sealcoating gravel roads.

Would have been nice to have a wider shoulder for Amish/bike/pedestrian traffic while repaving Hwy 27.

widen hwy 27 from mt sterling to county line.

Most roads that I drive that are in need of help are the states problem.

Q18 - What public transportation issues do you think the town government should focus on? - Selected Choice



Other – please specify - Text

I'd like to see resources developed for bicycling safely - right now, it's pretty scary because people don't expect bicyclists - dogs are also an issue.

none

elderly transpotation

encouraging public transportation is good, we need to drive less. I am not sure how to effectively accomodate this need tho in a low density population area such as this.

Combination of ARDC and Smrt bus

Public transport sounds great but I do not know how realistic it is in our township.

None.

I don't know enough about these options to have an opinion, but some sort of public transport IS needed, thank you!

none of the above

We don't need public transit.

How do you rate the following services and facilities in the Town of Utica?

Field	Mean	Responses
Internet access	74.87	63
Snow removal	73.01	67
Town Hall building	72.17	63
Fire rescue	69.27	63
Town government	67.94	64
Ambulance	65.68	63
Road maintenance	65.51	68
Waste management	57.89	64
Cell service	57.18	61
Stormwater management	55.34	53

What issues relating to natural resources should be addressed by the town...

Field	Mean	Responses
Preservation and Protection of Agricultural lands	79.65	63
Protection of wetlands	77.10	60
Protection of lakes, rivers, and waterways	75.13	62
Protection of forests	73.24	63
Protection and maintenance of cultural and historic landmarks	71.20	61
Wildlife and game	68.71	59
Public land and conservancies	66.26	57

What topics regarding renewable energy and the environment do you feel the Town should support...

Field	Mean	Responses
Agriculture pollution prevention specifically affecting water quality	77.85	66
Water use	70.75	48
Carbon emissions	64.14	43
Climate change	63.24	46
Wind and solar energy	62.04	55
Distribution (ex: power lines)	60.72	50

What "Big Idea" do you believe would benefit the community of Utica?

What "Big Idea" do you believe would benefit the community of Utica?

I think we've seen some dramatic changes since the last plan in terms of increased land prices, changes in climate and land use, and decreases in housing availability, services, and jobs. We recently had a medical emergency where no ambulance would come to our rural home from Gays or Soldiers Grove. It makes life harder as you grow older and less services are available. We need to plan for all residents and it becomes more difficult with more wealthy absentee landowners not participating in community building. I would love to stay in this beautiful town but it's getting harder and harder to find the basic services I need to live here and prosper. I think Utica has been a leader and proactive with planning...let's try to address some of these issues.

COMPOSTING - I'd like to see a county or regional composting cooperative to remove organic waste from municipal waste streams, and prevent use of valuable manure from animal livestock as simply excess industrial waste to be disposed of. ORDINANCE to set forth operational requirements for the spreading of liquid slurry manure from large animal agriculture -key is written spreading agreements, and prohibition of risky spreading methodologies like drag line hoses - consider all options to make Utica Township less attractive for development of CAFOs. INVENTORY of crossings to aid the town in strategic enhancement of our infrastructure, including maximum financing for enhancements - also urge the county to explore a PROTECT grant like Monroe County recently secured, which can pair conservation land use and infrastructure resilience. DEMAND our county participate in the DAWS well water quality study, and for updated bedrock geology maps from WGNHS.

Making more bike and recreational trails

Keep it Clean, and Keep it Rural

renewable industry (i.e. forestry products production)

Regulation of conventional agriculture chemicals and practices.

free transportation for disabled or elderly residents. something to curb the use of meth

Promote outdoor tourism through more water recreation opportunities (public pool as well as kayaking), bike paths/ routes, small, locally-owned places to eat, and maybe Dark Sky designation.

keeping the small family farm going; exclude CAFO's....

Create an artist colony & elderly community. The wealthy are going to come and buy up all the land. Keep out ATVs and rich people toys. Preserve land for those who have grown up here.

prevent the expansion of CAFO's in Utica

Development of more hiking and biking trails.

Rigorous controls or protection of groundwater for now and all future generations.

Make sure it does not get split into small parcels. No Zoning of farmland preservation for the township.

Stay out of my business and mind your own.

I overall like Utica township the way it is. I think we should have zoning in place so the community can have a voice and legal way for determining how we grow. I think there also needs to be a clearer way for monitoring the division of properties (deed restrictions?) into the future, so that people do not skirt zoning restrictions in the future. Utica is a beautiful township and I would like it to stay that way.

Grant money for small businesses to help the small villages stay on the map!

Some online presence for the township where residents/landowners can access township information, resources, maybe results of this survey(?), maybe what charitable organizations are active in the Utica region (in service of some of the township goals) so that residents know where they can direct possible volunteer efforts for effective local benefit, etc., etc. There is/was a website posted on the town building but it doesn't appear to be current. For a good and coincidental example ... <https://townofuticawi.gov/> ... which is actually in Winnebago County and happens to be the first link that pops up when searching on Utica Township.

The town hall is nice, but why would people want to use it when the dump area is right there. We would use it several times if it weren't for that reason. Get everyone together to do a roadway clean up, as even the side roads have lots of trash

Keeping farm runoff contaminants out of our groundwater. NO CAFOs

Lower minimum acres for residential and/or recreational use housing.

