

TOWN OF ELDERON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2007

Town of Elderon Town Board

Marathon County Conservation, Planning & Zoning
Department

URS, Inc.
MSA

Town of Elderon Conditions and Issues

October 2005

Town of Elderon Conditions and Issues

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List of Acronyms

303 (d) list—waters designated as “impaired” under section 303 (d) of the U.S. Clean Water Act.

AADT—Annual Average Daily Traffic

AHI—Architecture & History Inventory (a database of the Wisconsin Historical Society).

ATC—American Transmission Company

BMPs—Best Management Practices

CCR&R—Child Care Resource and Referral Network

CDBG—Community Development Block Grant

CES—Cropland Evaluation System (Marathon County)

Comm 83—Chapter 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce, setting standards for regulation of private sewage systems.

CRP—Conservation Reserve Program

CTH—County Trunk Highway

CWA—Central Wisconsin Airport

DCPZ—Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (Marathon County)

DWD—Department of Workforce Development

EMS—Emergency Medical Services

ERW—Exceptional Resource Waters, a designation by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

FCL—Forest Crop Law

FEMA—Federal Emergency Management Agency

FIRM—Flood Insurance Rate Maps

HOME—Home Investment Partnerships Program

HUD—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

LHOG—Local Housing Organization Grant

LOS—Level of Service (related to amount of traffic and congestion on a roadway, measure from Level A, no congestion and freely moving traffic, to Level F, traffic gridlock).

LWRMP—Land and Water Resource Management Plan (Marathon County)

MFL—Managed Forest Law

MPO—Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

NCHC—North Central Health Care

NCWRPC—North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

NHI—Natural Heritage Inventory

NRHP—National Register of Historic Places

NTC—Northcentral Technical College

NWTC—Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

ORW—Outstanding Resource Waters, a designation under the U.S. Clean Water Act.

PASER—Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating

PMP—Pavement Management Plan

SHPO—State Historic Preservation Office

STF Data—Summary Tape File, referring to data files of the 2000 U.S. Census.

STH—State Trunk Highway

TIP—Transportation Improvement Program (Marathon County)

USDA—United States Department of Agriculture

UW-MC—University of Wisconsin—Marathon County

WDA—Wisconsin Department of Agriculture

WDNR—Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

WDOA—Wisconsin Department of Administration

WDOT—Wisconsin Department of Transportation

WHEDA—Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority

WISLR—Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads

1. Introduction and Summary

The Town of Elderon's *Conditions and Issues Report* documents the current conditions in the community and identifies primary issues or concerns that the Town may want to address in the future. This report includes information about Elderon in the areas of demographics, natural resources, land use, transportation, utilities, housing, cultural resources, community facilities, parks, economic development, and intergovernmental cooperation. The report provides a foundation for development of the final plan, which will outline policies and actions that the Town can take to address identified issues and guide future growth in Elderon. Some key findings in this report include:

- The Town of Elderon is located at the east end of Marathon County, south of the fast-growing STH 29 corridor. The Town has experienced modest population growth over the last three decades, with an increase of 61 persons, or 12 percent.
- Elderon has numerous important natural resources worthy of preservation. They include many rare natural forest, wetland and lake communities, and several lakes that may require regulation to preserve their aesthetic and environmental quality. The Town has both Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) in Spranger Creek and the South Branch of the Embarrass River and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) in Comet Creek.
- Elderon still retains a higher level of agricultural uses than some of the surrounding Towns. However, more land is

transitioning out of agriculture and with the significant amount of woodland, is being purchased for residential or recreational uses.

- Elderon residents may consider managing anticipated new development and trying to preserve the rural character of the Town. Elderon has County zoning but may want to examine minimum lot sizes or other measures to ensure that growth is well managed.
- Elderon residents have raised concerns about traffic safety at the intersection of STH 49 and STH 29. The Town should pursue traffic safety issues along STH 29 with Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT).
- Most housing in Elderon is single family and will likely remain that way.
- Elderon has adequate park and recreation facilities because of three parks in the Village of Elderon as well as the Elderon Forest Unit.
- Given the construction of the new hospital along STH 29 in Weston, anticipated residential development pressure, and the CTH Y reconstruction, there may be a need for the Towns and Villages in the Eastern sub-area of the County to undertake a corridor study. The study would help the various communities to develop a common vision for the areas along STH 29 and better plan for land use and access that will be beneficial to all the communities.

2. Demographics

This analysis is intended to describe the existing demographics of the Town of Elderon and identify the major demographic trends impacting Elderon over the next few decades. Both Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin are also listed for comparison.

Population and Households

Historical Trends

As shown in Table 2-1, the Town of Elderon has experienced population increases and decline over the past three decades. Population grew through the 1980s and 1990s, only to decline over the past decade by 6 percent. Over the period 1970 to 2000, however, the Town achieved modest population growth, growing by 61 persons, or 12 percent. Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin both grew by over 20 percent over the same time period. Household growth over the past decade was higher than for either the County or State. The average household size declined since 1990, and is similar to that of the County or State.

Table 2-1: Demographic Change, 1970-2000

	1970	1980	1990	2000	% change 1970 to 2000	% change 1990 to 2000
Total Population						
Elderon	506	628	605	567	+12%	-6%
County	97,457	111,270	115,400	125,834	+29%	+9%
State	4,417,821	4,705,767	4,891,769	5,363,675	+21%	+10%
Total Households						
Elderon	176	241	192	224	+27%	+17%
County	29,771	37,865	41,534	47,402	+59%	+14%
State	1,328,804	1,652,261	1,822,118	2,084,544	+57%	+14%
Average Household Size						
Elderon	2.88	2.61	3.15	2.53	-12%	-20%
County	3.27	2.90	2.75	2.60	-20%	-5%
State	3.22	2.35	2.68	2.50	-22%	-7%

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration

Table 2-2 describes the percentage of population in various age groups. The Town of Elderon age groups were relatively proportional to those of the County and State. The Town had slightly higher percentages in the age groups from age 35 through 84, thus resulting in the Town's higher median age of 40.5, as compared to 36.3 and 36.0 for the County and State, respectively.

Table 2-2: Population by Age Group, 2000

Age Group	Percent of Population		
	Elderon	County	State
Under 5 years	5.1	6.4	6.4
5 to 9 years	6.0	7.5	7.1
10 to 14 years	7.4	8.0	7.5
15 to 19 years	7.6	7.7	7.6
20 to 24 years	3.0	5.4	6.7
25 to 34 years	11.6	13.0	13.2
35 to 44 years	17.6	16.5	16.3
45 to 54 years	17.3	13.9	13.7
55 to 59 years	5.5	4.8	4.7
60 to 64 years	5.6	3.8	3.8
65 to 74 years	7.8	6.4	6.6
75 to 84 years	4.8	4.8	4.7
85 years and over	0.7	1.7	1.8
Median Age	40.5	36.3	36.0

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, 2000

Population Forecasts

Table 2-3 indicates population projections for the Town of Elderon and for Marathon County. These projections were completed by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) (2003). Projections were based on the population from the 2000 Census, and projected in five-year increments until 2030. The percentage change in population growth from 1980 to 2000 was used as the basis for future growth. Table 2-3 uses the moderate growth rate. Estimates were completed for low growth (-5%), and high growth (+5%) as well. The moderate growth percent change from 2000 to 2030 for the Town of Elderon is 13.9 percent, slightly higher than the projected State change of 13.3 percent.

Table 2-3: Population Projections – 2000-2030

	Total Population by Year						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Elderon	567	580	593	606	620	633	646
County	125,834	128,632	131,430	134,217	137,022	139,820	142,618

Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 6/03

Table 2-3b shows population projections completed by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA), Demographic Services Center. The WDOA population projections are recognized as Wisconsin’s official population projections in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 16.96. These projections are based on the same historical time period as those developed by NCWRPC, however more recent years carry a greater weight in the WDOA’s projected populations. Additionally, the WDOA projections are based on the historical population trends of individual communities, whereas the NCWRPC projections are based on trends in the planning sub-areas.

The NCWRPC projections provide a baseline to determine trends in the sub-area. They are useful in identifying future population beyond the borders of individual communities. The WDOA projections are generally more useful at the local municipality level. The WDOA projections in Table 2-3b show a declining population in Elderon compared to the NCWRPC projected growth of 14 percent; the WDOA projects a population of 543 by 2010, a decrease of 4 percent.

Table 2-3b: Population Projections – 2000-2030

	Total Population by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
Elderon	567	556	544	533	522	512	523	-8%
County	125,834	130,242	134,504	138,836	143,308	147,112	150,255	+19%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration
 2030 numbers projected from 2025 DOA estimates based on countywide growth rate rates

Household Forecasts

Like the population projections, household projections were also calculated using both NCWRPC and WDOA population data. Table 2-4 indicates projected households for the Town of Elderon and for Marathon County. These projections are based on the population projections shown in Table 2-3 divided by the average household size of 2.53 (Table 2-1) in the Town of Elderon in 2000. Elderon shows a 14 percent change, or 31 additional households, compared to 13 percent change for Marathon County.

Table 2-4: Household Projections – 2000-2030

	Total Population by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
Elderon	224	229	234	240	245	250	255	+14%
County	48,585	49,665	50,745	51,821	52,904	53,985	55,065	+13%

Source: Derived from data in Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 6/03

Table 2-4b includes household projections based on population projections completed by the WDOA and assumes an average persons-per-household of 2.53 in Elderon in 2000. Like the population projections, the WDOA household projections show

a decrease of 4 percent by 2010. (Add WDOA projections when available).

Table 2-4b: Household Projections – 2000-2030

	Total Households by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
Elderon	224	223	223	224	222	220	226	-
County	47,702	50,109	52,902	55,589	58,181	60,283	62,035	+30%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration
 2030 numbers projected from 2025 DOA estimates based on countywide growth rate rates

Education and Income Levels

According to 2000 Census data, 81.2 percent of Town of Elderon residents have a high school education or higher. This compares to 83.8 percent for the County, and 85.1 percent for the State. (Table 2-5) In the Town of Elderon, 11.4 percent of residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher. This is lower than the number of persons with a bachelor’s degree or higher in the County and State with 18.3 percent and 22.4 percent respectively.

**Table 2-5: Educational Attainment
(population age 25 and over)**

Educational Attainment	Elderon		County	State
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	37	9.8	8.2	5.4
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	34	9.0	8.0	9.6
High School Graduate	177	46.9	38.0	34.6
Some College, No Degree	57	15.1	18.3	20.6
Associates Degree	29	7.7	9.2	7.5
Bachelor's Degree	32	8.5	12.6	15.3
Graduate or Professional Degree	11	2.9	5.7	7.2
Percent high school graduate or higher		81.2	83.8	85.1
Percent bachelor's degree or higher		11.4	18.3	22.4

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, 2000

Median household income for Town of Elderon residents was \$36,667 in 2000. This is lower than Marathon County with a median of \$45,165, and the State overall at \$43,791. Income distribution among all income levels is approximately proportionate to levels observed County and State-wide.

Table 2-6: Household Income Levels, 2000

Income Level	Elderon		County	State
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than \$10,000	23	10.3	5.9	7.1
\$10,000 - \$14,999	13	5.8	5.4	5.8
\$15,000 - \$24,999	41	18.3	12.3	12.7
\$25,000 - \$34,999	25	11.2	13.1	13.2
\$35,000 - \$49,999	44	19.6	19.4	18.1
\$50,000 - \$74,999	52	23.2	25.2	22.7
\$75,000 - \$99,999	18	8.0	10.5	10.9
\$100,000 - \$149,000	8	3.6	5.4	6.4
\$150,000 - \$199,999	-	-	1.3	1.5
\$200,000 or More	-	-	1.6	1.5
Total Households	224	100.0	100.0	100.0
Median Household Income	\$36,667	-	\$45,165	\$43,791

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, 2000

Employment Characteristics

Table 2-7 illustrates the breakdown, by occupation, of the employed population of the Town of Elderon in 2000. The “employed population” is defined as people living in the Town who are 16 years and older. In 2000, Elderon had an employed population of 304. Most residents were employed in management, professional and related occupations; production, transportation and material moving occupations; or sales and office occupations. Employment projections are included in the Economic Development section.

Table 2-7: Occupation by Sector, 2000

Sector	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	95	31.3
Service occupations	51	16.6
Sales and office occupations	56	18.4
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	9	3.0
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	28	9.2
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	65	21.4
Total Employed*	304	100

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

* "Total Employed" represents employed civilian population 16 years and over

Demographic Trends

- The Town of Elderon has experienced only modest population growth over the past three decades, growing 12 percent while the County and State both grew by over 20 percent.
- Household growth over the past decade was higher than for either the County or State. The average household size is 2.53, similar to that of the County or State.
- Elderon had more people in the age groups from 35 to 84, which contributed to the Town's median age of 40.5, as compared to 36.3 and 36.0 for the County and State.

- 81.2 percent of Elderon residents have a high school education or higher, compared to 83.8 percent for the County, and 85.1 percent for the State.
- In Elderon, 11.4 percent of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, lower than the number of persons with a bachelor's degree or higher in the County (18.3 percent) and the State (22.4 percent).
- Median Household income for Elderon was lower at \$36,667 than either the County or State medians.
- Both population and households in Elderon are expected to grow about 14 percent between 2000 and 2030 (NCWRPC projections).
- In 2000, most residents were employed in management, professional and related occupations; production, transportation and material moving occupations; or sales and office occupations.
- Elderon's changing population — Residents noted that Elderon is attracting both retirees and younger people who are buying housing sites on the various lakes in the Town.

3. Housing

Housing is a significant aspect of any comprehensive planning effort. This section is an inventory and analysis of housing conditions in the Town of Elderon. Housing in the Town is predominantly single family, with almost 90% owner-occupied. About 17 percent of housing units were constructed over the last decade. Median housing values are slightly lower than median values for Marathon County as a whole.

Data contained in this section reflect two methodologies of data collection employed by the U.S. Census. The source of data collected for the first table is from 2000 Census, Summary Tape File (STF)-1 Data, which was collected through a household-by-household census and represents responses from every household within the country. To get more detailed information, the U.S. Census also randomly distributes a long-form questionnaire to 1 in 6 households throughout the nation. Tables utilizing this sample data are identified in the footnote below each table and are labeled “STF-3 Data.” It should be noted that STF-1 and STF-3 data may differ for similar statistics, due to survey limitations, non-response, or other attributes unique to each form of data collection.

Housing Inventory

Housing Type and Tenure

As shown in Table 3-1, the 2000 Census shows the Town of Elderon has 224 occupied housing units. 199 (or 89%) of these units are owner-occupied. The Town has an average household

size of 2.53 persons. 23% of all households are classified as being “1 person households.” Approximately 22% of Town households have a householder 65 years or older.

Table 3-1: Number of Housing Units by Type and Tenure

Area	Town of Elderon	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Total Occupied Housing Units	224	47,702	2,084,544
Owner Occupied Units	199	36,091	1,426,361
Renter Occupied Units	25	11,611	658,183
Average Household Size	2.53	2.6	2.50
% Owner Occupied	88.8	75.7	68.4
% 1 Person Households	23.2	23.6	26.8
% With Householder 65 years or older	21.9	21.7	21.5

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 STF-1 Data

Changes in Housing Stock

Table 3-2 notes changes in the housing stock between 1990 and 2000 according to U.S. Census Data. Total housing units have decreased by 4 while the number of occupied housing units rose by 29. Vacancy decreased from 25% to 12% between decades. The number of owner-occupied housing units increased by 20 or 12%. The census reported increases in the number of single-family units.

Table 3-2: Changes in Housing Stock

	1990	2000	# Change	% Change
Total Housing Units	255	251	-4	-2%
Occupied Housing Units (Households)	191	220	29	15%
Vacancy %	25%	12%	--	--
Owner Occupied Housing Units	169	189	20	12%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	22	31	9	41%
Owner Occupied Housing Units as percent of Total	88%	86%	--	--
Number of Homes for Seasonal/Rec Use	48	23	-25	-52%
Number of Single Family Homes	229	231	2	1%
Detached*	229	231	2	1%
Attached**	0	0	0	--
Number of Duplexes	1	5	4	400%
Multi Family Units 3-9 units	0	5	5	--
Multi Family Units 10+	0	0	0	--

Source: U.S. Census, 1990, 2000 STF-3 Data

* This is a 1-unit structure detached from any other house

**In row houses (sometimes called townhouses), double houses, or houses attached to nonresidential structures, each house is a separate, attached structure if the dividing or common wall goes from ground to roof.

Housing Age

The age of a community’s housing stock typically reflects several important factors including size, offered amenities, and overall maintenance costs. Age of the housing often reflects different regional and national trends in housing development. Housing predating the 1940s, for example, was typically smaller and built on smaller lots. In subsequent decades, both average lot and housing sizes have increased. For example, average dwellings constructed in the 1980s and 1990s are typically much larger than housing built in previous decades.

This can be seen in both the rural and more urban environments of Marathon County. Additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and attached garage space are among the amenities found in newer housing units.

Table 3-3: Age of Community Housing Stock

Total Units	Year Built								
	1999 to March 2000	1995 to 1998	1990 to 1994	1980 to 1989	1970 to 1979	1960 to 1969	1950 to 1959	1940 to 1949	1939 or earlier
251	8	14	19	22	63	10	11	14	90
100%	3%	6%	8%	9%	25%	4%	4%	6%	36%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 STF-3 Data

Table 3-3 shows housing age for the community. In the Town of Elderon, data show that significant portions of the local housing stock was built before 1939 and in the 1970s. Recent housing growth from the 1990s makes up approximately 17% of the total housing stock. That is slightly higher than overall figures for the County. The Census reports that dwellings built in the 1990s make up 13% of the County’s overall housing stock.

Physical Housing Stock

Table 3-4 looks at several select measures of physical condition and compares them to figures for the County and State. The median dwelling size in the Town of Elderon is similar to that of the County and State, when measured by

number of rooms. Approximately 92% of the community’s housing stock is classified as single family. This is significantly higher than the overall figures for the County or State. No Elderon housing units are found in structures with over 10 units. Census data indicate that a small percentage of Town housing units lack complete plumbing and kitchen facilities.

Table 3-4: Physical Housing Stock

Community	Median Rooms	Characteristic (%)			
		1 unit, detached or attached	In buildings with 10 or more units	Lacking complete plumbing facilities	Lacking complete kitchen facilities
Town of Elderon	5.8	92.03%	0.00%	1.99%	0.80%
Marathon County	5.8	76.10%	4.50%	0.90%	0.90%
Wisconsin	5.4	69.30%	9.40%	1.40%	1.50%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 STF-3Data

Housing Values

Median Value

Table 3-5 shows housing value statistics for the community, County and State. Specifically, the column to the right shows the median (or middle value) of select owner-occupied housing units for each specified area. This value includes only single-family houses that are located on less than 10 acres. Additionally, this statistic only considers homes without a business or medical office on the property. Census data indicate that the Town of Elderon has a median housing value below that of the County.

Table 3-5: Median Housing Value

	Median Value (dollars)
Town of Elderon	\$85,400
Marathon County	\$95,800
Wisconsin	\$112,200

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 STF-3 Data

Range of Values

Table 3-6 shows the range of housing values that exist in the community. Percentages for the Town of Elderon are similar to that of the County.

Table 3-6: Range of Housing Values

Number of Houses per Housing Value Category	Town of Elderon	Marathon County
< \$49,999	18	1,459
%	16%	5%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	51	13,405
%	46%	49%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	38	8,220
%	34%	30%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2	2,368
%	2%	9%
\$200,000 or more	2	1,714
%	2%	6%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 STF-3 Data

Housing Affordability

Several factors impact the varied levels of housing affordability in Marathon County. These factors include rent and mortgage payments, maintenance expenses, lot size, and required or desired amenities for the dwelling. Household size and

income are also key factors contributing to what housing options are available and accessible to residents.

Statistically speaking, those spending in excess of 35% of their total household income on housing costs may be facing affordability difficulties. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that rental-housing costs not exceed 30% of the monthly income. HUD also indicates that mortgage lenders are more willing to make loans if the scheduled mortgage payment is less than 29% of the monthly household income. The percentage of households in the Town of Elderon that pay more than 35% of their income on housing costs is similar to that of the County and State among owner-occupied households.

Table 3-7: Housing Affordability

	Owner Occupied			Renter Occupied		
	Median selected monthly owner costs ¹			Median selected monthly renter costs ¹		
	With Mortgage	No Mortgage	% ²	Median Contract Rent	Median Gross Rent	% ²
Town of Elderon	\$790	\$237	11%	\$425	\$490	0%
Marathon County	\$916	\$295	10%	\$423	\$484	20%
Wisconsin	\$1,024	\$333	9%	\$473	\$540	25%

¹In dollars

²Percent paying over 35% of household income on housing

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 STF-3 Data

Additionally, Table 3-7 shows that select Town median owner-occupied costs, both with and without a mortgage, are less than

median figures for Marathon County. Renter costs, however, are approximately equal to those of the County. Technical documentation from the Census states that contract rent is the monthly rent agreed to or contracted for, regardless of any furnishings, utilities, fees, meals, or services that may be included. For vacant units, it is the monthly rent asked for the rental unit at the time of enumeration. Gross rent is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid by or for the renter. (*U.S. Census STF 3 Technical Documentation Guide*)

Special Housing

In Marathon County, housing for seniors and populations with special needs is primarily provided in the urbanized areas in and around Wausau. The Marathon County Aging and Disability Resource Center, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and the Marathon County United Way all maintain a list of these housing options throughout the County. As the number of elderly persons increases in the coming years, there will most likely be a greater need for these types of housing options. This trend will be seen throughout Marathon County, the State of Wisconsin, and the U.S.

Senior Housing

The Eastern area of Marathon County is served by the senior housing Home Sweet Home in the Village of Hatley, as well as four additional facilities in the Village of Birnamwood. This area is also served by facilities and nursing homes in Antigo, Wausau, and nearby Wittenberg. This region, along with the

rest of Marathon County, will most likely need additional senior housing in the coming years, as the senior population continues to increase.

Assistance Programs

There are a variety of State and Federal housing programs geared at addressing housing issues. Grants and low interest loans are available for counties, communities, or individual homeowners. The following housing resources are available to participants as specified by program.

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Small Cities Housing**

- **Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)**
 - Rental Rehabilitation Program
 - Home Owner and Accessibility Rehabilitation Program
 - Home Ownership Program
 - Wisconsin Fresh Start Initiative provides at-risk young people with education, skills, and career direction leading to economic self-sufficiency.

- **Homeless Programs (Wisconsin Department of Administration [WDOA])**
 - HUD Emergency Shelter Grants
 - State Shelter Subsidy Grants
 - Transitional Housing

- **Local Housing Organization Grant (LHOG)**

State grants are available to enable community-based organizations, tribes and housing authorities to increase

their capacity to provide affordable housing opportunities and services.

- **HOME Loans and Home Improvement Loans (Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority [WHEDA])**

- **Housing-Related Consumer Protection Services (Wisconsin Department of Agriculture [WDA])**

The Trade and Consumer Protection Division is responsible for the investigation of unfair and deceptive business practices and handles individual consumer complaints involving landlord/tenant complaints, and home improvement transactions.

Issues

Residents have not identified any housing issues or problems with deteriorated or abandoned properties.

4. Transportation

Background

With three STHs intersecting in the Town of Elderon, many transportation decisions affecting Elderon will be made by Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) and subject to their budgeting and schedule.

Recent Transportation Plans

Transportation planning in Marathon County is coordinated between Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (DCPZ) staff and the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the body designated by the Federal Department of Transportation to be responsible for transportation planning in the metropolitan area. Marathon County provides staff for the Wausau Area MPO. The County also does transportation planning for areas outside the Wausau metropolitan area.

County transportation planning efforts are presented in various plans and studies. Findings and recommendations in these plans should be integrated into local community planning efforts when relevant and appropriate. Recent transportation plans prepared by Marathon County include:

- **State Trunk Highway 29 Corridor Land Use Review (1997)**– This plan was prepared by a multi-departmental team working with communities along the STH 29 corridor in the western part of Marathon County. The primary goal was to identify recommendations to allow local communities to protect STH 29 from impacts related to unplanned growth.
- **Marathon County Functional / Jurisdictional Highway Classification Study (1998)** –This plan identifies and groups classes of roadways that provide similar levels of service. The plan recommended that the unit of government having the greatest basic interest in the roadway’s function would carry out the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the classified roadways.

Road Network

Functional Classification of Roads/Jurisdiction

(WDOT Facilities Development Manual)

A functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. At the upper limit of the system (principal arterials, for example), are those facilities that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel), whereas at the lower limits are those local roads and streets that emphasize access.

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

Principal Arterials serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban areas with a population greater than 5,000 or connect major centers of activity, the highest traffic volumes and the longest trip desires.

Minor Arterials, in conjunction with principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-community continuity and service for trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials.

Collectors provide both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. The collector system distributes trips from arterials through the area to local streets. The collectors also collect traffic from local streets and channel it onto the arterial system.

Local Streets comprise all facilities not on one of the higher systems. They serve primarily to provide direct access to abutting land and access to higher order systems. Local streets offer the lowest level of mobility, and through-traffic movement on this system is usually discouraged.

Jurisdiction - Roads are commonly classified in one of two ways: by ownership or by purpose. Jurisdictional responsibility refers to ownership of a particular road, while

functional classification, as described above, identifies the road by the Level of Service (LOS) it provides.

Jurisdiction refers to governmental ownership, not necessarily responsibility. For example, some State-owned roads are maintained by local jurisdictions. Additionally, the designation of a public road as a “Federal-aid highway” does not alter its ownership or jurisdiction as a State or local road, only that its service value and importance have made that road eligible for Federal-aid construction and rehabilitation funds.¹

Ownership is divided among the Federal, State, and local governments. States own over 20 percent of the national road network. The Federal Government has responsibility for about 5 percent, primarily in national parks, forests, and Indian reservations. Over 75 percent of the road system is locally controlled.

In some cases, local municipalities are responsible for conducting routine maintenance and minor repairs on State and Federal highways within their jurisdictional boundaries. In return, the State generally provides financing to those jurisdictions. However, major repairs and reconstruction are generally still the responsibility of the State Department of Transportation. Roadway jurisdictions (i.e. U.S., State, and County highways) are indicated in Figure 4-1.

¹ U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Conditions and Performance Report.

Major Road Facilities

Following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in the Town of Elderon. Functional classification, jurisdiction, and Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), when available, are summarized for all major roads.

- **STH 29** is an east-west, four-lane divided principal arterial. STH 29 runs through the northeast corner of the Town providing access to the Wausau metropolitan area to the west and Green Bay to the east. East of STH 49, STH 29 had an AADT volume of 7,900 in 1998 and 10,100 in 2001. Southeast of CTH D, STH 29 had an AADT volume of 8,300 in 1998 and 10,200 in 2001.
- **STH 49** is designated as a minor arterial through the Town of Elderon connecting to STH 29. South of STH 29, STH 49 had a 2001 AADT of 2,000.
- **STH 153** is an east-west major collector that forms a portion of the southern boundary of the Town. West of the Village of Elderon, the AADT volume was 480 in 1998 and 570 in 2001.
- **CTH II** is an east-west minor collector that provides a connection between CTH Y and STH 29/STH 49. East of CTH Y, CTH II had an AADT volume of 230 in both 1998 and 2001.
- **Pike Lake Road** is a Town road that is designated as a minor collector. It is unusual that the minor collector designation does not continue to CTH Y. Pike Lake Road

east of Lakeview Drive had an AADT volume of 170 in 1998 and 320 in 2001.

- **CTH D** connects to STH 29 in the northeast corner of the Town and is designated as a minor collector. The AADT near STH 29 was 300 in 1998 and 370 in 2001.
- **Mission Lake Road** contains a small section between Poplar Drive and Crooked Lake Drive that is designated as a minor collector. The section of road had an AADT volume of 40 in 1998 and 210 in 2001. It is unusual that this designation only includes a small section of roadway and the designation does not include sections connecting to higher functionally classified roads.

Road Maintenance

The Town of Elderon has approximately 40 miles of road. All but 4 roads are paved with blacktop. The Town does a yearly survey to check the road condition, and also evaluates safety, and when cutting of brush or trees is required. The Town provides snowplowing service.

Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) – The WDOT requires all incorporated communities to prepare a Pavement Management Plan (PMP) using a pavement rating system for their local roads. These plans were to be submitted for review by December 2001. The data from these plans is intended to provide the foundation for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR), which is a computer resource that will enable communities and the State to begin to assess Wisconsin's local roadway system.

The PASER system, which was designed by the Transportation Information Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the rating system used most by Wisconsin communities. PASER rates road surfaces on a scale of 1 to 10. This scale is broken down as follows:

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

In addition to its use in the new WISLR, the rating system gives communities a detailed assessment of the appropriate maintenance method for each road segment under their jurisdiction. This assessment is then incorporated into the community’s PMP.

Figures 4-2 and 4-3 and Table 4-1 illustrate the WISLR road assessment done in 2004 by surface type and condition rating. As shown, the majority of roads in the Town are paved with asphalt. Roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below “Fair” should be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary. Roads that display a surface rating of “Good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to maintain safe travel conditions. Those roads without data should be examined to ensure safe travel conditions exist along these routes. A majority of the roads in the Town are rated in “Good” or better condition and will require only preventative maintenance.

However, roughly 4 miles of roadways will require some sort of reconstruction.

Table 4-1: Summary of Pavement Conditions

Surface Type Code (miles)						
Unimproved Road	Graded Earth Road	Gravel Road	Wearing Surface	Cold Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Cold Mix Resurfacing with < 7" Base	Cold Mix Resurfacing with > 7" Base
0.08	1.53	3.61	0.76			
Cold Mix Asphalt Base < 7"	Cold Mix Asphalt Base > 7"	Hot Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Hot Mix Resurfacing	Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement	Concrete Pavement	Brick or Block Pavement
10.46	28.86					

Surface Condition Rating - WISLR Data						
No Data	Failed	Very Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
4.57		0.87	3.38	15.92	10.21	10.35

Source: WDOT (WISLR), 8/10/04

Land Use and Transportation

Access Management – Wisconsin was one of the first states to recognize the relationship between highway operations and the use of abutting lands. Under Chapter 233, the WDOT was given the authority to establish rules to review subdivision plats abutting or adjoining State trunk highways or connecting highways. Regulations enacted by WDOT establish the principles of subdivision review. They require new subdivisions to: (1) have internal street systems; (2) limit direct vehicular access to the highways from individual lots;

(3) establish building setbacks; and (4) establish access patterns for remaining unplatted land.

Residents of Elderon have noted a safety issue at the intersection of STH 29 and STH 49. It is difficult for vehicles to make a left turn onto STH 29 because of heavy traffic.

Marathon County issues driveway permits and implements access restrictions on all properties fronting a lettered County road. The *County Trunk Highway Access-Driveway Policy* addresses the requirements regarding culverts, access width, slope, visibility and spacing. The policy is available through the Marathon County Highway Department.

Other Transportation Modes

Pedestrian – There are no public sidewalks in the Town of Elderon.

Bicycle - The *Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for the Non-Urbanized Area of Marathon County, Wisconsin, 1996* identified **recommended** bicycle routes in Marathon County. These recommended routes were based on traffic counts and condition of pavement. Formal action has not occurred to adopt these as **designated** bicycle routes. The only suggested bike route in the Town of Elderon is a one-mile section on Crooked Lake Drive on the southwest boundary of the Town. (Figure 4-4)

Transit – Elderly, needy, and disabled transit service is provided throughout the County through North Central Health Care (NCHC). The services include semi-fixed routes that are

scheduled, and demand services available with a 48-hour notice. Information and services are available by calling 848-4555.

Rail – There are no rail lines serving Elderon.

Airports – The Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) is a joint venture of Marathon and Portage Counties. It is the only airport within Marathon County or neighboring counties that provides scheduled air passenger services. The CWA is located east of Mosinee and accessible via I-39. The terminal has been modernized and highway access reconstructed to be more convenient. Since 1982 more than \$24,000,000 has been spent to keep the airport ready to serve the needs of the region. Service is provided through Mesaba/Northwest, United/United Feeder Service and Skyway/Midwest Express, offering 24 flights per day that connect through Minneapolis, Chicago, Detroit and Milwaukee. There are also nine air freight and express flights daily.

Issues

- **STH 29 Safety Issues**— Residents of Elderon have noted a safety issue at the intersection of STH 29 and STH 49. It is difficult for vehicles to make a left turn onto STH 29 because of heavy traffic. Elderon residents should work with WDOT to address issues along STH 29.
- **STH 29 Corridor Study**— Given the construction of the new hospital, the anticipated residential development pressure, and the CTH Y reconstruction, there may be a need for the Towns and Villages in the Eastern sub-area of

the County to undertake a corridor study. The study would help the various communities to elaborate on a common vision for the areas along STH 29 and better plan for land use and access that will be beneficial to all the communities.

5. Utilities

This section describes the existing conditions and issues relative to utilities available to the Town of Elderon, including sewage disposal, water supply, power supply, and telecommunication facilities and services. It also describes existing conditions with regard to surface water management.

Private Utilities

Most unincorporated areas of Marathon County use private on-site waste disposal systems for sewage disposal and obtain potable water from private wells. The Town of Elderon does not provide public sewer or water service. All development uses private wells and waste disposal systems.

On-Site Waste Disposal Systems

Chapter 15 of the *General Code of Ordinances for Marathon County* requires private waste disposal systems on all premises intended for human habitation or occupancy that are not served by public sewer. The County Code incorporates by reference rules, regulations, and laws in the Wisconsin Statutes and Wisconsin Administrative Code governing private waste disposal systems, including:

- **Comm 83** – This refers to Chapter 83 in the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce. It sets standards for regulation of private sewage systems. This code was updated in 2000 and now allows the use of new concepts and technologies through a system of

individual component approval. Standards for effluent are based on a drinking water standard, although nitrates are generally exempted.

Types of Systems – Under the revised Comm 83 standards, property owners have a wider array of system options than previously available. Septic tanks can be steel, concrete, fiberglass or plastic, but they all must now be equipped with a filter to prevent the movement of solids out into the soil absorption component. In addition, rock in drainfields may now be substituted with specifically engineered foam peanuts bound in mesh or plastic chambers.

On-site waste disposal systems generally fall into four categories:

- **Conventional Systems** – These systems include an absorption field that is buried under the natural ground level. These systems cannot be built in areas where soils do not allow percolation due to high clay content or bedrock where groundwater is too near the surface, or where soils percolate too rapidly and thus pose problems for groundwater contamination.
- **Mound Systems** – These systems include an absorption field that is constructed above ground, creating a “mound.” This type of system is generally used where clay soils, groundwater, rapid permeability or bedrock prevent construction of conventional systems.
- **Mechanical Treatment Components** – These components generally replace or augment the septic tank

component and may include aerobic treatment tanks and/or self-contained artificial media or sand filters to clean the effluent prior to its discharge into the soil absorption component.

- **Holding Tanks** - Holding tanks are considered the system of last resort and are only allowed if other types of septic systems cannot be used. Temporary holding tanks (e.g., less than 2 years) are sometimes allowed in areas where public sewer is approved for installation in the near future.

Permit Requirements – The Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (DCPZ) reviews and issues permits for private waste disposal systems. Soil and site evaluations are required to determine if the proposed system is suitable for the specific property and location before a permit will be issued. If deemed necessary, floodplain and/or wetland delineation may also be required prior to permit issuance. In addition, a maintenance agreement must be submitted prior to permit issuance. All septic tanks installed on or after July 1, 1980, are required to be pumped at least once every three years.

On-Site Waste Disposal Systems – All development in the Town of Elderon uses individual waste disposal systems. Depth to bedrock does not pose a barrier to waste disposal systems and soils are generally suitable for septic tanks. (Figure 5-1 and Figure 5-2)

Water Wells – All development in the Town of Elderon receives water from private wells.

Surface Water Management

In 2001, Marathon County adopted a Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP) in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). The primary intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County and outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources.

The County is particularly concerned about nonpoint sources of pollution, including failing septic systems, urban runoff, and issues often identified with rural areas such as soil erosion, animal waste and pesticides. Nonpoint pollution is best addressed by watershed. Marathon County encompasses portions of 22 watersheds as shown on Figure 5-3. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has ranked these watersheds according to water pollution impacts and designated five as “priority” watersheds to receive special planning and funding through the voluntary, State-funded Priority Watershed Program. There are no impaired watersheds identified for special planning and funding in the Town of Elderon. Preparation of resource management plans for the following watersheds is currently underway:

- Springbrook in the Town of Harrison;
- Upper Yellow River in the Town of Spencer;
- Upper Big Eau Pleine in western Marathon County;
- Lower Big Eau Pleine in the south-central part of the County
- Lower Big Rib River

Electrical and Gas Utilities

The Town of Elderon receives electric power from Alliant Energy. Gas is generally supplied from individual propane tanks.

The American Transmission Company (ATC) is proposing to upgrade its existing power line through the Town of Elderon.

Telecommunication Facilities and Services

- Television/Cable providers—
- Telephone—Wittenberg Telephone Company

Solid Waste Management

The Town of Elderon contracts with a private company for waste management. Fees are paid on an annual basis, per household, by a special assessment. Municipal, commercial and industrial waste is accepted at the Marathon County Landfill in Ringle. User fees collected at the landfill defray the cost of landfill operations.

The Marathon County Solid Waste Management Department is in charge of waste management for non-hazardous solid waste. It consists of the 575-acre landfill, recycling programs, composting, and waste-to-energy. The Department opened a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility in May 1997, where County residents can drop off hazardous waste free of charge.

Recycling

Recycling pick-up is provided by a private contractor.

Issues

No utilities issues have been identified by the Town of Elderon.

6. Community Facilities

This element describes the community facilities and services provided to the Town of Elderon. It describes schools, libraries, public protection services, hospitals and child care services available to residents.

Schools

Primary and Secondary Schools

The Town of Elderon is served by the Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District, which operates three elementary schools and one high school. Residents of the Town of Elderon attend Elderon Elementary (1-5), Wittenberg Middle School (1-8), and Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School (9-12). Enrollment in the district is declining. The kindergarten center in Eland has closed and children will attend kindergartens in each elementary school. Long range planning is considering creation of a separate junior high school. There are no private schools in Elderon. (Figure 6-1)

Table 6-1: Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District

Year	Enrollment PreK-12
1996-1997	1,511
1997-1998	1,505
1998-1999	1,505
1999-2000	1,464
2000-2001	1,449
2001-2002	1,432

Source: State of Wisconsin, Department of Public Instruction

Post-Secondary Educational Facilities

University of Wisconsin – Marathon County (UW-MC) - UW-MC, located in Wausau, offers lower level (freshman/sophomore) college classes, leading to a baccalaureate degree. Associate Degrees are offered in Arts & Sciences, and Bachelor’s Degrees (through collaborative degree programs with UW Oshkosh and UW Stevens Point) offered in Business Administration, General Studies, and Nursing. Enrollment in 2002-2003 was approximately 1,300 students.

Northcentral Technical College (NTC) - NTC, located in Wausau, offers 40 one- and two-year programs and certificates in business, technical, health and industrial fields. Approximately 2,300 full- and part-time students attend classes, although more than 16,000 people take at least one class annually.

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) — NWTC is based in Green Bay and offers classes on three campuses and eight Regional Learning Centers throughout northeast Wisconsin. NWTC provides education and training for a skilled workforce through 67 associate degree and technical diploma programs, offered through various flexible learning options. The West Regional Learning Center of NWTC is located in Shawano.

Libraries

The Town of Elderon is served by the Marathon County Public Library system. The Village of Hatley is working with the

County to plan and construct a new branch library in Hatley in the near future. Residents in the Village of Elderon would like to open a library and have begun talks with the County and Library Board.

The Wausau Headquarters Library, located on First Street in downtown Wausau, completed an expansion to 82,000 square feet in 1995. The new main Wausau Library is open seven days a week and offers over 555,800 volumes, as well as facilities including internet access. A new Rothschild Area Branch Library, recently constructed on Grand Avenue in Rothschild, has 3,240 square feet of space holding over 31,500 volumes.

Public Protection

Police

Law enforcement is provided by the County sheriff. (Figure 6-2)

Fire and Emergency Response

In 1998, Elderon joined with Bevent, Reid, and the Village of Hatley to create the Hatley Area Fire and Ambulance District. The district was expanded from the former Hatley district. (Figure 6-3).

E-911 Dispatch Service - The Marathon County Sheriff's Department Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies in Marathon County. The Communications

Division services 85 user agencies and also provides alert paging support for the Emergency Management Office, District Attorney, and Medical Examiners Office.

The users are served by a microwave linked voted repeater radio system, consisting of a control center at the Sheriff's Department, and nine remote radio tower sites spread throughout the County. The system is also utilized by the Marathon County Highway Department and the Wausau Fire Department to support their radio communications. The 37 base radio transmitters and 479 mobile radios that make up the integrated system are maintained and serviced by the Sheriff Department's radio technician.

Hospitals

The major hospital in Marathon County is Wausau Hospital at 425 Pine Ridge Boulevard in Wausau. Wausau Hospital was created in the 1970s from a merger of St. Mary's Hospital and Memorial Hospital. A new building was completed in 1979 and expansions followed in 1982 and 1992. The 321-bed facility is a multi-specialty regional health center serving a 12-county region in north central Wisconsin. Annual admissions in 2001 totaled 13,631.

Wausau Hospital and its parent corporation, Community Health Care, and other nearby hospitals are part of the Wisconsin Valley Health Network. Hospitals nearby that are part of the network and may serve Marathon County residents include:

- Langlade Memorial Hospital Antigo, WI

Birnamwood General Clinic is part of the Community Health Care network. The Clinic serves local needs and is located at 400 Railroad Street in the Village.

Shawano Medical Center is located at 309 N. Bartlette Street in Shawano. Shawano Medical Center offers an array of services including rehabilitation services, a 24-hour emergency room, and a convenient care clinic. There are 12 active physicians on staff, most affiliated with the Theda Care Physicians Clinics or the Menominee Tribal Clinic. There are also a number of visiting specialists available for consultation. Shawano Medical Center is one of over 50 hospitals in the nation that are affiliated with Planetree, Inc., a non-profit organization founded on patient-centered care.

St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield and St. Michael's Hospital in Stevens Point are both operated by Ministry Health Care. St. Joseph's Hospital is located at 611 Saint Joseph Avenue in Marshfield and offers a full array of services, specialty services and a complete rehabilitation unit. St. Michael's is a fully accredited acute care facility with 181 beds and nearly 200 doctors on staff. It is located at 900 Illinois Avenue in Stevens Point.

Working in conjunction with St. Joseph's Hospital is the Marshfield Clinic. Marshfield Clinic began in 1916 when six physicians decided to join their efforts. The Marshfield Clinic has grown to over 700 physicians with 41 Regional Centers in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. Marshfield Clinic first established satellite locations in 1976. Offices in Marathon County are located in Athens, Colby/Abbotsford, Marathon,

Mosinee, Schofield (Everest Center), Stratford, and Wausau (4 locations). There is a Marshfield Clinic in Wittenberg.

Ministry Health Care announced plans in July 2002 to construct a 104-bed, \$100 million hospital and medical office complex in Weston near the intersection of STH 29 and CTH X. The hospital is planned to open in 2005. (Figure 6-4)

North Central Health Care (NCHC) – In addition to the hospitals and clinics described above, Marathon County is served by NCHC, a public agency, that also serves Langlade and Lincoln counties. The NCHC main campus is located at 2400 Marshall Street in Wausau. Additional offices are located in Antigo (Langlade Health Care Center) and Merrill and Tomahawk (Lincoln Health Care Center). According to their web site, NCHC offers outpatient, day hospital, community support and inpatient services for mental/emotional problems; vocational, life skill training, early intervention, housing and care management services for the developmentally disabled; and assessment, individual and outpatient group counseling, intensive programming, day hospital, referral for residential and inpatient treatment, and education for alcohol and other drug problems. Services for detoxification and for persons suffering from problems with gambling addiction are also offered.

NCHC operates a nursing home (Mount View Care Center) that offers skilled nursing services at the main campus in Wausau. This facility has a licensed capacity of 320 and serves persons requiring either short term or long term skilled nursing care because of complex physical needs, psychiatric and neurological diseases, dementia or behavior problems.

Child Care

The Wisconsin Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Network is a membership organization made up of 17 community-based CCR&R agencies serving the State of Wisconsin.

CCR&R agencies assist parents in selecting quality childcare, help to increase the supply of childcare in areas that may be lacking sufficient care, offer information and technical support to potential child care providers, and give technical assistance and support to existing childcare programs.

Each agency manages a database of existing childcare providers and programs, collects data about childcare rates, provider and teacher salaries, the number of parents and children using their services, the type of care requested and the children's ages.

The community-based CCR&R agencies that provide services to Marathon and adjacent counties are:

Table 6-2: Child Care Referrals

Counties	Agency	Contact Information
Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Taylor	Child Care Connection	http://www.childcareconnectionrr.org/ (800) 848-5229
Shawano	Community Child Care Connection	800-738-8899
Portage	Mid Wisconsin Child Care Resource & Referral	715-342-0788

Issues

The Town of Elderon reported no major concerns regarding community facilities or services.

7. Agriculture/Natural Resources

Because natural resource features do not follow geo-political boundaries, it is important to consider their patterns and inter-relationships on a broader scale. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administered at the County, State or Federal level. Thus, an overview of recent county-wide natural resource planning efforts is described below, followed by a description of local natural resource conditions. Of particular interest are geographic areas of the landscape encompassing valued natural resources features grouped below by resource type, including water, soil and biological resources.

Recent Planning Efforts Related to Natural Resources

In the last decade, several plans were prepared by the County specifically to address protection and management of natural resources. These plans may be used to guide local policy and decision making regarding resource management and protection. In addition to the plans listed below, Marathon County and several local communities have adopted park and outdoor recreation plans that discuss natural resource based recreational facilities and protection strategies. These are described in more detail in the Parks section.

- **Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP)** - In 2001, Marathon County adopted a LWRMP in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). The primary

intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County and outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources. Marathon County encompasses portions of 22 watersheds. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has ranked these watersheds according to water pollution impacts and designated five as “priority” watersheds to receive special planning and funding through the voluntary, State-funded Priority Watershed Program. The County’s Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (DCPZ) works with the WDNR to implement the program. Program funding is used to hire staff to assist in developing management plans for each watershed and to provide cost sharing to landowners for implementation of “best management practices” (BMPs) to achieve the program objectives.

- **Marathon County 2001 Groundwater Protection Guide** – This guide is an extension of the efforts established with adoption of the Marathon County Groundwater Plan in 1988. It is intended to guide local and County officials in setting policy. It also serves as a resource of information about groundwater and other natural resources and recommends strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection.
- **Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 1996-2005** – This plan includes recommendations to guide management of forest land in Marathon County in accordance with the County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department’s mission to manage and protect the County forest on a sustainable basis for

ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future generations. It provides substantial information on existing forest resources as well as information regarding the roles of the various agencies and regulatory framework related to forest management.

Water Resources

Marathon County contains abundant water resources. Many have remained in a fairly pristine state and others need focused efforts to improve water quality. Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) designations are derived from an amendment to the U.S. Clean Water Act, which directed states to identify waters that were largely unaffected by pollution and should remain that way. States were required to develop “anti-degradation” policies to protect these waters from pollution. As a result, wastewater entering an ORW must be as clean as the water in the “outstanding” water body. The anti-degradation policies only apply to point sources of pollution, such as an industrial discharge pipe. However, Wisconsin has other programs in place to control non-point source pollution, such as animal waste and pesticides in farm runoff, urban runoff, and failing septic systems.

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board also wanted to extend WDNR established a second category of waterways to be protected under the anti-degradation policy; these are the ERW. Wastewater entering ERW must meet minimum clean water standards, although higher standards are encouraged where feasible.

ORW in the Town of Elderon include:

- Spranger Creek
- South Branch Embarrass River

ERW include:

- Comet Creek (Towns of Elderon, Franzen, Village of Elderon)

Water resources that have been significantly degraded are identified as “impaired waters.” Four of the 22 watersheds in Marathon County have been identified as “impaired waters” on the “303 (d) list” of the U.S. Clean Water Act. The list identifies waters that do not meet current water quality standards and merit water quality improvement and protection. There are no impaired waters in the Town of Elderon. County impaired waters include:

- Springbrook in the Town of Harrison
- Upper Yellow River in the Town of Spencer
- Upper Big Eau Pleine in western Marathon County; and
- Lower Big Eau Pleine in the south-central part of the County.

Resource management plans for these watersheds, plus the Lower Big Rib River watershed are currently being done as part of the Priority Watershed Program, a State-funded, voluntary program administered by the County. The County’s resource management planning efforts are described in more detail in the *Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan* (2001).

Resources in the Town of Elderon

Streams/Rivers – Spranger Creek and the South Branch of the Embarrass River in northeast Elderon both have ORW. Comet Creek, in the central portion, and also running through the Village of Elderon, has ERW. Most of the Town falls within the watershed of the Middle and South Branches of the Embarrass River. (Figure 7-1 and Figure 7-2)

Lakes —The Town of Elderon has a number of lakes within or on its boundaries. Lakes include Bass Lake, Muddy Lake, Lost Lake, Rice Lake, Pike Lake, Little Lake, and Lilly Lake (in the Village of Elderon). Pike Lake is especially used for fishing, and is supported by a local fish and game club.

Floodplains — Floodplains consist of land likely to be covered by floodwater during the regional (100-year) flood. Floodplain areas are based on information compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The floodplain includes the floodway and the flood fringe.

In the Town of Elderon, the areas within floodplains are located along Comet Creek and along Spranger Creek, both in the eastern half of the Town.

Wetlands – Wetlands in Wisconsin were defined by the State Legislature in 1978 as: *"an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions."*

Programs in three levels of government - local, State and Federal - regulate activities in wetlands. There are dozens of wetland types in Wisconsin, characterized by vegetation, soil type and degree of saturation or water cover. Some of the more prominent wetland types are:

- ***Aquatic Bed*** wetlands contain plants growing entirely on or in a water body no deeper than 6'. Plants may include pondweed, duckweed, lotus and water-lilies.
- ***Marshes*** are characterized by standing water and dominated by cattails, bulrushes, pickerel-weed, lake sedges and/or giant bur-reed.
- ***Sedge or "Wet" Meadows*** wetlands may have saturated soils, rather than standing water, more often than not. Sedges, grasses and reeds are dominant, but look also for blue flag iris, marsh milkweed, sneeze-weed, mint and several species of goldenrod and aster.
- ***Scrub/Shrub*** wetlands include bogs and alder thickets and are characterized by woody shrubs and small trees such as tag alder, bog birch, willow and dogwood.
- ***Forested*** wetlands include bogs and forested floodplain complexes. They are characterized by trees 20 feet or more in height such as tamarack, white cedar, black spruce, elm, black ash, green ash and silver maple.

Wetlands in Elderon are located throughout the Town. The majority are forested wetlands, with major sections in the north central and southwest portions of the Town. Wetlands are

associated with both Spranger and Comet Creeks, and found adjacent to some of the lakes in Elderon. There are also some areas of scrub/shrub wetlands that tend to be smaller, adjacent to the forested wetlands. (Figure 7-3)

Groundwater – Groundwater is located at a shallow to medium depth in the Town of Elderon. Groundwater supplies are generally available in volumes adequate for industrial development, irrigation and domestic uses. Depth to bedrock is not an issue for groundwater access in Elderon. (Figure 7-4 and Figure 7-5).

Soil Resources

Soils Types – There are several soil associations in Elderon. The western half of the Town is largely Kennan-Hatley soils, prominent along the glacial moraine adjacent to the Plover River. There is an area of Mahtomedi-Graycalm-Meehan around Pike Lake. The eastern half of the Town is predominantly Chetek-Rosholt-Oesterle, identified as soil on outwash plains and stream terraces. (Figure 7-6)

Given that the average allowable soil loss rate for Marathon County is 4.4 tons per acre per year, the susceptibility for soil erosion in Elderon is low, with soil loss of 1.0 – 2.0 tons/acre/year.

Prime Farm Soils – Figure 7-7 illustrates soils that have been identified as prime farm soils according to the Marathon County Cropland Evaluation System (CES). This system establishes a basis from which one parcel of land can be compared to another. It rates soils on their ability to produce

food, feed, forage, and fiber crops. It is based upon the knowledge that soil properties affect yields. The system is non-biased, defensible, and can be consistently applied. Additional information on Marathon County CES can be obtained from Marathon County DCPZ.

Prime farm soils in Elderon are most predominant in the eastern half of the Town, particularly along either side of STH 49 and just northeast of the intersection of STH 49 and STH 29. There are several clusters of these soils along Comet Creek and directly in the center of the Town as well.

These class designations refer to the quality of soils for growing crops and are based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifications. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Marathon County for growing all crops. Class 2 soils are also very good agricultural soils, however, they may be prone to wetness and are therefore less desirable than Class 1 soils. It should be noted that not all prime farm soils are used for farming; some have been developed with residential or other uses. The “prime farm soils” designation simply indicates that these soils are good productive farmland.

Steep Slopes – Steep slopes are scattered throughout Elderon. Steep slopes are defined as slopes with gradients over 12 percent. Figure 7-8 illustrates where steep slopes exist and separates them into two categories. Category D includes areas with slopes between 12 and 20 percent. Category E includes areas where slopes are all greater than 15 percent.

Biological Resources

Vegetation – The majority of the Town of Elderon is classified as woodland, according to land cover maps. Marathon County owns approximately 280 acres as County Forest. The next largest land cover category is cropland, with large sections concentrated in the east central section of the Town, and somewhat consistent with areas identified as prime farm soils.

Wildlife Resources and Habitat – Wildlife resources include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that typically live in Marathon County. Common types of wildlife include deer, wild turkeys, bear, badger, wolf, raccoon, squirrels, songbirds, waterfowl and raptors. Wildlife resources are abundant in the many undisturbed sanctuaries, refuges, reserves, and scattered habitats located throughout the County. Numerous other species of migrating birds use habitat in Marathon County for food, shelter, and resting stops during seasonal migration.

There is a significant amount of wildlife habitat in Marathon County. In addition to County parks and forest units, major wildlife habitat areas include: the George W. Mead Wildlife Area, the McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, and Rib Mountain State Park.

Threatened and Endangered Species - Both aquatic and terrestrial endangered, threatened, or special concern species are present within the Town of Elderon. Endangered resources that may be identified at the local level include:

Communities:

- **Northern Dry-Mesic Forest Community** - In this forest community, mature stands are dominated by white and red pines (*Pinus strobus* and *P. resinosa*), sometimes mixed with red oak (*Quercus rubra*) and red maple (*Acer rubrum*). Common understory shrubs are hazelnuts (*Corylus* spp.), blueberries (*Vaccinium angustifolium* and *V. myrtilloides*), wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), partridge-berry (*Mitchella repens*); among the dominant herbs are wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), Canada mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*), and cow-wheat (*Melampyrum lineare*). Stands usually occur on sandy loams, sands or sometimes rocky soils.
- **Alder Thicket Community** - These wetlands are dominated by thick growths of tall shrubs, especially speckled alder (*Alnus incana*). Among the common herbaceous species are Canada bluejoint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), orange jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), several asters (*Aster lanceolatus*, *A. puniceus*, and *A. umbellatus*), boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*), rough bedstraw (*Galium asprellum*), marsh fern (*Thelypteris palustris*), arrow-leaved tearthumb (*Polygonum sagittatum*), and sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*). This type is common and widespread in northern and central Wisconsin, but also occurs in the southern part of the State.
- **Soft Seepage Shallow Lake Community**—This lake community is a shallow, soft bottom lake that acquires its waters from seeps.

- **Northern Sedge Meadow Community** - This open wetland community is dominated by sedges and grasses. There are several common subtypes: Tussock meadows, dominated by tussock sedge (*Carex stricta*) and Canada bluejoint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*); Broad-leaved sedge meadows, dominated by the robust sedges (*Carex lacustris* and/or *C. utriculata*); and Wire-leaved sedge meadows, dominated by such species as woolly sedge (*Carex lasiocarpa*) and few-seeded sedge (*C. oligosperma*). Frequent associates include marsh bluegrass (*Poa palustris*), manna grasses (*Glyceria* spp.), paniced aster (*Aster lanceolatus*), joy-pye-weed (*Eupatorium maculatum*), and the bulrushes (*Scirpus atrovirens* and *S. cyperinus*).
- **Northern Wet Forest Community** - These weakly minerotrophic conifer swamps, located in the North, are dominated by black spruce (*Picea mariana*) and tamarack (*Larix laricina*). Jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) may be a significant canopy component in certain parts of the range of this community complex. Understories are composed mostly of sphagnum (*Sphagnum* spp.) mosses and ericaceous shrubs such as leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), Labrador-tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), and small cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*) and sedges such as (*Carex trisperma* and *C paupercula*). The Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) has split out two entities, identified (but not strictly defined) by the two dominant species (see Black Spruce Swamp and Tamarack Swamp).
- **Open Bog Community** - These non-forested bogs are acidic, low nutrient, northern Wisconsin peatlands

dominated by Sphagnum spp. mosses that occur in deep layers, often with pronounced hummocks and hollows. Also present are a few narrow-leaved sedge species such as (*Carex oligosperma* and *C. pauciflora*), cotton-grasses (*Eriophorum* spp.), and ericaceous shrubs, especially bog laurel (*Kalmia polifolia*), leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), and small cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*). Plant diversity is very low but includes characteristic and distinctive specialists. Trees are absent or achieve very low cover values as this community is closely related to and intergrades with Muskeg. When this community occurs in southern Wisconsin, it is often referred to as a Bog Relict.

- **Spring Pond Community** – These ponds are rare due to being spring fed.
- **Hard Fast Cold Stream Community** - This stream community contains a cold water, fast moving stream with a hard rocky bottom. This stream is well suited to support a trout population so long as it is not too steep.

Fauna:

- **Buck Moth** (*Hemileuca nevadensis*) – The Buck Moth has been determined of Special Concern in Marathon County because occurrences are rare or uncommon.

Issues

- **Development on Lakes**—It appears likely that there will continue to be development pressure on lakes in Elderon, both for residential development and recreational uses. The

Town may want to consider whether any additional regulation is necessary to preserve the aesthetic and environmental quality of the lakes. In addition, the Town may want to work on lake regulation with the Town of Norrie and the Town of Reid, both of which share lakes on the boundaries with Elderon.

- **Preservation of Natural Resources**— Elderon has many rare natural resources of forest, wetland and lake communities that are worthy of preservation and protection from intense development.

8. Cultural Resources

Cultural resources is a broad term that can encompass many aspects of our heritage. Cultural resources may include archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to American Indians or other cultural groups. Cultural resources are those elements around us that signify our heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinctive. Cultural resources include buildings, sites and landscapes that help communities retain their sense of identity in an increasingly homogenized society.

Brief History of the Town of Elderon

The Town of Elderon originally included the Town of Franzen to the south, and began as a center for logging in the 1880s. A branch line of the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western Railroad was built into the area with a depot in the Village of Elderon. The Village thrived in the lumbering years and at that time had a hotel, blacksmith and three general stores in its business district. As potato, corn, grain and dairy farming gradually replaced the logging, a creamery and potato warehouses were built in the Village. Elderon farmers had local branches of the County Holstein Association and the County Guernsey Association in the 1920s. Elderon was known for its Norwegian settlers, but the Town also included residents of Polish, German and Scottish heritage.

Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

There are no properties in the Town of Elderon listed on the NRHP. One property in Elderon has been determined eligible for the NRHP:

Charles Berke House T 27, R 10, Sec. 12

The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains the Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI) that identifies any properties that may have been surveyed in the past; the Inventory does not convey special status and may not be current. The inventory may be reviewed at www.wisconsinhistory.org/ahi/index.html. There are two historic properties in Elderon that have been previously surveyed and included in the AHI.

The Town does not have a local historic preservation commission. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has identified two archaeological sites and one historic cemetery in the Town of Elderon.

Cemeteries, Burial Mounds, Other Burials – Wisconsin Statute 157.70 provides for the protection of all human burial sites, including all marked and unmarked burials and cemeteries. There are currently 133 cemeteries and burial areas identified in Marathon County, and it is likely that other cemeteries and burials may be present. Suspected burial mounds or unmarked burials must be reported to the State Burial Sites Preservation Office. If human remains are uncovered during excavation, all work must cease pending

review of the Burial Sites Preservation Office. All cemeteries and burials in Marathon County should be catalogued under Wis. Stat. 157.70 to provide maximum protection of these sites.

Table 8-1: Known Cemeteries

Cemetery Name	Location	Section
Birchwood/Evergreen Rest	Cherry Drive, north of STH 153	27

Source: www.rootsweb.com/~wimarath/CemLocations.htm

Issues

- **Lack of Current Information** – Although a brief countywide historic properties survey was carried out in 1975-77, there has been no update. Many properties identified at that time may be gone, while other properties not previously surveyed may now be evaluated in a new context. It is necessary for the community to have current information about cultural resources in order to maximize planning and make the best use of historic properties. This is important in Elderon, where few properties have previously been identified.
- **No Recognition Process** – Outside the City of Wausau, there is no process to recognize historic buildings or begin to plan for their protection. Once historic properties are identified, towns and villages do not have an established mechanism for recognizing them or integrating them into ongoing planning processes.
- **Rural Character and Historic Resources** – In Marathon County, residents have expressed a strong desire

to preserve the rural character of the County and raised concerns about increasing ex-urban development and the decline of working farms. An important part of rural character is the rural landscape and the buildings that convey that sense of place. While it is important to address the location and type of new development, there is also a need to preserve some visible reminders of rural character, including working farms. Without preserving some of the existing resources, including farmsteads and farmlands, the very characteristics that attracted residents will increasingly be lost.

- **Protection of Archaeological Sites and Cemeteries** – Cultural resources planning includes identification and protection of archaeological sites and historic cemeteries. The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains a list of reported sites and cemeteries, representing a fraction of sites that are actually present. This information is often overlooked and should be incorporated into the planning process for local communities.

9. Parks

Existing Parks, Trails and Open Space

Local Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Town of Elderon does not own or operate any public parks.

Nearby, however, the Village of Elderon owns and maintains three public parks, South Park, North Park, and McNulty Park. South Park is located along the shore of Lake Lilly, with a nature trail along the west and north sides of the lake. North Park has a popular ball diamond and shelter. (Figure 9-1)

County or State Parks, Forest and Trails

There are no Marathon County parks located in the Town of Elderon, but Mission Lake County Park is nearby in Reid.

Mission Lake County Park—Mission Lake County Park is located in the southeast corner of the Town of Reid, on the border with the Town of Elderon. Mission Lake is a 122-acre park with facilities including three shelters, restrooms, picnic tables, grills, children's play equipment, and drinking fountains. The main features are a sand beach and boat launch, with fishing a popular activity. A planned segment of the Ice Age Trail will also be constructed in the park.

Elderon Forest Unit— Marathon County owns the Elderon Forest Unit located south of Pine Lake Road at Tower Drive.

The forest is 279 acres in size, with the majority of the vegetation oak and northern hardwood, and some pine plantations, aspen, and cedar swamp. The forest is open to recreational uses such as hunting, snowmobiling, hiking, and camping.

Rib Mountain State Park — Rib Mountain State Park is located within the Town of Rib Mountain. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1,924 feet above sea level is one of the highest elevations in the State of Wisconsin. The park surrounds the mountain and has the following facilities: a picnic area with 65 tables, a camping area with 31 developed sites, 3 hiking trails, a nature trail, and a downhill skiing area with 12 runs.

Park System Needs

The Town of Elderon does not anticipate a need to acquire any park land. No other park and recreation issues have been identified.

10. Economic Development

The condition of the local economy directly influences local growth and development, and therefore must be considered when planning for a community's future. Employment patterns and economic trends generally occur on a regional scale. Oftentimes residents of one community work in another. Similarly changes in a major industry can impact jobs and growth far beyond the community where the business is physically located.

It is therefore important to understand a local community's economy in light of its regional context. The following section provides a brief overview of the economy in Marathon County, in terms of key economic sectors and the regional labor force. A more specific description includes Town of Elderon employment trends, major local employers or industries, and where most residents work. Potential economic development opportunities and/or issues regarding the local economy are also identified.

County Economic Environment

Originally, the Marathon County economy was based on forest resources and diversified agriculture. Increased population and infrastructure – railroads, roads and dams for power enabled the area to evolve beyond simple agricultural and logging operations. Resources that once left the area unprocessed were transformed into finished products in the County, providing employment opportunities and adding value in forest products and agricultural processing. A number of related

manufacturing operations grew up in the area, some based on forest products and agricultural products, others supplying the existing industries with fabricated metal products. As these industries progressed, so did industries such as transportation, communications, public utilities, government, trade, finance, insurance and real estate. The County now enjoys a well-diversified economy.

Agricultural Economy

Located in the agricultural area of eastern Marathon County, the economic health and vitality of the Town of Elderon is affected by the economic health of the agricultural economy. However, the agricultural economy is subject to national and international pressures, creating challenges for rural areas seeking to adapt to the changing economic environment and preserve their rural agricultural heritage.

The Marathon County agricultural economy is in a depressed state due to a downturn in prices for agricultural goods such as milk and ginseng. At the same time that prices for farm commodities are low, cash rents for Wisconsin farmland have increased, and the percentage of farm equity associated with real estate values has increased significantly. The average cost for agricultural land being converted to non-farm uses has increased from \$544 per acre in 1990 to nearly \$1,200 per acre in 2000; this compares with the average cost for agricultural land continuing in agricultural use, which has increased from \$612 per acre in 1990 to nearly \$1,000 per acre in 2000. When farms are not profitable and the value of land rises, farmers have a harder time competing for the land base.

Other forces that create an environment of change in the rural area:

- Net farm profits are increasingly a function of Federal United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) support payments.
- The average age of the current agricultural owner/operator is nearly 55; a large number are nearing retirement.
- The low entry rate into agriculture reflects the high capital investment and low profit margins.
- The number of dairy herds decreased by 10 percent (1,565 to 951 farms) in the past 13 years, and the total number of cows decreased from 77,000 in 1990 to 64,000 in 2000, a decrease of 17 percent.
- Dairy production is now more concentrated; the average size of dairy herds increased from 42 cows in 1990 to 62 cows in 2001. Nearly 50 dairies have over 300 animal units (200 cows), and 12 dairies have more than 1,000 animal units (more than 700 cows).
- Local milk production is not sufficient to reliably meet the demand of local dairy processors.
- Crop land and open space are being broken up into smaller fields by rural residences.
- Crop land production is being concentrated into fewer, larger operations.

- Soil erosion is increasing and soil organic matter content is decreasing.
- Environmental regulation of farms by the State and Federal government continues to increase. Agriculture is identified as a major non-point source of water pollution (sediment and nutrients) in the U.S.
- Larger farm equipment damages local roads and farm traffic is increasing.
- Conflicts between various land uses in rural areas are increasing.

** Source: Marathon County Task Force on the Rural Economy, Agricultural Issues in Marathon County, January 10, 2003 and Report of the Marathon County Task Force on the Rural Economy, April 2003.*

Key Economic Sectors

Key sectors of a regional economy can be identified by size, by growth or decline in employment, or by a concentration of the industry in the local area exceeding the national concentration. An industry that shows a higher concentration of employment than the national average is considered a “basic industry” and is identified by a technique called “Location Quotient” analysis. Basic industries are those sectors that export a product or service from the local community into the national or international economy. They are a critical part of the “economic engine” for a region, affecting the growth and health of many dependent sectors such as retail, transportation, construction, and local services.

Table 10-1: Marathon County Top 10 Industry Groups Based on Number of Employees (March 2001)

Industry Group	Employers	Employees	Numeric change	
			1-year	5-year
Health Services	139	4,646	251	-276
Lumber & Wood Products	41	4,438	-30	253
Educational Services	22	3,792	108	243
Eating and Drinking Places	192	3,554	219	335
Fabricated Metal Products	32	3,458	-184	168
Insurance Carriers	24	3,339	-171	*
Miscellaneous Retail	120	3,142	206	1,206
Paper and Allied Products	11	2,649	4	*
Industrial Machinery & Eqmt	37	2,642	41	697
Wholesale Trade – Durable	164	2,521	-89	63

*data suppressed to maintain confidentiality

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, ES-202, December 2001

Local Economic Environment

The population of Marathon County grew from 115,400 in 1990 to 125,834 in 2000, an increase of 10.3% compared to an 8.5% increase in the State and 8.7% in the U.S. The most recent estimates show an annual growth rate of 0.7% in all three jurisdictions. (Wisconsin Department of Administration [WDOA], Demographic Services, 2002) Population growth has been concentrated in the urbanized area surrounding Wausau.

Table 10-2 illustrates population and employment information for the Town of Elderon. In 2000, there were 176 employed

people in the Town of Elderon. Data show that most people in Elderon were self-employed or in farming.

Because self-employment and farm employment are not covered under the State’s unemployment compensation law, totals in that category were estimated by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC), using the Agricultural Census and figures from Wisconsin’s Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

Table 10-2: Population and Employment by Sector, 2000

POPULATION	567
EMPLOYMENT:	
Commercial	8
Manufacturing	--
Service	2
Other	--
Self-Employed/Farm	166
TOTAL	176

Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 6/10/03

Employment Projections

Information on employment in Marathon County is gathered separately for non-farm and farm employment. The DWD collects data on non-farm employment. The DWD estimated non-farm employment in Marathon County to be 49,407 in 1990 and 65,630 in 2000. This represents about a 33 percent increase over ten years. Data on farm employment is collected by the Census of Agriculture and consists of hired farm labor and operators. In 1987, farm employment in Marathon County

was estimated to be 11,643 and in 1997 it was estimated to be 8,298. This represents a decrease of almost 29 percent.

The NCWRPC computed employment projections using a low, moderate and high growth scenario, based on the assumption that the historical growth rates described above would continue through 2030. The moderate-level projections are shown in Table 10-3.

Table 10-3: Employment Projections in 5-Year Increments

	Total Employment by Year						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Elderon	176	171	167	162	157	153	148
County	72,508	75,625	78,742	81,859	84,976	88,093	91,210

Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 6/03

The projections indicate declining employment for the Town of Elderon. By the year 2030, it is estimated that the Town of Elderon will provide employment for 148 workers. This estimate reflects a 16 percent employment decline, and reflects the historical countywide decline in agricultural employment of almost 29 percent between 1987 and 1997.

Table 10-4 shows the percent change in projected employment using the low, moderate and high growth scenario. The low and moderate growth percentages are similar for the Town of Elderon because of the relatively low numbers involved in the decline. Elderon’s projected employment varies from a loss of 17 percent at low growth (146 workers) to a projected high growth rate of 8 percent (190 workers).

Table 10-4: Percent Change in Employment, 2000-2030

	Percent Change in Employment by Growth Rate		
	Low Growth	Moderate Growth	High Growth
Elderon	-17% 146	-16% 148	+8% 190
Marathon County	21%	26%	34%

Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 6/03

Employment Trends

Anecdotal statements indicate how the farming economy in Elderon has changed. Potato farming is still carried on, but not to the extent that it once was. There are a couple of large farms that have employees in the Town. Many residents now work in Wausau, Mosinee or Stevens Point.

Issues

- **Farm Economy**—The changing farm economy will continue to affect Elderon residents as farmland is sold, either for residential development, or to farmers who are adding to existing operations.
- **Potential STH 29 Development**—Although located adjacent to STH 29, Elderon does not anticipate any commercial or industrial development in the next few years, because of a lack of sewer and water facilities. Should development occur in the future, there will be a need for frontage roads and consideration of sewer and water provision.

11. Intergovernmental Cooperation

This analysis presents an inventory of existing mechanisms that the Town of Elderon uses to coordinate with other units of government, including: Marathon County, adjacent towns, the school district, the State of Wisconsin and the Federal government. The purpose of this analysis is to identify the existing cooperative mechanisms and summarize the major challenges and issues regarding intergovernmental cooperation and regional planning, including

- Opportunities to reduce or eliminate duplication of services;
- Incompatible goals, policies and development;
- Mechanisms for conflict resolution;
- Opportunities for joint planning and decision making.

Mechanisms for cooperation and coordination primarily take the form of intergovernmental agreements, leases and contracts, and regulatory authority. These can occur between the Town of Elderon and other local, regional, State or Federal entities. Following is a brief description of the various functional areas and services that require intergovernmental coordination at various levels.

Shared Public Services and Facilities

Law Enforcement— Law enforcement is provided by the County sheriff.

Fire and Emergency Response- In 1998, Elderon joined with Bevent, Reid, and the Village of Hatley to create the Hatley Area Fire and Ambulance District. The district was expanded from the former Hatley district.

Utilities - The Town does not provide sewer or water services; residents have private waste disposal systems and individual wells.

Relationships to Other Governmental Entities

Surrounding Municipalities— The Town of Elderon is bordered by the Town of Norrie to the north, Shawano County to the east, Town of Franzen to the south, and Town of Reid to the west. The Village of Elderon also lies in the southeast corner of the Town. Norrie, Reid, and the Village of Elderon are concurrently preparing comprehensive plans, which will increase opportunities for coordination and cooperation on matters of common interest.

School District- Elderon is in the Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District (Shawano County). There is an elementary school located in the Village of Elderon.

Marathon County- The County provides several services to the Town including: law enforcement through the Sheriff's Department, 911 dispatch service, access permits, maintenance and improvement of County Highways, planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation, private sewage system regulation, and animal waste and manure management. The County also provides oversight on compliance with County soil and water conservation policy for the Farmland Preservation Program.

Regional Agencies- The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) provides planning and mapping assistance.

State and Federal Agencies- The Town has little direct contact with State or Federal agencies. However State agencies regulate certain activities such as access onto State roads, shoreland, floodplain and wetland zoning oversight, navigable waters protection, compliance with water quality standards, farmland preservation tax credits and managed forest tax credit programs.

Cooperative Plans or Agreements

Boundary Agreements/Plans—

- **STH 29 Corridor Study—** Given the construction of the new hospital, the anticipated residential development pressure, and the CTH Y reconstruction, there may be a need for the Towns and Villages in the Eastern sub-area of the County to undertake a corridor study. The study would help the various communities to develop a common vision for the areas along STH 29 and better plan for land use and access that will be beneficial to all the communities.

Existing or Potential Conflicts

No existing or potential conflicts were identified by the Town of Elderon.

12. Land Use

The Town of Elderon is located in the southeastern corner of Marathon County, bounded by the Town of Reid on the west, the Town of Norrie on the north, Shawano County on the east and the Town of Franzen on the south.

Current Pattern of Land Use

The Town of Elderon is located in the southeastern section of the County, divided topographically from the rest of Marathon County by a glacial moraine. This area, with its rolling hills, lakes and forests, is marked by the various rivers that divide the land as they flow toward the Wisconsin River.

Like the other towns in southeastern Marathon County, Elderon contains both woodlands and croplands. Woodland predominates on the northern, western and southwestern areas of the Town. Approximately 280 acres are owned by Marathon County. Known as the Elderon Forest Unit, the land contains oak and northern hardwood and is best known for timber production, hunting and its snowmobile trails. Another 120 acres in Elderon is owned by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). Other parcels appear to be owned as private recreational land.

Cropland is most evident in the eastern half of Elderon with large areas along STH 49 and STH 29 in the northeast corner. Other crop land is along CTH II and along Cherry Drive in the center of the Town. Prime farm land is concentrated in the eastern half, on either side of STH 49. Approximately 500

acres of land have been placed under Farmland Preservation Contracts.

In terms of development patterns, Elderon retains more large parcels of land than some adjacent towns. There are fewer of the multiple, ten-acre parcels lining County roads in Elderon than in towns to the north and west. Although there are some smaller parcels, the 40-acre parcel is more typical in Elderon. Smaller residential parcels are primarily along Bass Lake, Lost Lake, and Pike Lake. There are also a number of larger acreages (80 acres +) that coincide with the cropland land cover. This appears to indicate that there is still a fair amount of cropland apparently connected to working farms.

The Village of Elderon, located at the intersection of STH 49 and STH 153, is the primary community in the Town of Elderon. Waterways in the Town include the South Branch of the Embarrass River, Spranger Creek and Comet Creek.

Existing Land Use – For purposes of this report, existing land cover was used as a proxy for existing land use. This was done to achieve consistency in describing existing land uses in the various municipalities participating in the Marathon County comprehensive planning effort. Table 12-1 describes the various land use cover categories and Figure 12-1 illustrates the existing land cover. The acreage and percent of land shown on Table 12-1 were determined from aerial photos and are not intended to be accurate to the parcel level or correspond directly to acreages calculated from plat maps.

Table 12-1: Land Use Cover Classification, 2000

Land Cover Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
Single Family Residential	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes	482	2.09
Multi-Family Residential	Multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments	1	0.01
Commercial Services	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	8	0.03
Industrial	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers	0	0
Quarries/Gravel Pits	Mining operations	0	0
Cropland	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland	6,254	27.08
Specialty Crops	Ginseng, orchards, vineyards, nurseries, groves, cranberries, etc.	0	0
Other Agriculture	Fallow, pasture and undetermined agriculture, power lines and towers, water towers, municipal wells	1,126	4.88
Public/Quasi-Public	Schools, churches, cemeteries, town halls, fire departments, National Guard	6	0.02
Recreation	Ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, parks, trails, camp grounds, shooting ranges	9	0.04
Woodlands	Forested land	7,511	32.53
Water	Open waters, lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, reservoirs, wetlands	6,860	29.71
Transportation	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	582	2.52
Barren Land	Unused open land in wooded areas, along streams, along roadsides	253	1.09
Total Land Area		23,092	100%

Source: Marathon County Land Use Cover Database

Current Land Use Plans and Regulations

Land Use Plan – The Town of Elderon does not have a land use plan.

Zoning – The Town of Elderon uses County zoning. The entire Town is zoned agricultural, except for small residential areas near Bass Lake, Lost Lake, and Pike Lake. (Figure 12-2)

Shoreland Zoning - Shoreland, shoreland wetlands, and floodplain regulations are applicable in all geographic areas of the County. Wisconsin law mandates Counties to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the County outside of villages and cities. This ordinance supersedes any Town ordinance, unless a Town ordinance is more restrictive. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the land ward side of a floodplain, whichever distance is greater.

Farmland Preservation Program – The State of Wisconsin has a Farmland Preservation Tax Credit Program. The goals of the program are twofold: to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning and soil conservation practices and to provide property tax relief to farmland owners. Landowners keeping land in agricultural use can claim a credit on their State income tax by obtaining a zoning certificate, if the land is exclusive agriculture zoned (8 towns in Marathon County), or sign a contract with the State. The program requires that a landowner be a Wisconsin resident, own a minimum of 35 or more acres of contiguous land, and produce

gross farm receipts of \$6,000 or more in the last year, or \$18,000 in the last three years. The income requirement can be satisfied by having 35 acres or more enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Landowners must also comply with County soil and water conservation standards. Contracts can range from 10 to 25 years, and remain in effect regardless of change in ownership.

Approximately 500 acres of land in Elderon have been entered into Farmland Preservation Contracts. Concentrations of areas are in the far northwest corner of the Town, and several blocks in the east central portion. (Figure 12-3)

Forest Crop Law (FCL) and Managed Forest Law (MFL)

With a large amount of forest land in the County, forest tax laws have a major effect on land uses. Because the tax laws require 25- to 50-year contracts, they are a good indicator of the amount of land that is effectively kept from development for the near future.

In the State, over 2.6 million acres are enrolled under the FCL and the MFL. Because high taxes had encouraged the cutting of timber for revenue, the laws were developed to encourage better forest management and provide tax relief to the woodland owners. Land set aside under the FCL (which was combined into the MFL in 1986) required at least 40 acres in one quarter-quarter section, set aside under a 25- or 50-year contract, and public access for hunting and fishing activities. Current contracts will continue until their expiration dates. This land is typically shown in plat books to identify locations. Land set aside under the FCL in Marathon County is often owned by forest products companies, although many

individuals also own large enough parcels to participate. There are 119 acres set aside in Elderon under the FCL.

The MFL was enacted in 1985 and requires at least 10 acres of contiguous forest land. Because of the smaller acreage requirement, many individual landowners take advantage of the MFL. Landowners may close to public access up to 80 acres of their forest lands set aside under MFL. The remaining program acres must be open to public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing and cross-country skiing. Landowners must choose a 25- or 50-year contract. The landowner pays an Acreage Share Amount as part of their tax bill in lieu of taxes. Current rates through 2007 are \$0.83 per acre for land open to the public and \$1.95 per acre for closed land.

Table 12-2 indicates land in Elderon currently enrolled in the FCL and/or MFL programs. Land enrolled under FCL has remained the same in recent years, while land open to the public under the MFL has declined greatly. The major change, however, is a large increase in land closed to the public under the MFL, growing to over 1,400 acres in 2002.

Table 12-2: Land in Forest Preservation Programs (in acres), 1998 – 2002

Year	Forest Crop Law (FCL)	Managed Forest Law (MFL) open	Managed Forest Law (MFL) closed
1998	119	101	783.9
2002	119	19.8	1,418.8
Change	0	-81.2	+643.9
% Change	0	-80.4%	+81%

Source: Data compiled by local assessors with Municipal Board of Review

Development Trends

Land Supply – Land potentially available for future development (residential and non-residential) between 2000 and 2030 was estimated by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) based on the land cover categories shown in Table 12-1. Land categorized as barren, crop land, forest land, other agriculture, and specialty crop was considered “available” for future development. Land categorized as already developed, such as residential or commercial, or areas that cannot easily be developed, such as wetlands or waterways, were considered “unavailable” for future development. In the Town of Elderon 15,144 acres are identified as available for future development and 7,949 are considered unavailable. It is noted that some of the land classified as “available” may be in public ownership, as shown in Table 12-3, thus making it essentially “unavailable” for development.

Table 12-3: Public Owned Land (in acres), 1998-2002

Year	County Owned	State Owned	Federal Owned
1998	280	164.6	39
2002	280	163.8	39
Change	0	-0.8	0
% Change	0	-0.5%	0

Source: Data compiled by local assessors with Municipal Board of Review

Land Demand – An estimate of land needed for future residential development was based on projected new dwelling units between 2000 and 2030 derived from WDOA household projections and the average density of dwelling units per acre in the community. The average density was calculated using

the total acres of residential land on the 2000 land use/cover map divided by the number of households according to the 2000 Census. It was assumed that the density would remain constant between 2000 and 2030. Future acres needed for residential development were then estimated by multiplying the projected number of households in 2030 by the average density. In the Town of Elderon, is estimated that 5 acres of land will be needed to accommodate new residential development through 2030.

Many Towns along the STH 29 corridor have experienced rapid growth. Between 1990 and 2002, 70 sanitary permits for residential development were approved in the Town of Elderon. This represents an average of 5.8 new homes constructed each year.

The NCWRPC estimated land needed for non-residential development based on projected changes in local employment and an estimated current average density of 3.32 employees per acre in the Eastern Group planning sub-area. In the Town of Elderon, it is estimated that only 4 acres will be needed to accommodate new non-residential development through 2030. This small acreage reflects the anticipated decline in employment, due primarily to loss of farm employment. Even though employment is estimated to decline, loss of acreage devoted to farming or other non-residential land uses should not occur. Rather, farm acres may remain constant, while the number of farm employees declines.

Land Values – Table 12-4 shows the change in per acre assessed land values in Elderon between 1998 and 2002. It also indicates percent change in acreage and land value for the

Table 12-4: Per Acre Assessed Land Values (in dollars), 1998 – 2002

Year	Residential		Commercial		Manufacturing		Agriculture		Swamp & Waste Land		Forest	
	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only
1998	360	\$2,736	23	\$1,148	0	\$0	7,761	\$360	2,402	\$99	9,506	\$451
2002	421	\$5,627	23	\$2,422	0	\$0	7,293	\$189	2,695	\$610	9,212	\$1,141
Chg.	+61	\$2,891	0	\$1,274	0	\$0	-468	\$-171	+293	\$511	-294	\$690
Percent Change Comparison												
	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)
Town	+16.9	+105.7	0	+111.0	0	0	-6.0	-47.5	+12.2	+516.2	-3.1	+153.0
County	+21.2	+5.6	+38.4	-4.0	-0.5	+34.4	-11.2	-47.6	+74.8	+137.0	+1.0	+91.8

Source: Data compiled by local assessors with Municipal Board of Review

Major Opportunities and Constraints

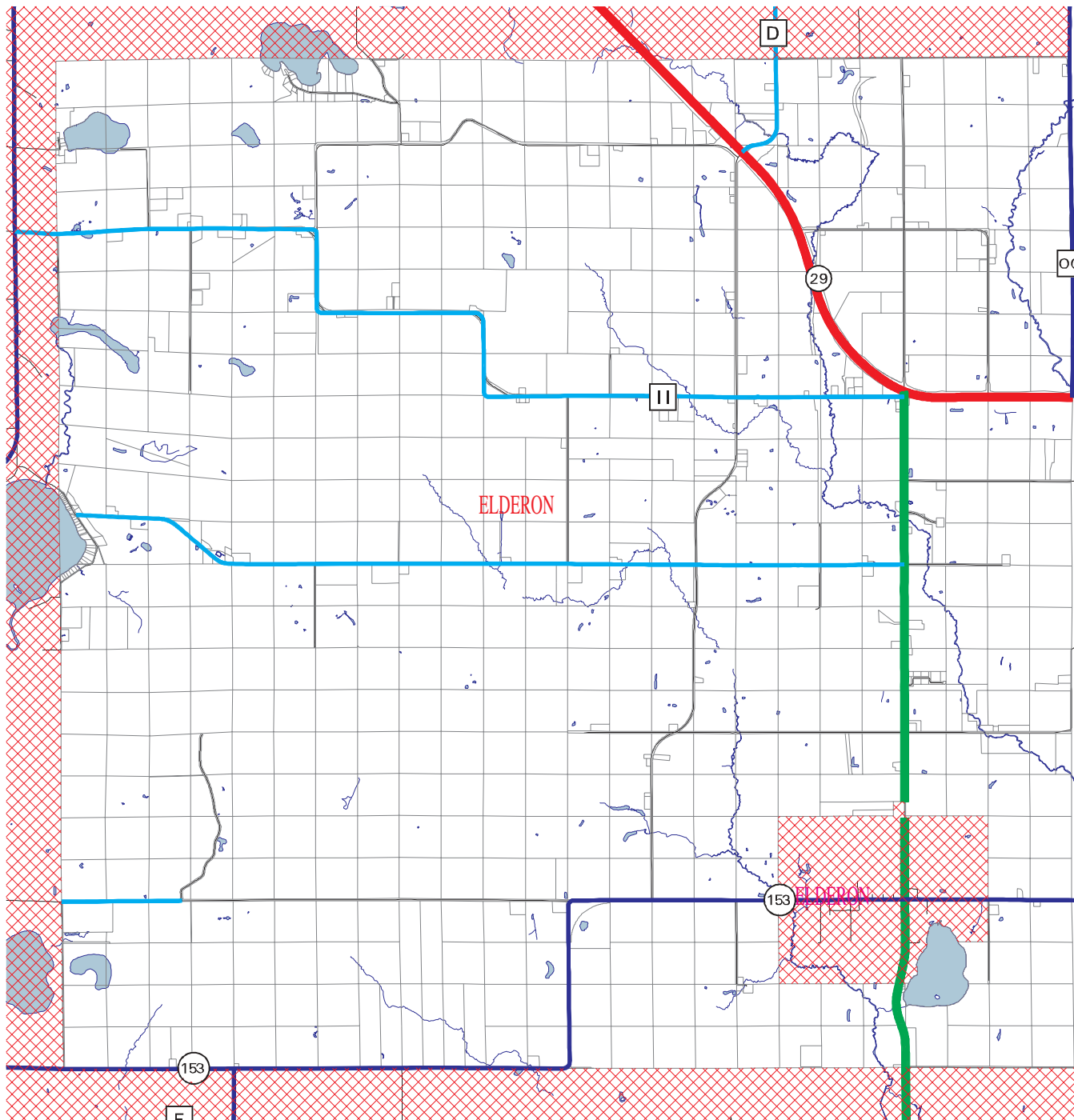
- **Access** – Elderon has adequate roadway access, with STH 29 in the northeast corner, STH 49 running north and south, and STH 153 on the southern border.
- **Land Development Suitability** – Although it has many wetlands, Elderon does not have high bedrock levels preventing wells, or difficult soils that can make residential development prohibitive. As a result, much of the Town does not suffer from any development constraints and residential development could occur almost anywhere if not regulated.

Issues

- **Farm Land Transition**— Farms are increasingly being sold to other farmers who want additional cropland, or sold for residential development. The farmer may continue to reside in the buildings, or rent them to others who are not farming the land. Anecdotal evidence indicates that there are an estimated 50 farms in the Town. The Town may want to consider whether they want to encourage preservation of farmland in Elderon.
- **Recreational Land**—Woodlands and marshlands are being purchased for recreational use and residential use.
- **Commercial and Highway Development**—According to residents of Elderon, there has been little pressure for development along STH 29, or for commercial uses in the Town.

- **Development on Lakes**—It appears likely that there will continue to be development pressure on lakes in Elderon, both for residential development and recreational uses. The Town may want to consider whether any additional regulation is necessary to preserve the aesthetic and environmental quality of the lakes. In addition, the Town may want to work on lake regulation with the Town of Norrie and the Town of Reid, both of which share lakes on the boundaries with Elderon.

Parcel Sizes— Parcel size of residential development has not been an issue. In general it appears that most parcels in Elderon are 10 acres or larger. The Town may want to consider whether to enforce a minimum parcel size, as a way of managing development and/or encouraging farmland preservation.

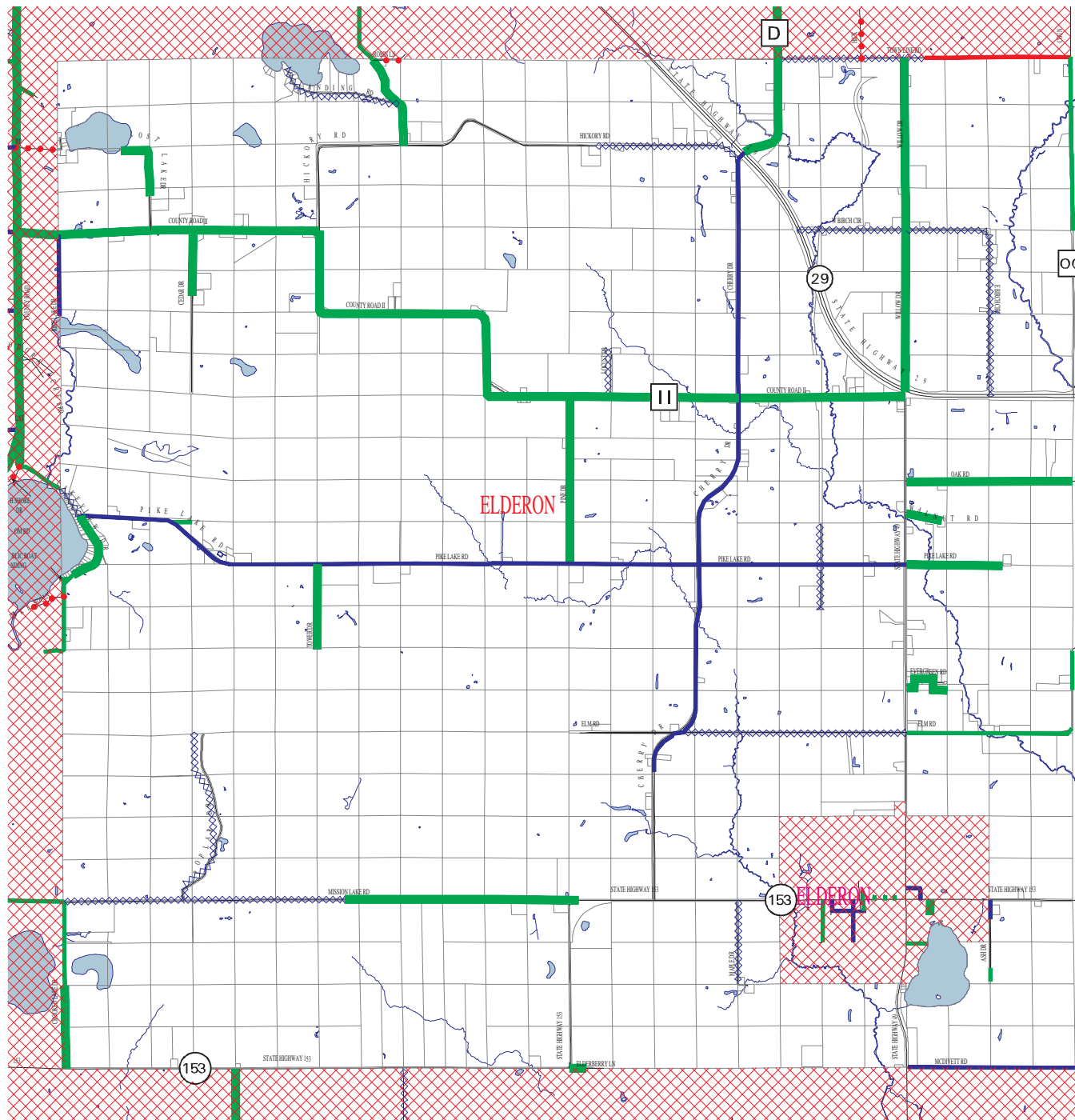


- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

- F County Highways
- 52 State Highways
- 51 US Highways
- 39 Interstate

 Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

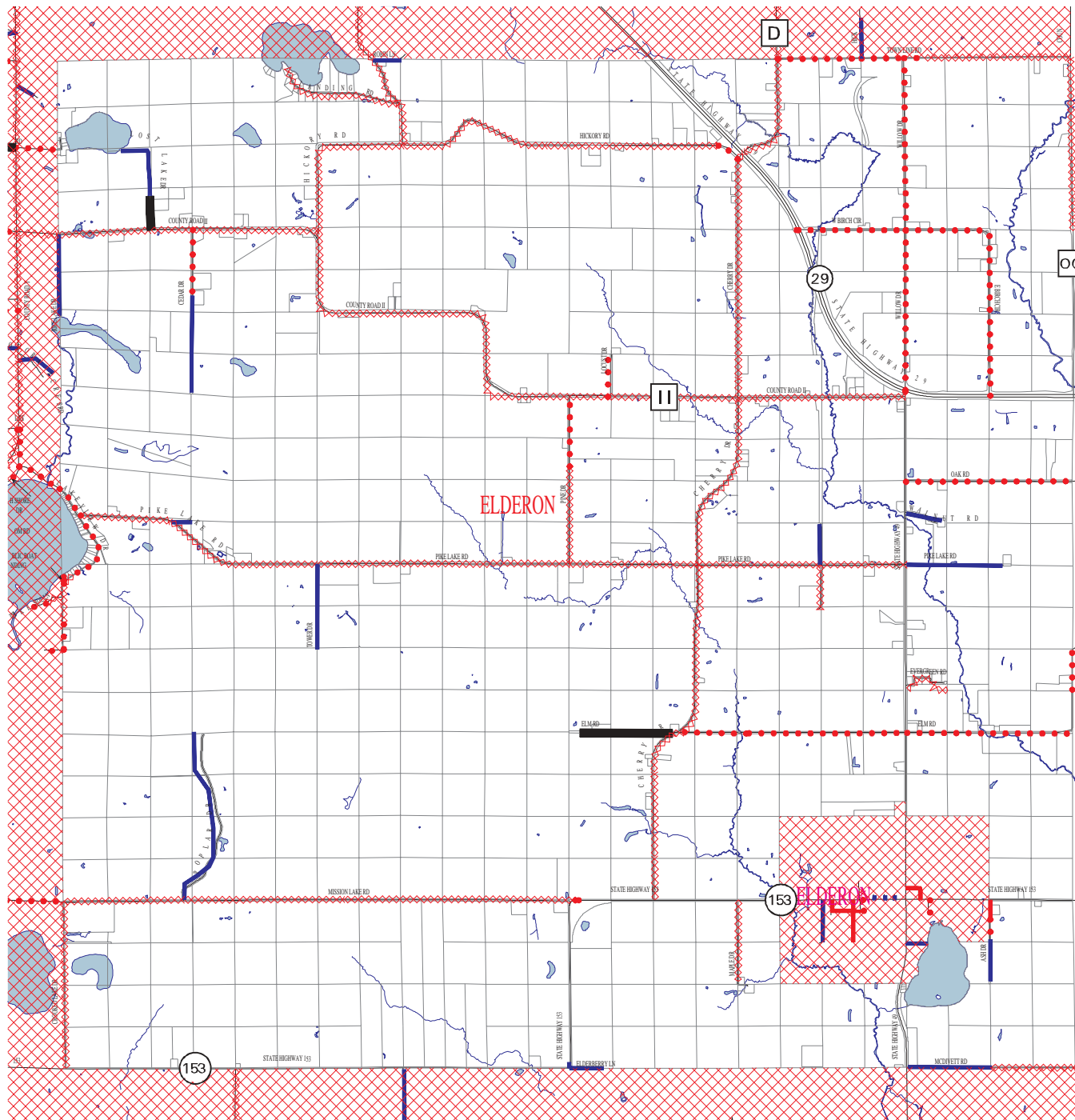
Figure 4-1
Functional Classification of Roads
T-ELDERON



- No Data
- Fair
- Failed
- Good
- Very Poor
- Very Good
- Poor
- Excellent

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

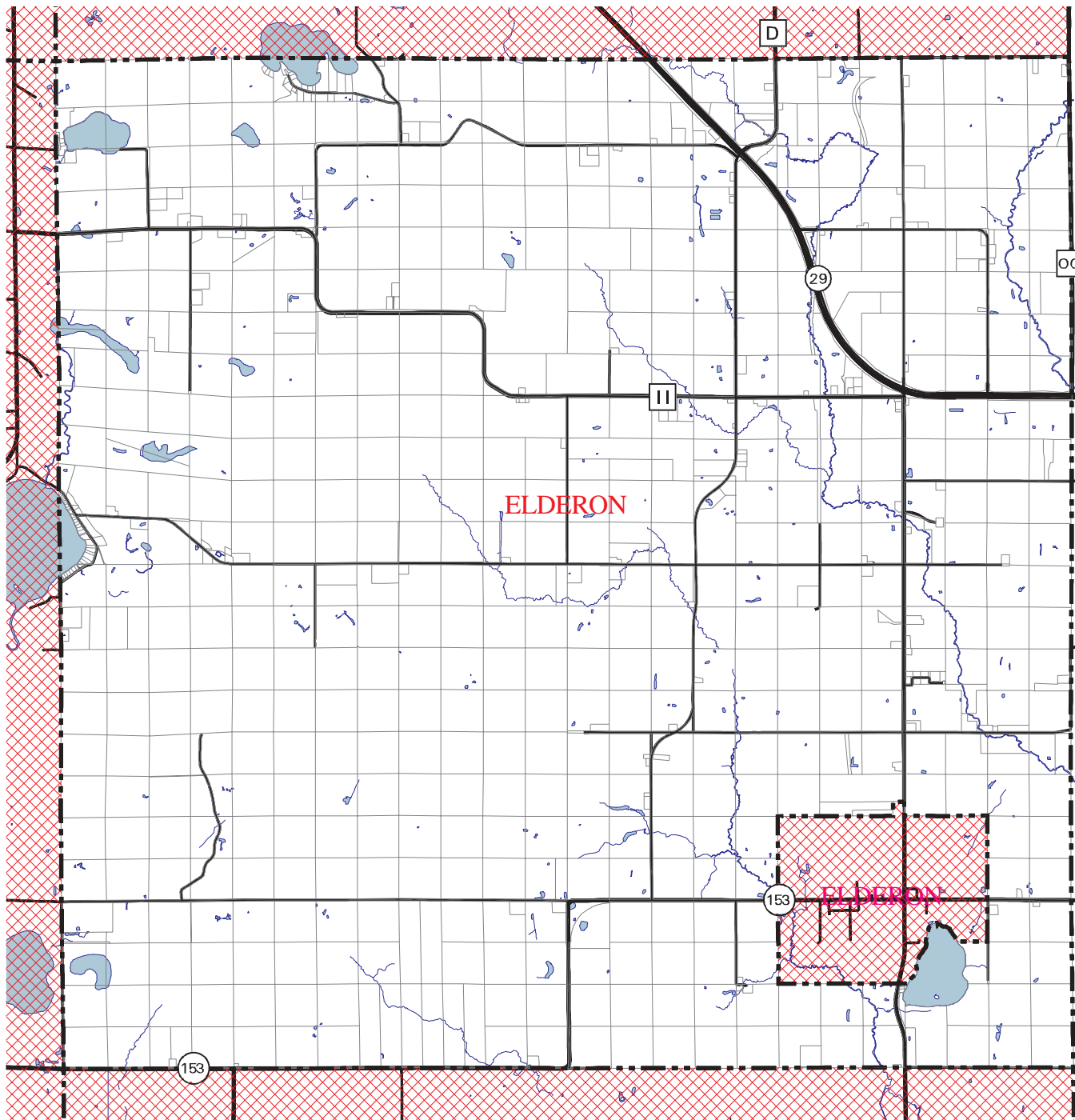
Figure 4-2
Road Surface Rating
T-ELDERON



- No Data
- Concrete Pavement
- <1" Wearing Surface
- Asphalt Pavement
- Asphalt Pavement on Concrete
- Asphalt Pavement with Base >7"
- Asphalt Pavement With Base <7"
- Unimproved Road
- Brick or Block Pavement

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

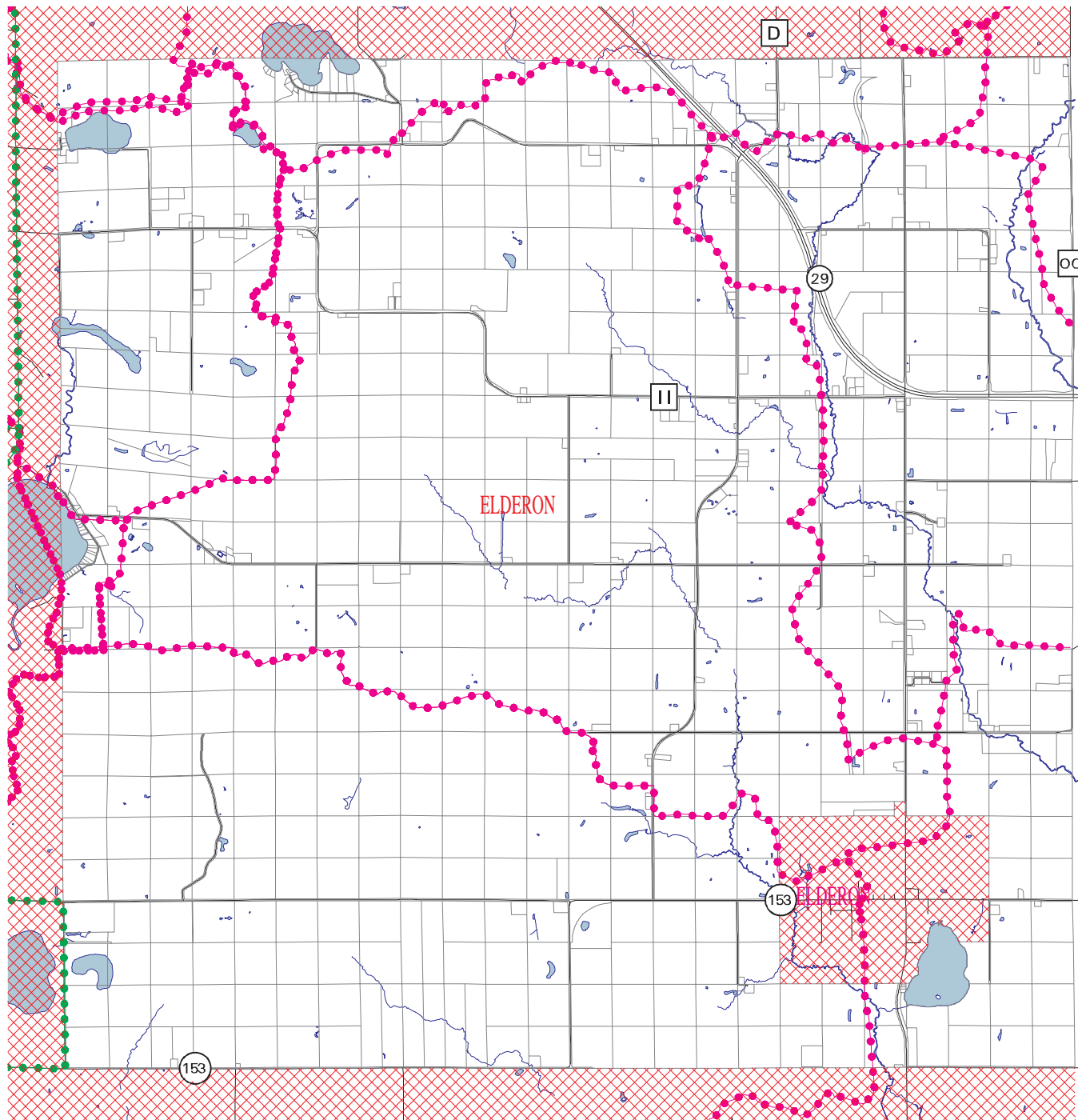
Figure 4-3
Road Surface Types
 T-ELDERON



- 0 - 20" (Quarries) □ >60"
- 20 - 40 "
- 40-60"

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

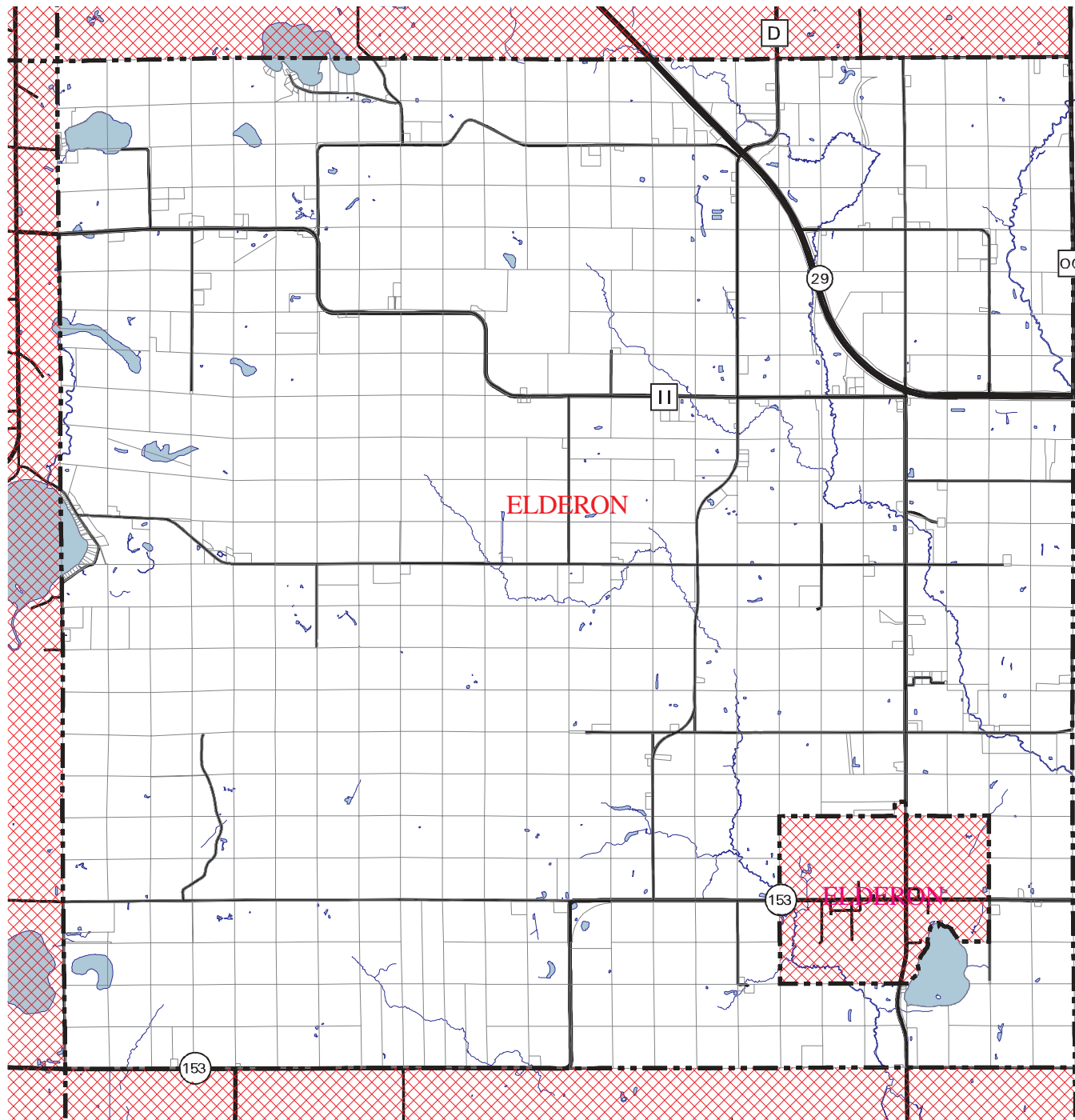
Figure 5-1
 Depth To Bedrock
 T-ELDERON



- 2001 Snowmobile Trails
- Mountain Bay Trail
- Ice Age Trail
- Suggested Bike Routes

 Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

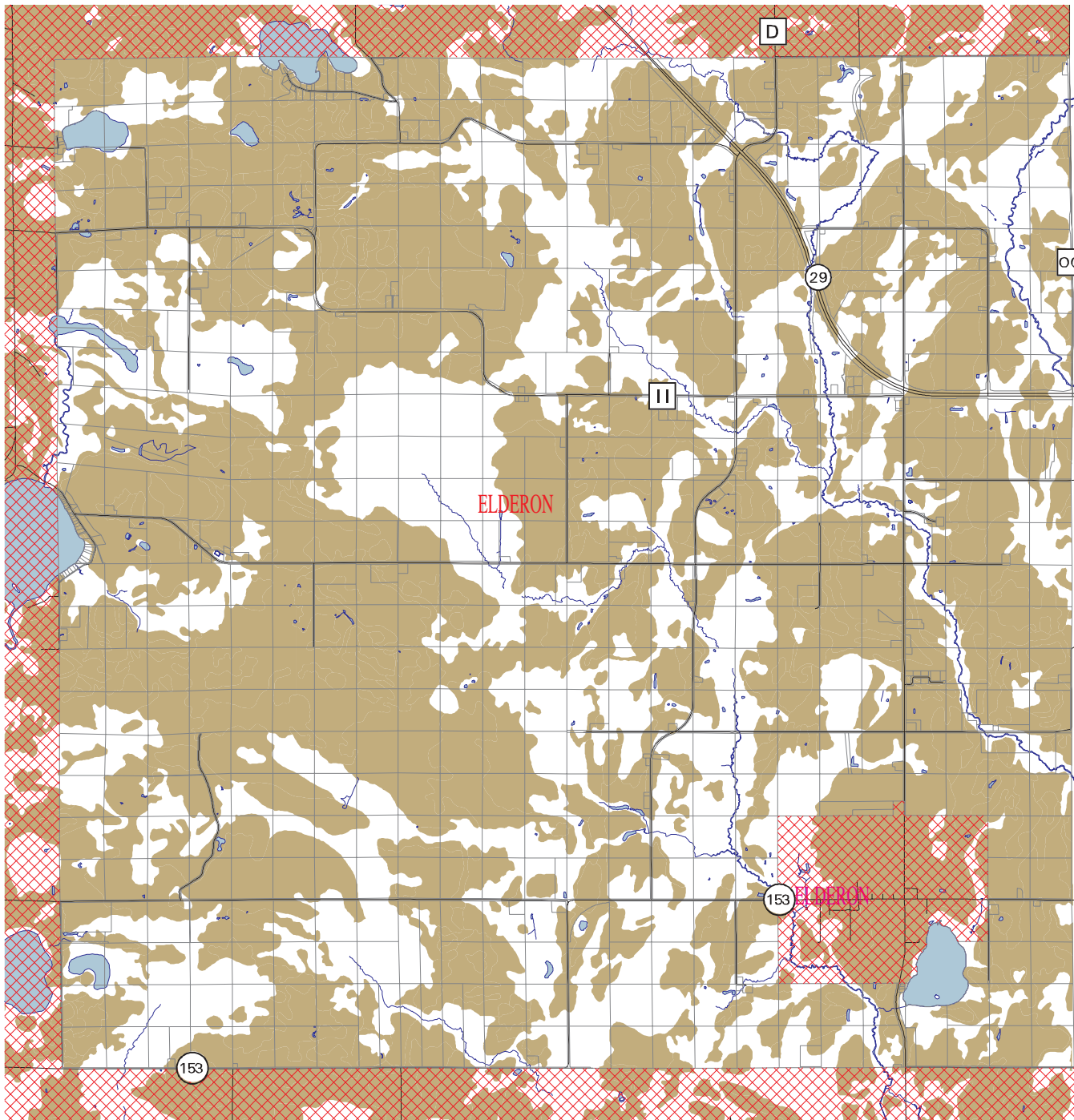
Figure 4-4
 Trails
 T-ELDERON



- 0 - 20" (Quarries) □ >60"
- 20 - 40 "
- 40-60"

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

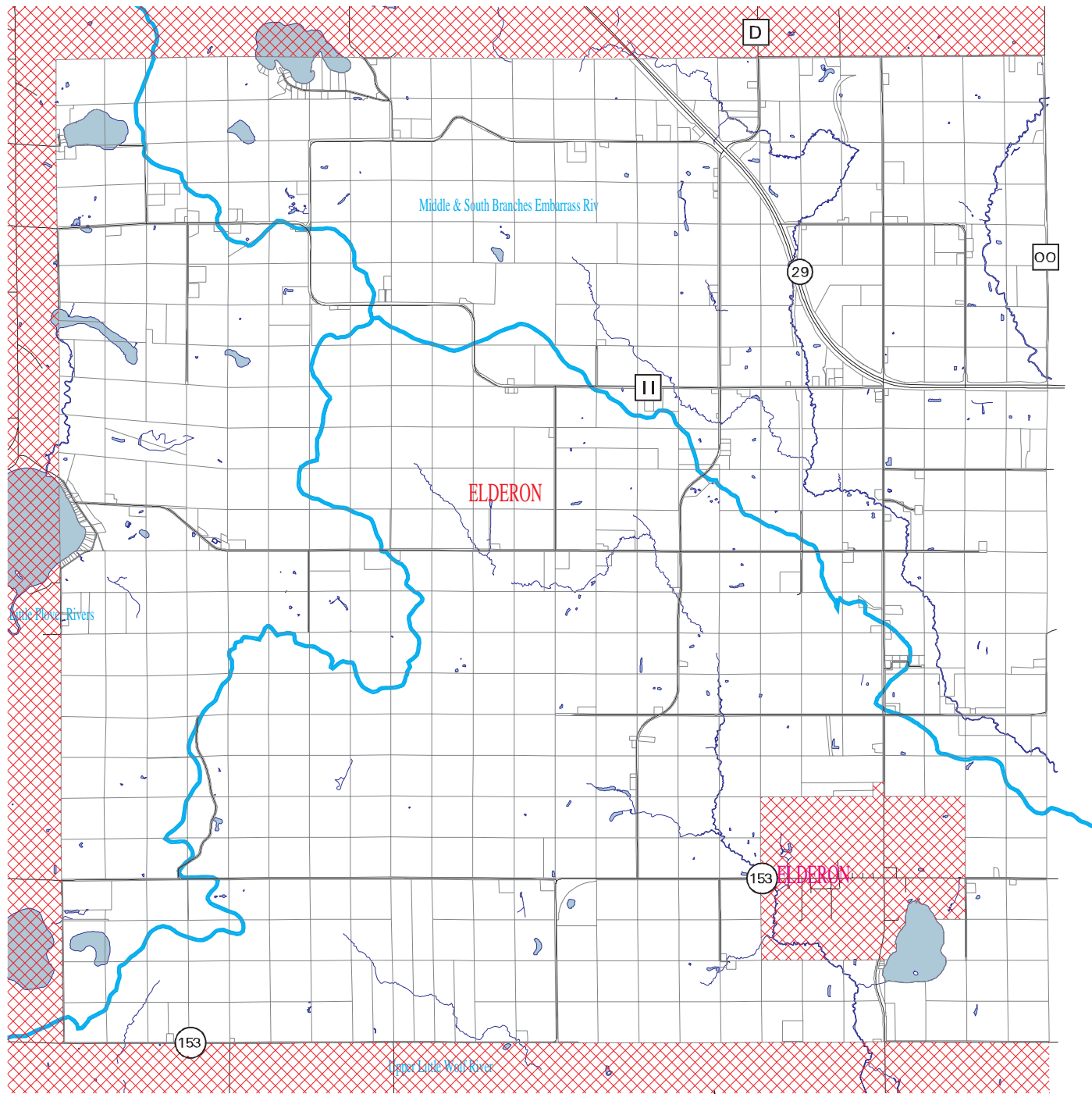
Figure 5-1
 Depth To Bedrock
 T-ELDERON



■ Soils suitable for septic systems w/soil absorption component

▨ Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 5-2
 Suitable Soils-Septic Tank Absorption
 T-ELDERON



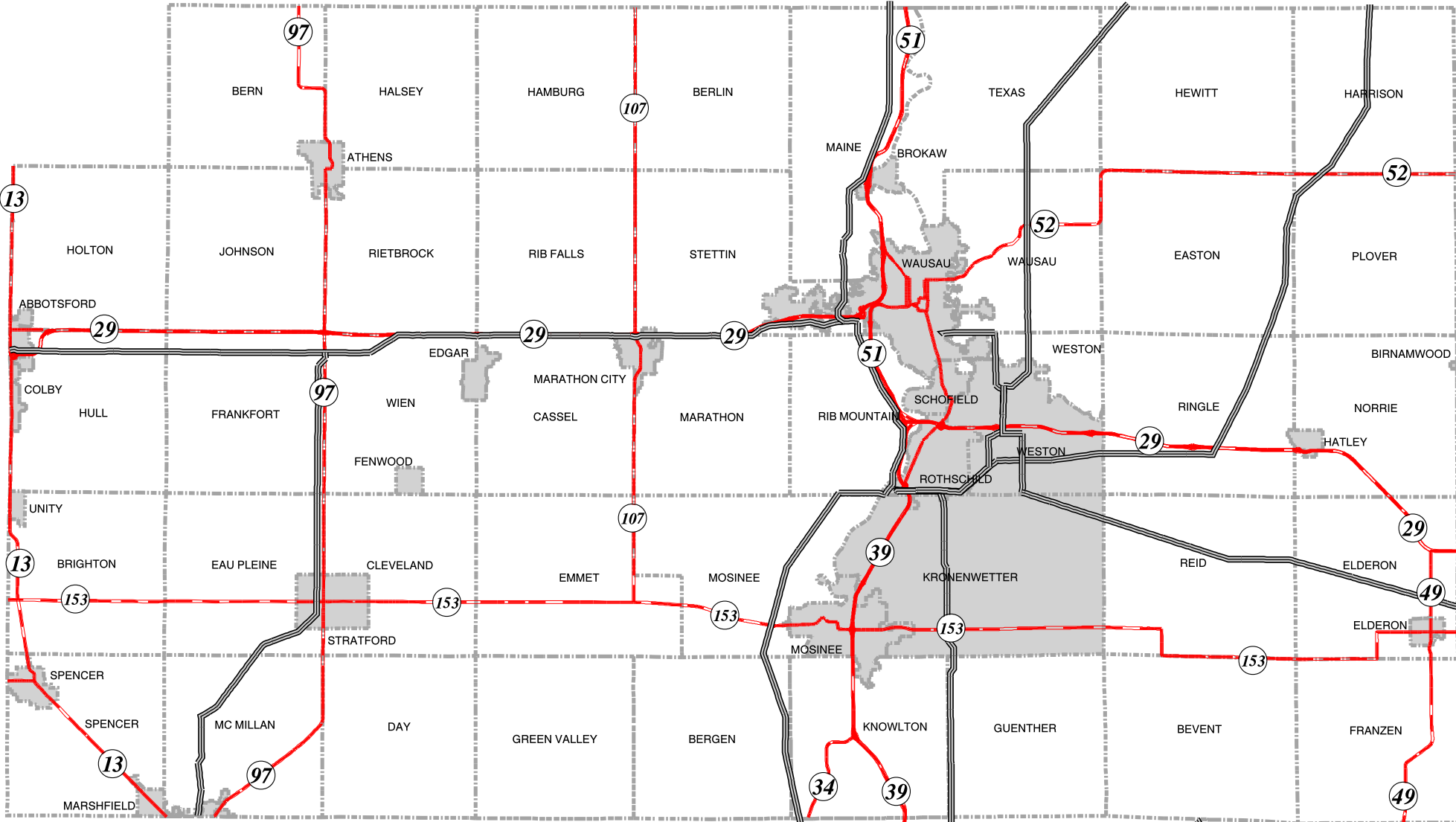
Priority Watersheds
 as identified in the Marathon County
 Land & Water Resource Management Plan

Watershed boundaries

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

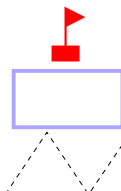
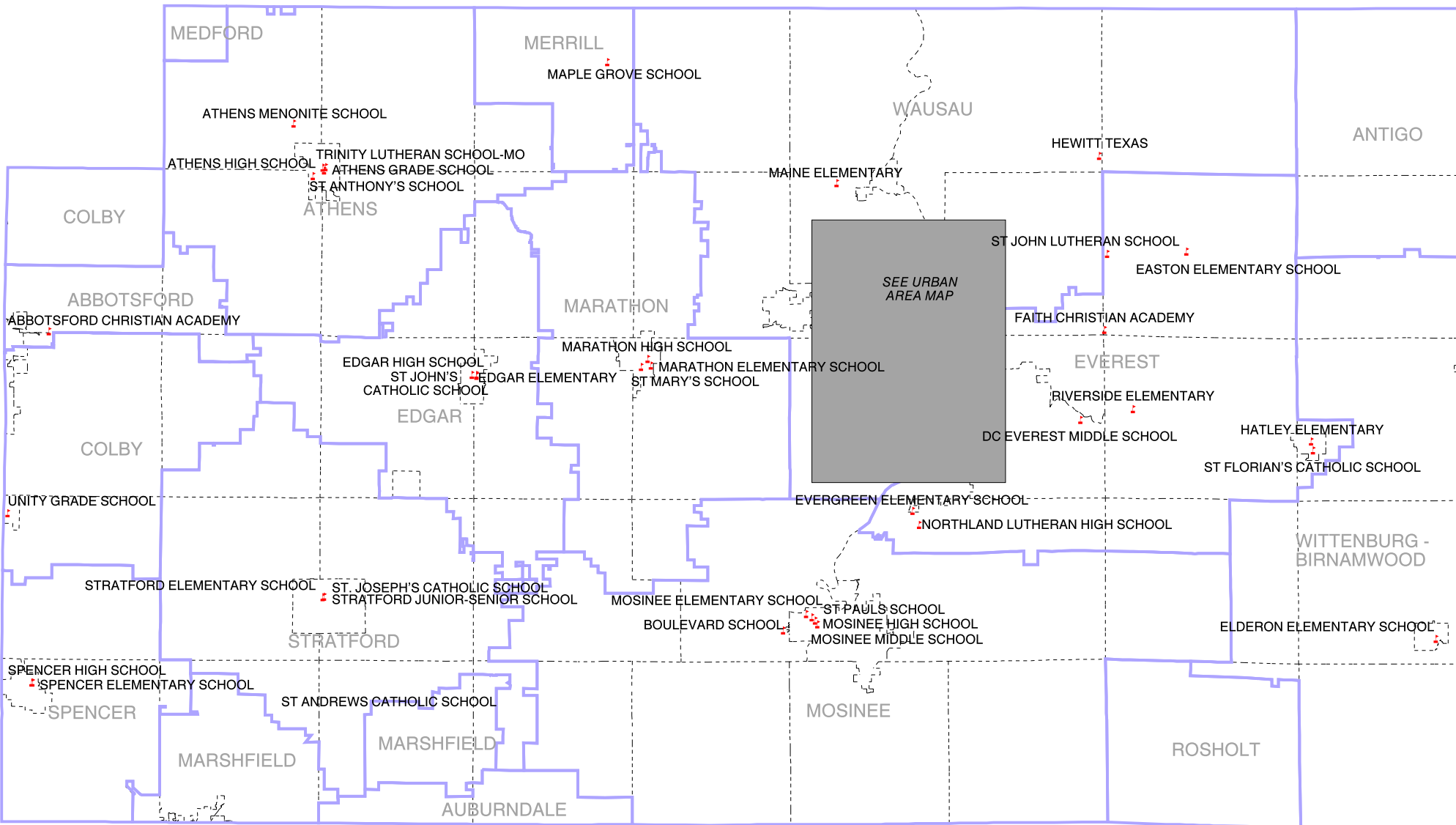
Figure 5-3
Major Watersheds
T-ELDERON

MARATHON COUNTY EXISTING POWERLINES



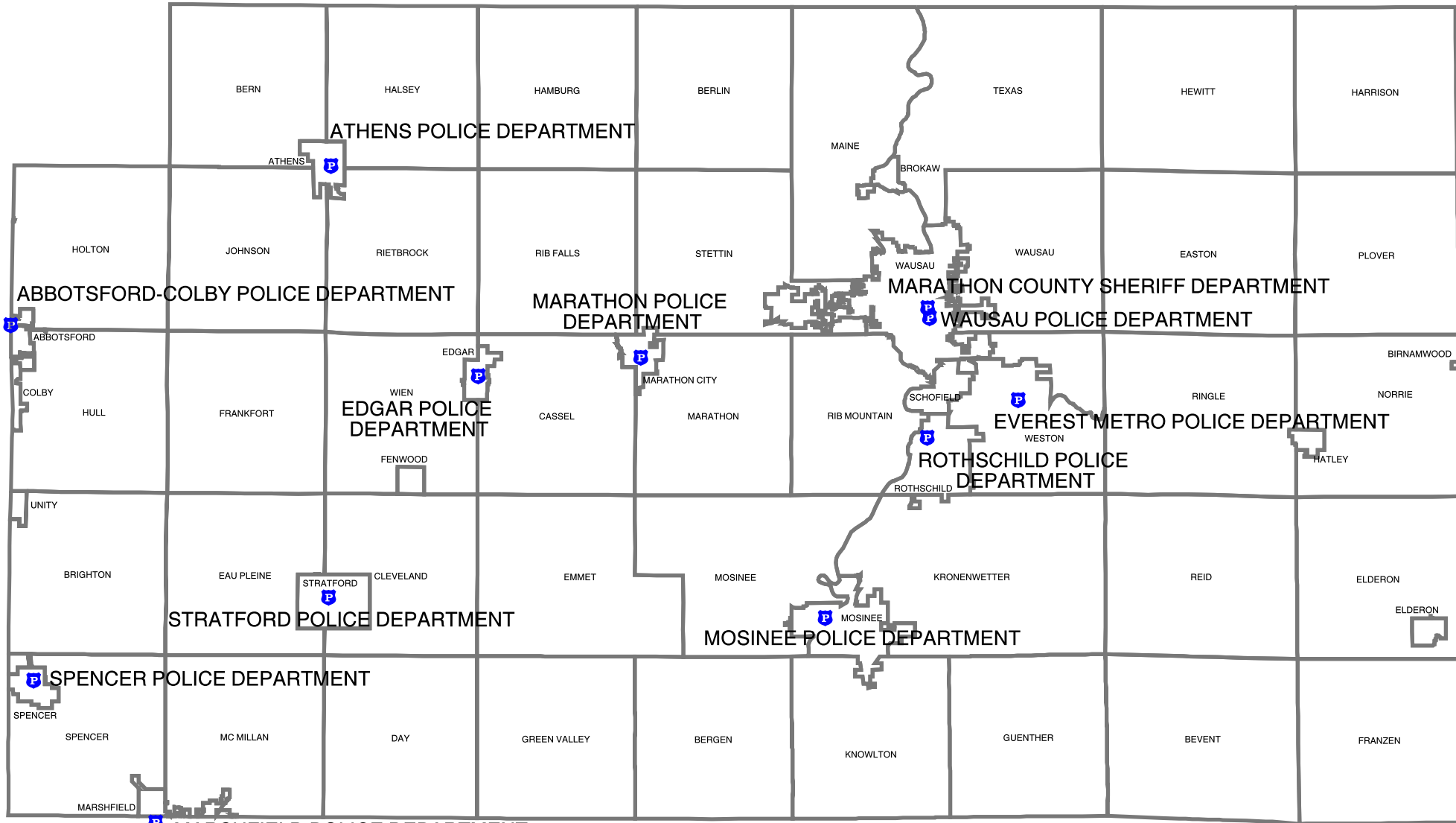
-  Existing Power Lines
-  State & Us Highways
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Incorporated Municipality

MARATHON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS RURAL AREA MAP



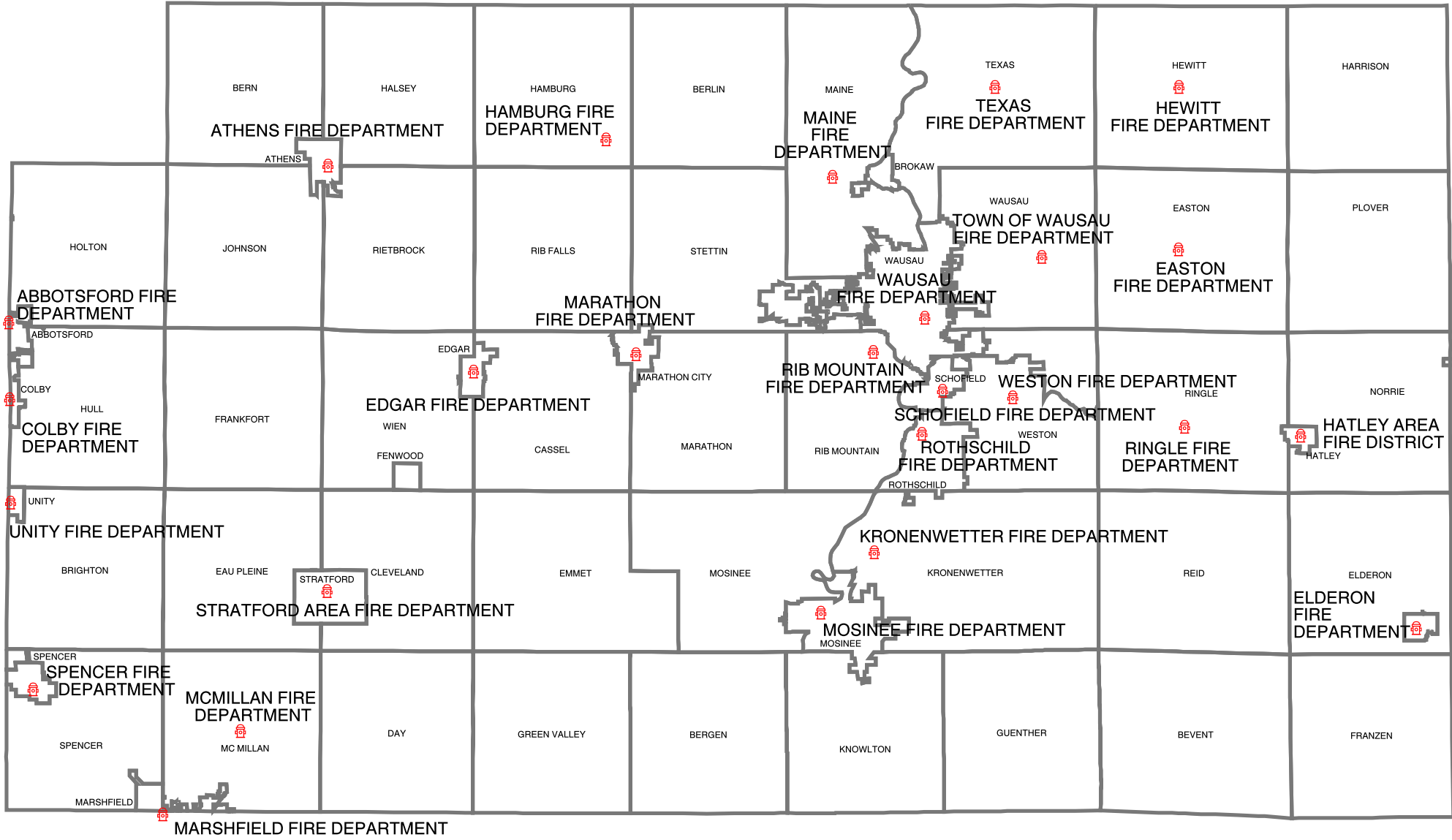
School Locations
School District Boundary
Municipal Boundary

MARATHON COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT



 Police Department
 Municipal Boundary

MARATHON COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENTS



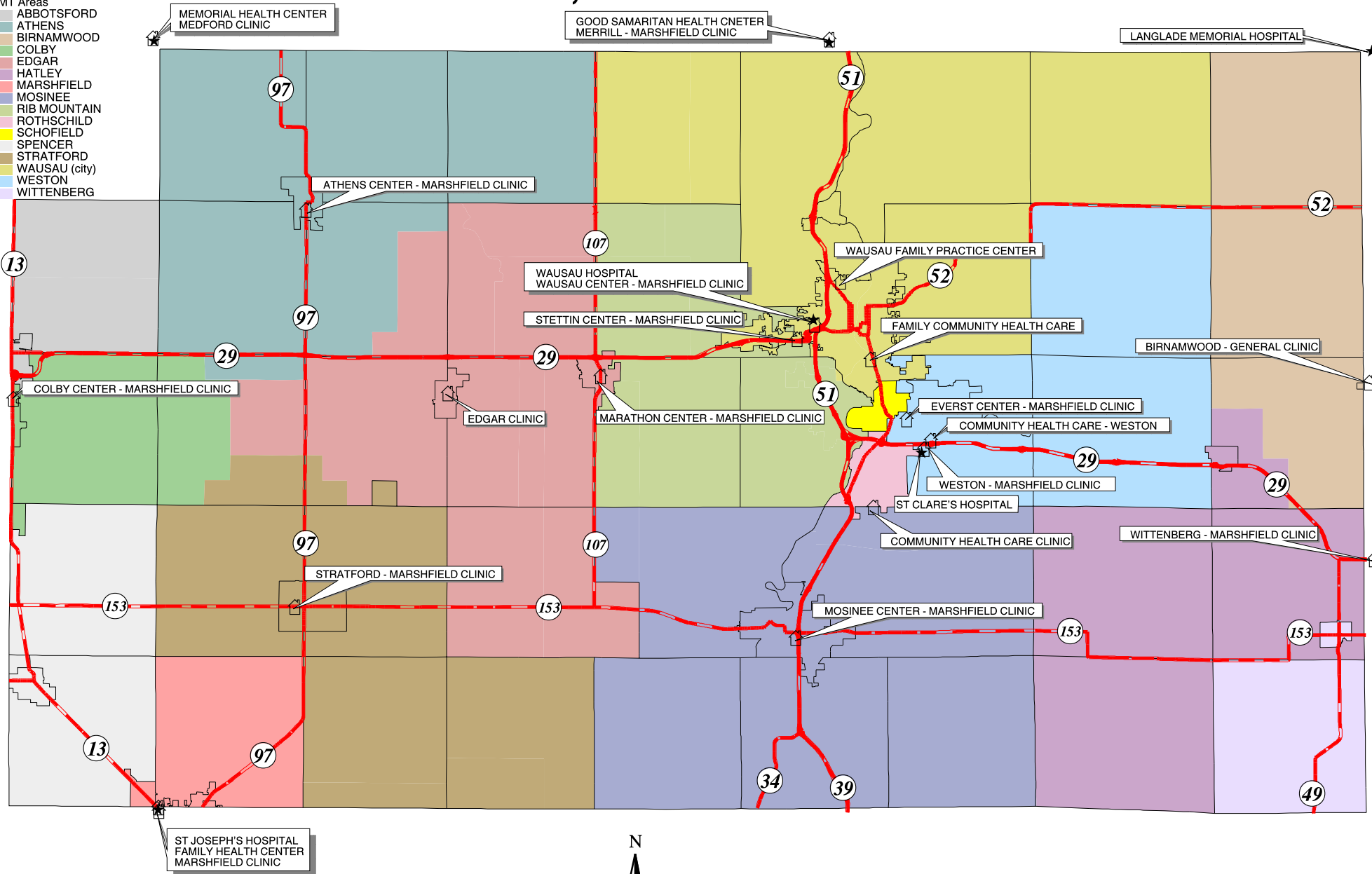
Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

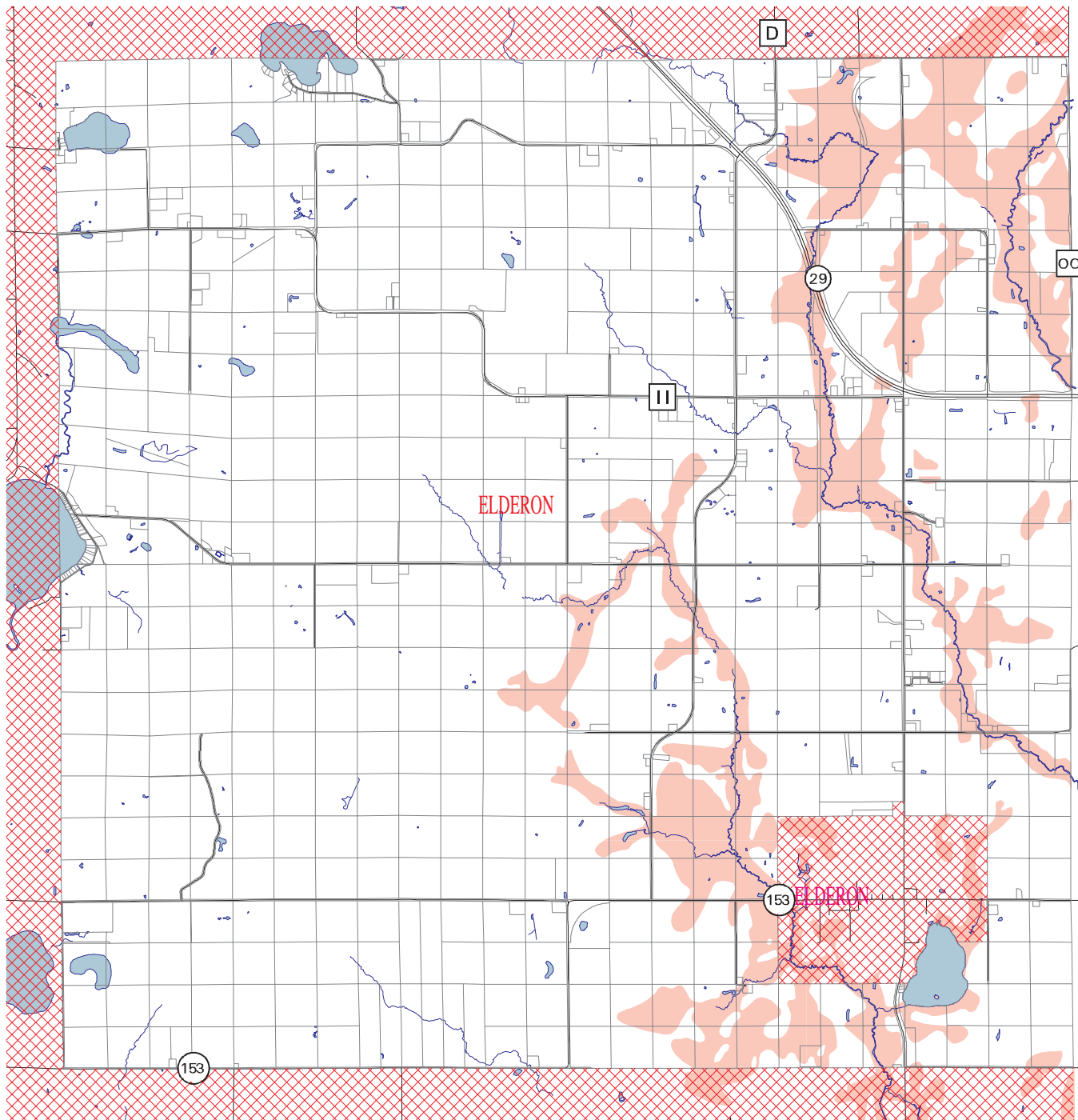
 **Fire Department**
 **Municipal Boundary**

Figure 6-3

MARATHON COUNTY AREA HOSPITALS, CLINICS & EMS ZONES

- Healthcare Facilities
- CLINIC
 - HOSPITAL
 - State & US Highways
 - Municipal Boundary
- EMT Areas
- ABBOTSFORD
 - ATHENS
 - BIRNAMWOOD
 - COLBY
 - EDGAR
 - HATLEY
 - MARSHFIELD
 - MOSINEE
 - RIB MOUNTAIN
 - ROTHSCHILD
 - SCHOFIELD
 - SPENCER
 - STRATFORD
 - WAUSAU (city)
 - WESTON
 - WITTENBERG





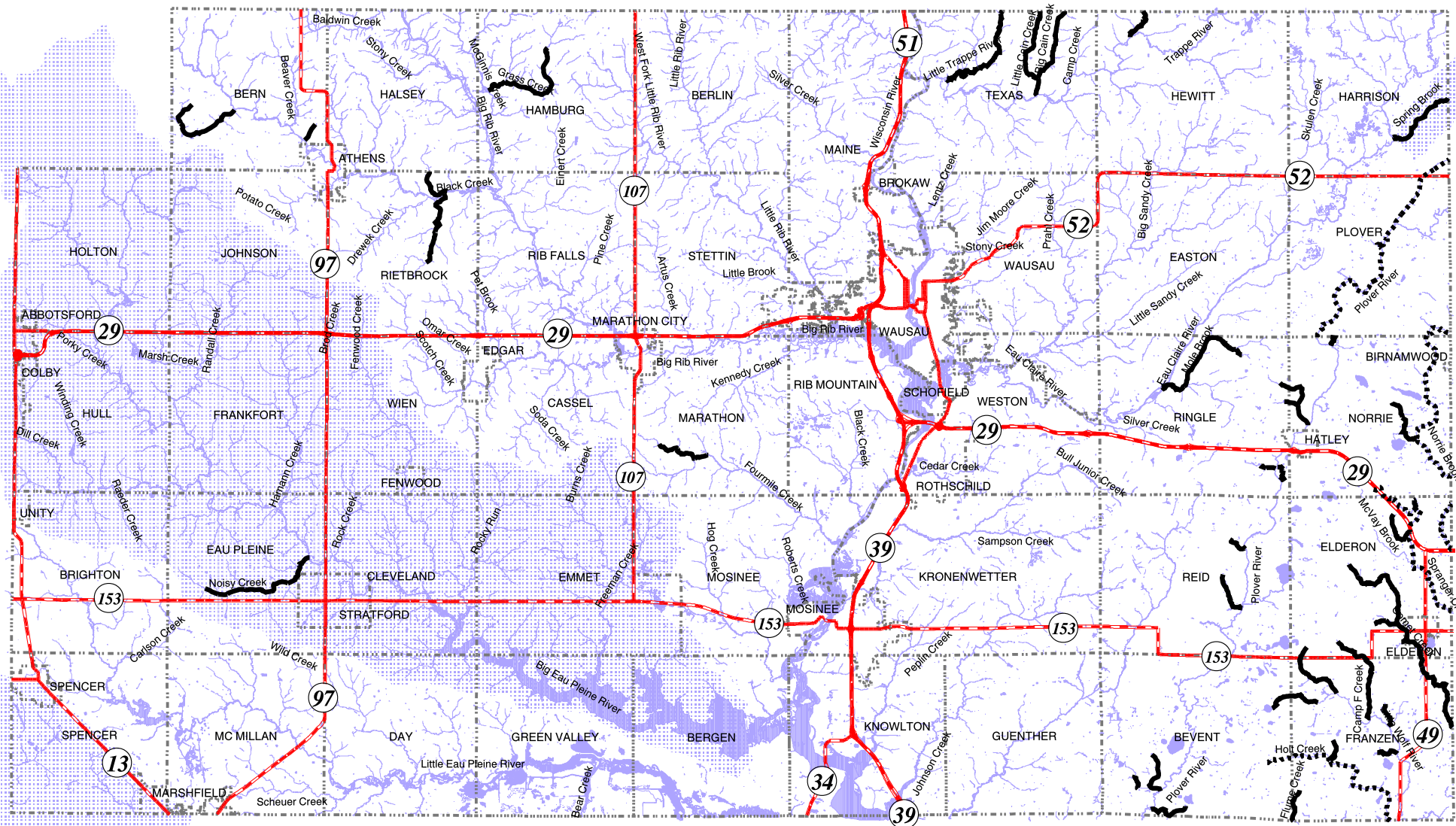
■ FEMA Floodplain

▨ Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 7-1
 100 Year Floodplain
 T-ELDERON

MARATHON COUNTY

OUTSTANDING & EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCE AND IMPAIRED WATERS



- Exceptional
- Outstanding
- State & Us Highways
- Municipal Boundary
- Water Features
- Impaired Waters



O & E Resource and Impaired Waters
Data from the WIDNR

Figure 7-2

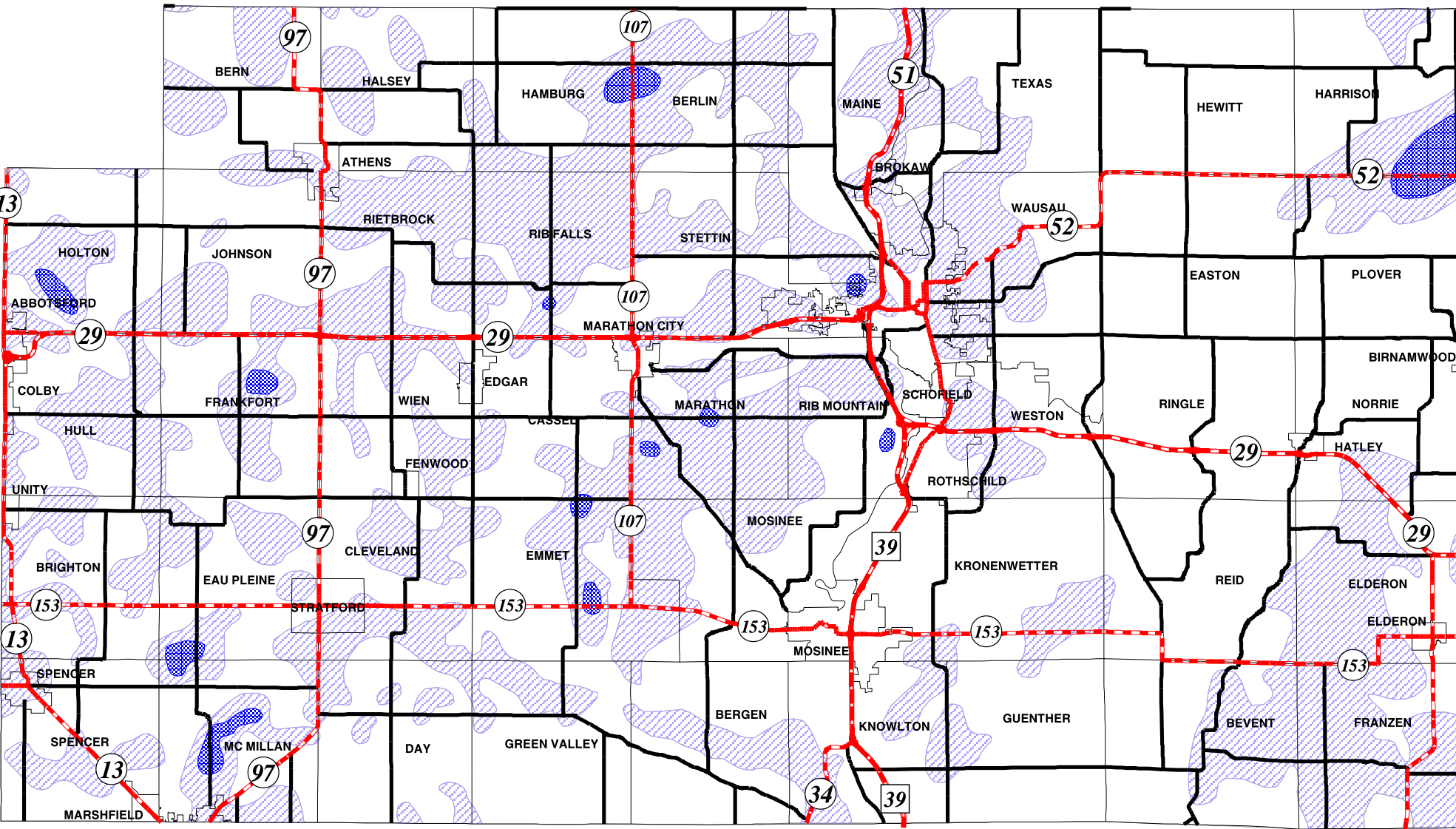


- Aquatic beds
- Emergent/wet meadow
- Filled/draind wetland
- Flats/unvegetated wet soil
- Forested
- Scrub/shrub

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 7-3
Wetland Types
T-ELDERON

MARATHON COUNTY DEPTH TO GROUND WATER

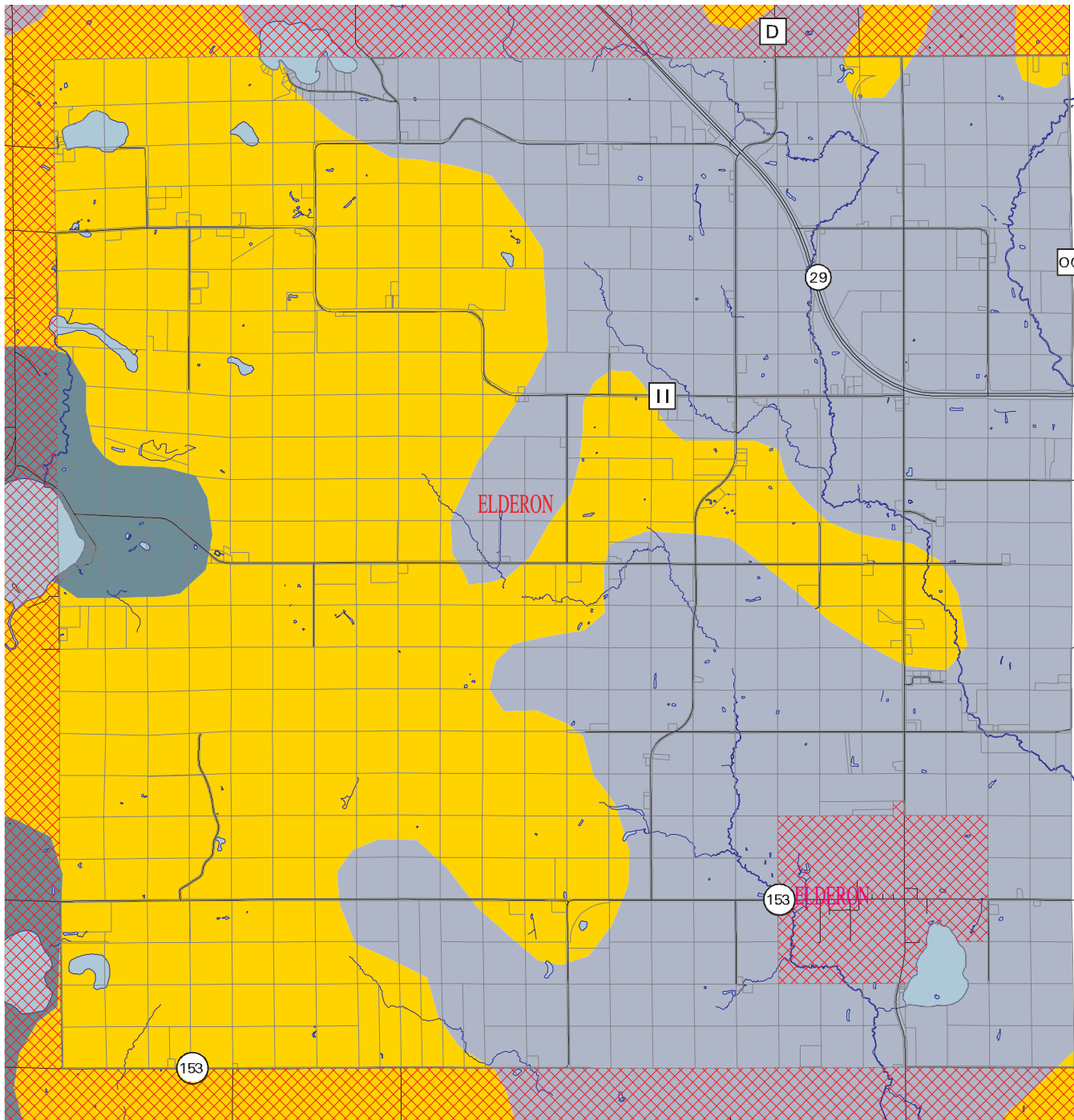


- State & Us Highways
- County Roads
- Municipal Boundary
- Ground Water Depth
- 0-20 feet
- 20-50 feet
- >50 feet



Source: "Irrigable Lands Inventory --- phase 1 Groundwater and Related Information", I.D. Lippett and R.G. Hennings, MP -81-1, WGNHS 1981.

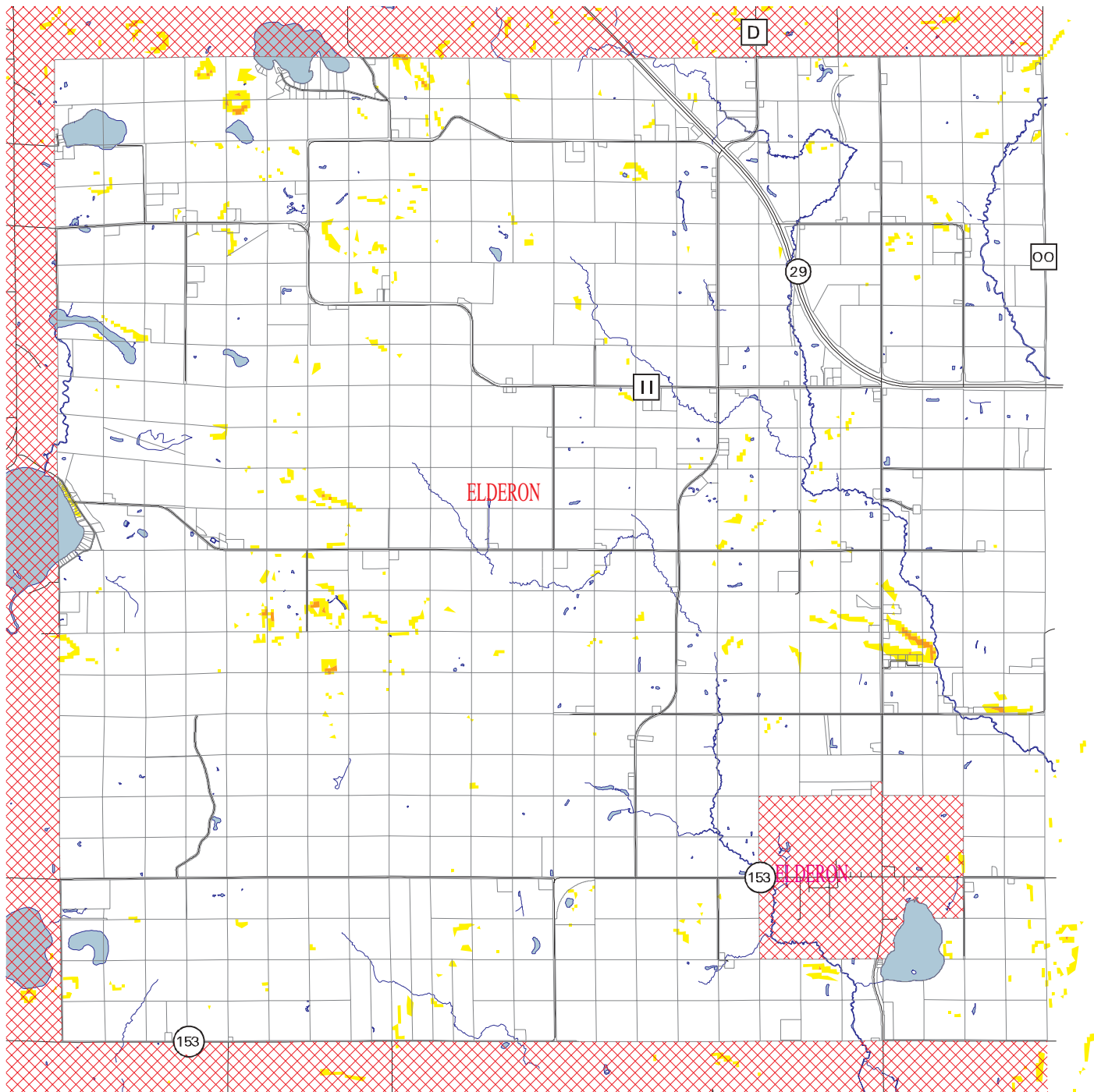
Figure 7-4



- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Magnor-Cable | Marathon-Mylrea-Moberg | Mahtomedi-Fordum-Sturgeon | Cathro-Seelyeville |
| Loyal-Withee-Marshfield | Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozellville | Chetek-Rosholt-Oesterle | |
| Kennan-Hatley | Mosinee-Meadland-Dancy | Mahtomedi-Graycalm-Meehan | |

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 7-6
 Soil Associations
 T-ELDERON

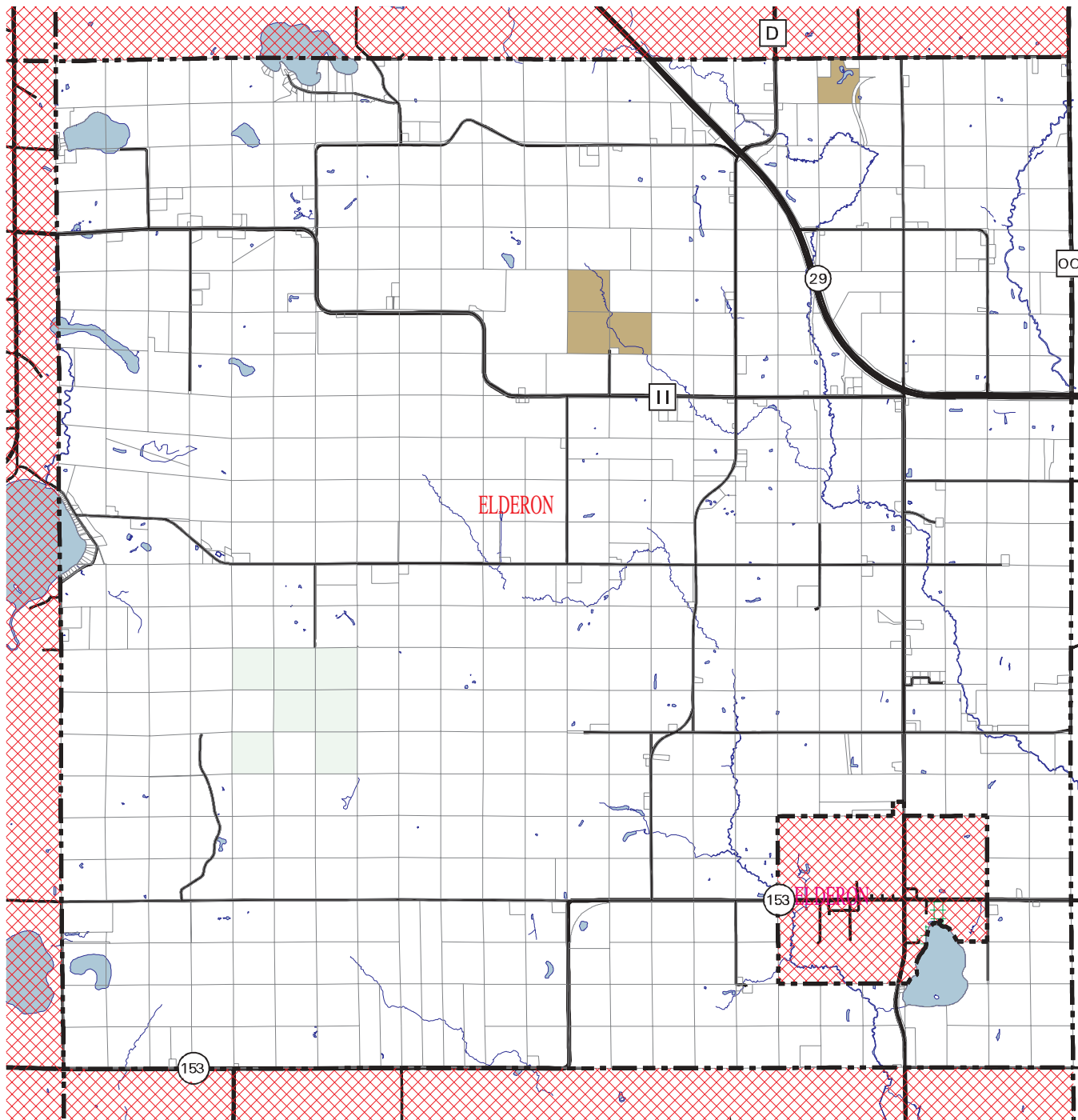


■ D - generally 12-20% slopes

■ E - generally greater than 15% slopes.

⊠ Indicates other Municipality
Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

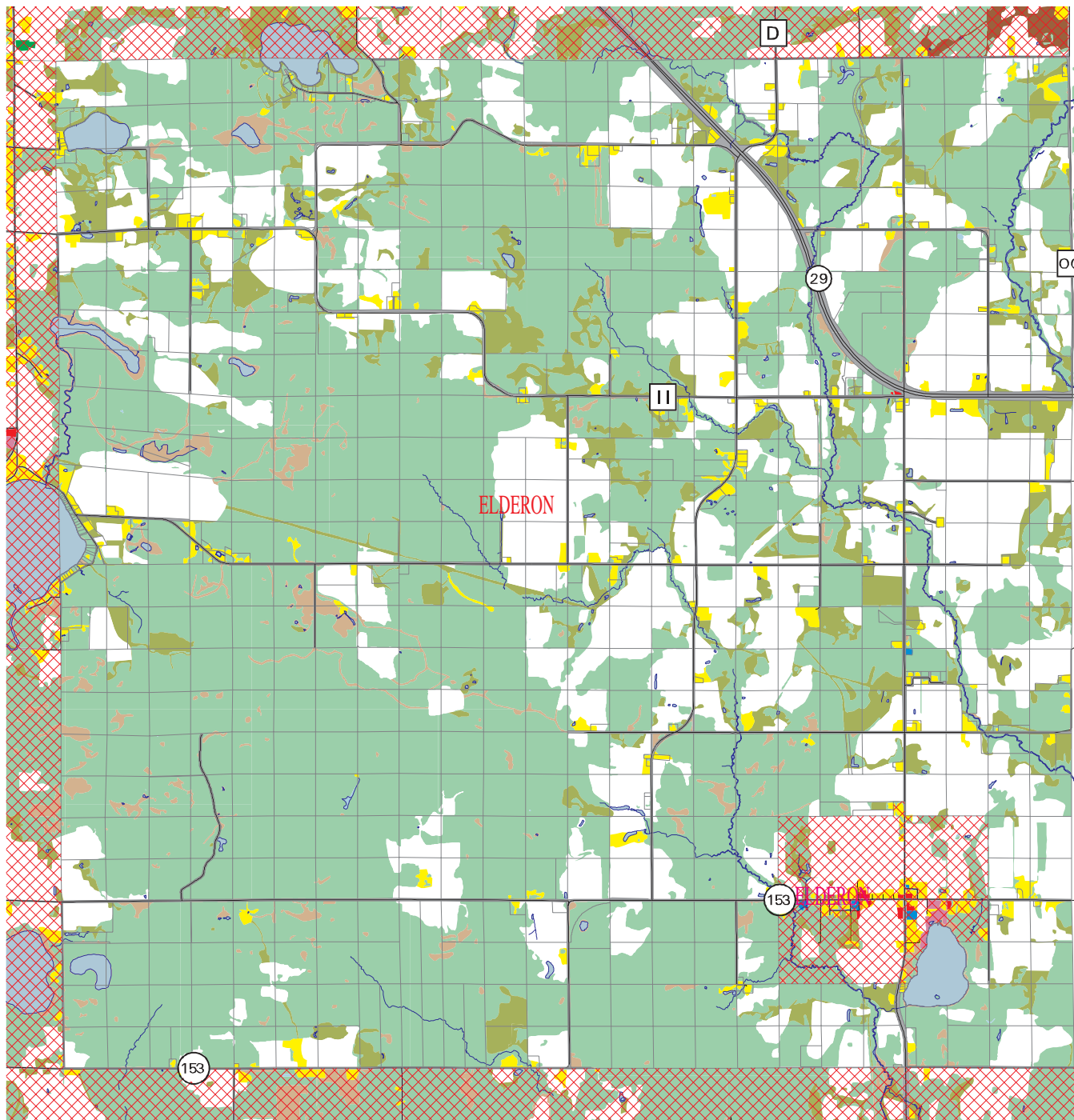
Figure 7-8
Slopes
T-ELDERON



- Municipal Parks
- County Forest Units
- County Parks
- State Parks

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

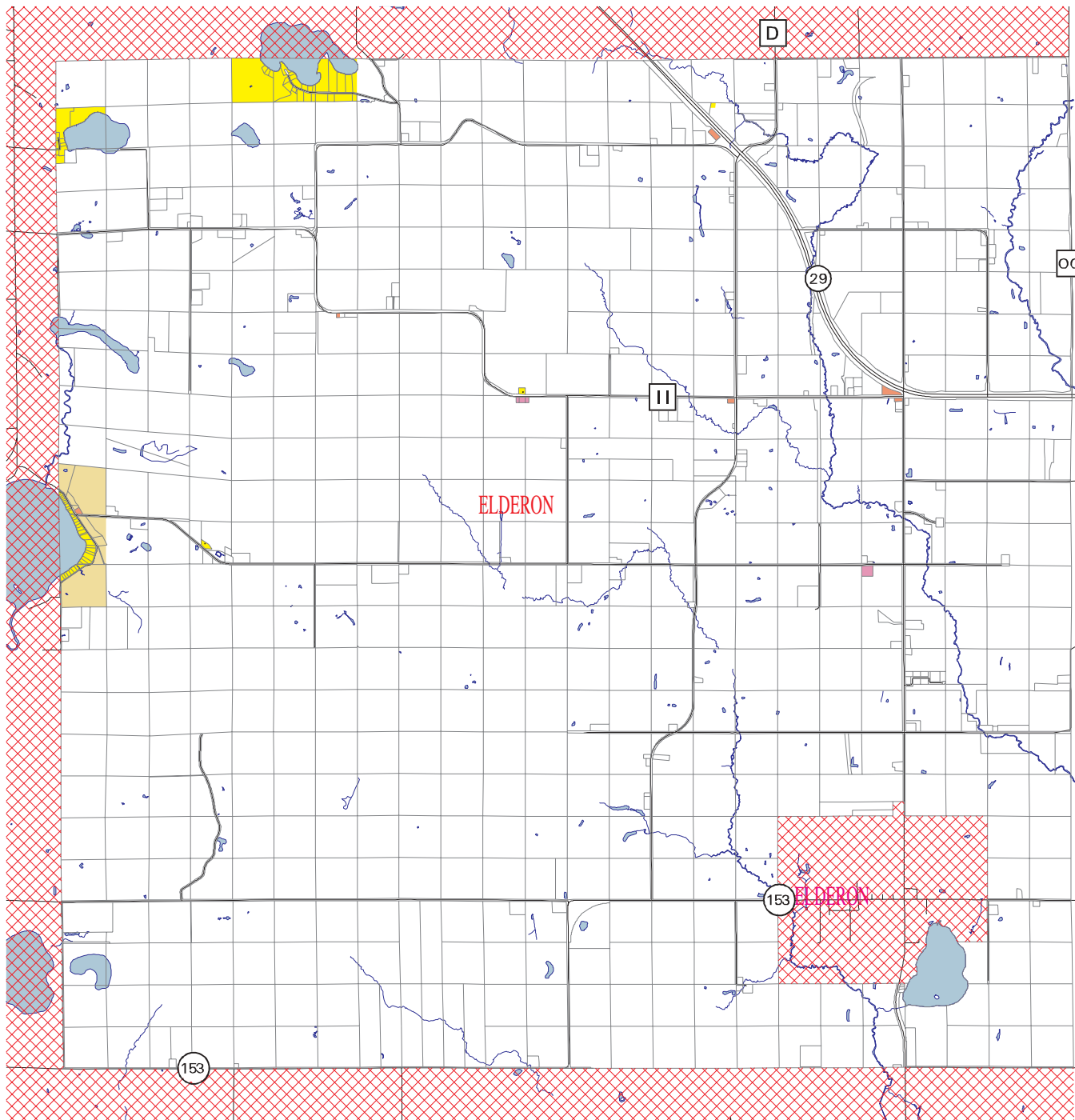
Figure 9-1
Recreation Facilities
T-ELDERON



- | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Single Family Residential | Industrial | Specialty Crops | Recreation | Transportation |
| Multi-Family Residential | Quarries/Gravel Pits | Other Agriculture | Woodlands | Vacant/Barren Land |
| Commercial Services | Crop Land | Public/Quasi-Public | Water | |

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

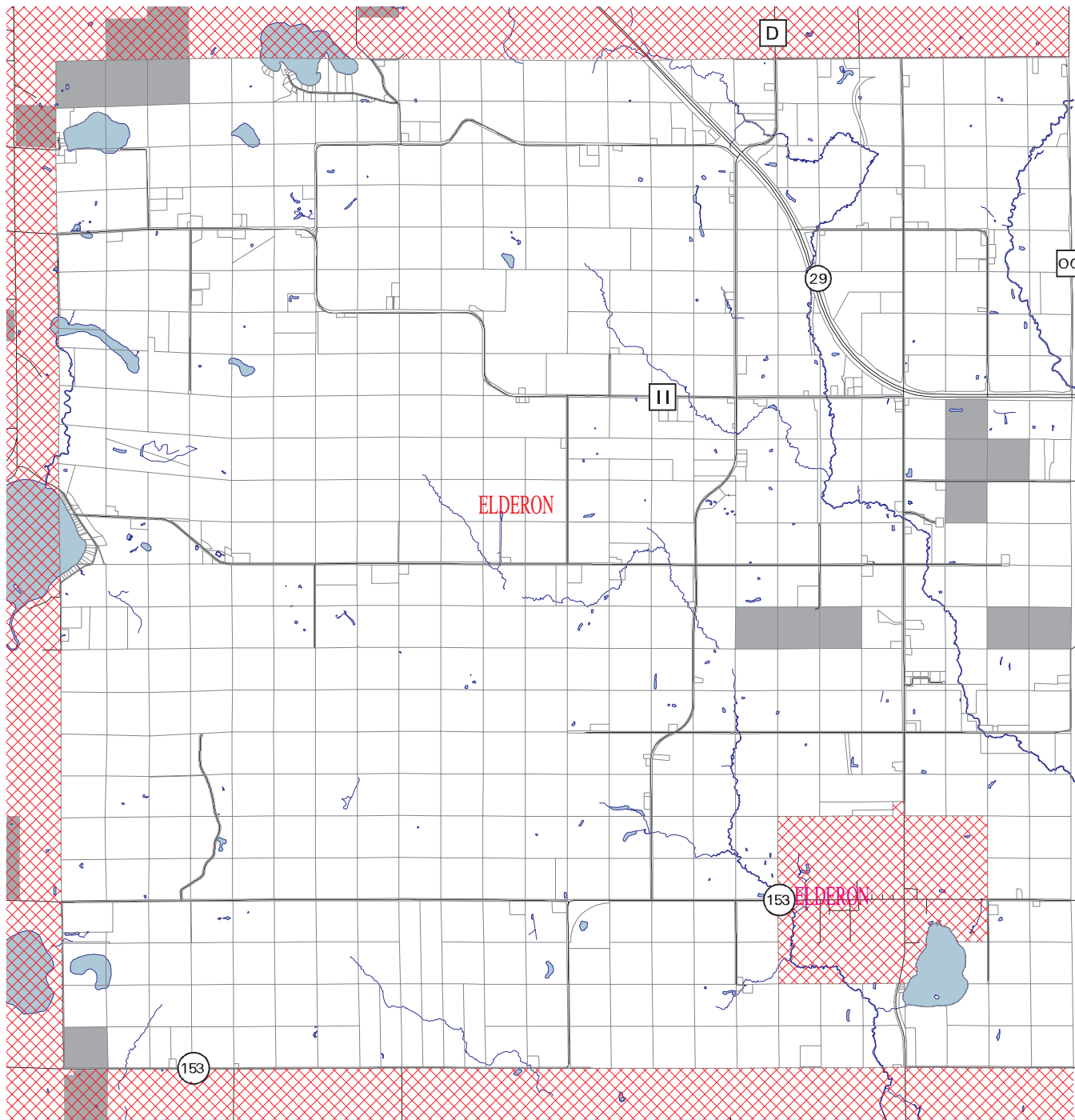
Figure 12-1
 2000 Landuse/Landcover
 T-ELDERON



- | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|----|-------|-------|-------|------|-----|------|------|
| RS-1/20 | RM | RC | A-3 | A-4-M | AE | C-1 | UV | WP-C |
| RS-1/40 | RP | A-1/5 | A-3-M | AR | AE/M | M-1 | WP-A | |
| RS-2 | CV | A-2 | A-4 | AR/M | HI | M-2 | WP-B | |

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 12-2
 County Zoning
 T-ELDERON



- Exclusive ag zoning
- Farmland pres contracts

 Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 12-3
Exclusive Ag & Farmland Preservation
T-ELDERON

Town of Elderon

Comprehensive Plan

Goals, Objectives, Policies & Implementation

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- A. State Comprehensive Planning Goals
- B. Marathon County Guiding Principles
- C. Ordinances and Resolutions for Adoption
- D. Public Participation Plan
- E. Bibliography of Related Studies and Plans
- F. Road Paving Criteria

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- Figure 3-3: WISLR Road Surface Type
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- Figure 11-2: Existing Zoning
- Figure 11-3: Development Constraints

List of Acronyms

303 (d) list—waters designated as “impaired” under section 303 (d) of the U.S. Clean Water Act.

AADT—Annual Average Daily Traffic

AHI—Architecture & History Inventory (a database of the Wisconsin Historical Society).

BMPs—Best Management Practices

CCR&R—Child Care Resource and Referral Network

CDBG—Community Development Block Grant

CES—Cropland Evaluation System (Marathon County)

CIP—Capital Improvement Program

Comm 83—Chapter 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce, setting standards for regulation of private sewage systems.

CRP—Conservation Reserve Program

CTH—County Trunk Highway

CWA—Central Wisconsin Airport

DWD—Department of Workforce Development

EMS—Emergency Medical Services

EMT—Emergency Medical Technician

ERW—Exceptional Resource Waters, a designation by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

FEMA—Federal Emergency Management Agency

FIRM—Flood Insurance Rate Maps

HOME—Home Investment Partnerships Program

HUD—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

LHOG—Local Housing Organization Grant

LRTP—Long Range Transportation Plan (Prepared by the Wausau Metro Planning Organization for the Metro area).

LWRMP—Land and Water Resource Management Plan (Marathon County)

MPO—Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

NCHC—North Central Health Care

NCWRPC—North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

NRHP—National Register of Historic Places

NTC—Northcentral Technical College

ORW—Outstanding Resource Waters, a designation under the U.S. Clean Water Act.

PASER—Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating

PMP—Pavement Management Plan

SHPO—State Historic Preservation Office

STF Data—Summary Tape File, referring to data files of the 2000 U.S. Census.

STH—State Trunk Highway

TDP—Transit Development Plan (Wausau Area Transit System)

TIP—Transportation Improvement Program (Marathon County)

USDA—United States Department of Agriculture

USH—U.S. Highway

UW-MC—University of Wisconsin—Marathon County

WATS—Wausau Area Transit System

WDA—Wisconsin Department of Agriculture

WDNR—Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

WDOA—Wisconsin Department of Administration

WDOT—Wisconsin Department of Transportation

WHEDA—Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority

WISLR—Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads

WPD—Wetland Protection District

WPS—Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

1. Introduction

This document represents the core of the Town of Elderon Comprehensive Plan. It outlines the community's goals and objectives to address the issues and opportunities identified in the *Conditions and Issues Report* and guide future growth. Goals and objectives have been developed relative to each of the required plan elements. For each of the goals and objectives, specific policies, strategies and/or actions are recommended to enable the community to achieve them. The Implementation Element at the end of this document compiles and prioritizes all the recommended action steps and identifies who is responsible for implementation.

Coordinating planning efforts with other jurisdictions was integral to the local comprehensive planning process. By working in sub-area groups, participating in county-wide planning workshops, and directly communicating with neighboring communities, all participating local municipalities have taken steps to foster intergovernmental cooperation and land use coordination. To achieve a level of broad consistency, all participating municipalities worked together to identify common likes, dislikes and concerns impacting their respective sub-areas. These were distilled into ten countywide guiding principles that describe a broad, shared vision of the future of Marathon County.

Local plans must also address the State's fourteen planning goals outlined in Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001, to the extent applicable. The sub-area concerns are summarized below and the State planning goals and countywide guiding principles are summarized in Appendix A and B, respectively.

Sub-Area Concerns

Following is a list of concerns shared by the four rural planning sub-areas outside of the Wausau metropolitan area. These were developed through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) exercise to identify aspects of the sub-areas that participants liked, disliked, or had concerns about. Because many of the concerns were shared by all the rural sub-areas, they were consolidated into one list as follows:

General Concerns:

Local Development Control

- Maintain local control of development regulation
- Private property rights

Degree of Regulation

- Prefer minimal development regulation, but open to some regulation to protect prime farmland, rural character, natural resources and water quality
- Managed development preferred

Land Use and Development:

Preserve Rural Character

- Rural settings (small farms dotting landscape)
- Low population density (1, 2 and 5 acre lots)
- Ample open space, woodlands, natural areas, etc.
- Small town living – familiar, friendly, safe
- Concentrate commercial and industrial development in cities or villages

Farm/Non-farm Conflicts

- Increased demand (from new residents) for higher level of service, paved roads, etc.
- Traffic conflicts between passenger vehicles and farm equipment
- Road paving and dust control – Costs? Benefits?
- Road damage from heavy farm equipment
- Increased complaints about farm smells, dust, noise

Urban Fringe Development

- Annexation - lack of control over where, when and what might develop
- Some support for cooperative boundary agreements to manage growth at urban edge
- Planned development preferred - but wary of over regulation

Identity and Appearance

- Lack of design/aesthetics control for commercial and industrial development (buildings, landscaping, signs)
- Cluttered appearance of major road corridors (signs, power lines, no landscaping)
- Improve housing maintenance in some neighborhoods
- Land use conflicts – i.e. old industrial adjacent to residential

Preservation and Protection of Resources:

Preserve/Protect Natural Resources

- Preserve woodlands (highest ratings in survey responses), wetlands, rivers
- Protect/maintain natural character and scenic quality
- Maintain access to natural areas

Fiscal/Economic:

Strong and Diverse Tax Base

- Loss of land, jobs and population due to annexation
- Loss of taxable land due to public purchase (e.g. County Forests)
- Redevelop under-utilized land, particularly along Wisconsin River
- Maintain/foster diverse mix of land uses
- Competition for industrial development – particularly between urban and fringe areas

Farmland Preservation (primarily economic issue)

- Loss of small/family farms to development or larger farms
- Mega farms [also concerns about environmental impacts]
- Decreasing number of active farms
- Conversion of farms to non-farm development
- Land value inflation (high taxes)

Infrastructure:

Traffic and Transportation System

- Too many driveway openings on busy road corridors
- Lack of future street planning
- Limited river crossings
- New interchange locations and loss of highway access
- Highway frontage roads – access limitations

Protect Water Supply

- Depletion or degradation due to high volume users (mega farms, new high school, industry)
- Limited access to water for wells in some areas (bedrock, etc.)

Sewer and Septic System Availability

- Poor soil drainage limits suitability for on-site waste treatment systems in some areas
- “Comm83” opens more areas for on-site treatment systems
- Interest in looking at alternatives to centralized wastewater treatment

Cost Efficient Community Services

- Shared services generally good – fragmentation an issue in some areas
- Maintain and improve services w/o increasing taxes
- How/who will pay for increased services
- Lack of transit access in rural and fringe areas

- **Objective:** An objective is a statement that describes a specific course of action to achieve a goal or address an issue.
- **Policy:** A policy is a general course of action or rule of conduct to be followed to achieve community goals and objectives.
- **Strategies:** As the name implies, strategies are strategic approaches that may involve a series of individual actions to achieve a specific goal or objective.
- **Actions:** An action describes a specific effort that will be undertaken to achieve a specific goal or objective.

Goals, Objectives, Policies, Strategies & Actions

This section is intended to address issues and opportunities as identified by the Town of Elderon in its *Conditions and Issues Report*. These issues and opportunities are captured in the policies, strategies and actions set forth with the intent of achieving the goals identified by the community. These goals work in concert with the goals set forth by the State of Wisconsin (Appendix A) and Marathon County (Appendix B).

Definitions:

- **Goal:** A goal is a statement that describes a desired future condition. The statement is broad in scope and describes general concepts or things the community hopes to accomplish.

2. Housing Element

Looking into the future, the Town of Elderon would like to serve its residents by guiding development to areas that will best utilize areas already served by public utilities. Additionally, the Town of Elderon would like to ensure that a variety of housing options are available to its residents.

Goal 1: Plan for rural residential development to address concerns about waste disposal systems, adequacy of water supply and to preserve rural character in the Town.

- **Objective: To consider changes to minimum lot size for new rural residential and subdivision development.**
- **Objective: To encourage housing development in areas that can best be served with infrastructure including water capacity and road access.**
- **Objective: To locate new residential units in areas that will have minimal impact on forest and farmland.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon supports adequate and thorough planning for rural residential development.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Distinguish areas that are preferable to the Town for new rural residential development.

Goal 2: Ensure that residents have access to a variety of housing options.

- **Objective: To work with Marathon County to identify area housing agencies that serve housing needs and provide information to residents.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon supports the dissemination of housing information to local residents.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Contact and meet with area housing agencies.
- Summarize meetings or obtain information to provide to the public.

3. Transportation Element

A pending STH 29 corridor study is an area of concern for Town of Elderon residents, as well as the intersection of STH 29 and STH 49. Safety and rural/urban conflicts are identified issues as the Town of Elderon continues to grow. The following goals, objectives and actions reflect the Town of Elderon's desire to be proactive in planning for future transportation needs.

Goal 1: Improve traffic safety within the Town.

- **Objective: To continue to work with WDOT and the Village of Elderon to manage traffic along STH 49.**
- **Objective: To work with WDOT to address safety issues at the corner of STH 49 and STH 29.**
- **Objective: To establish criteria for review of driveway access along Town roads if and when documentation is necessary for efficient planning.**
- **Objective: To look for opportunities to minimize rural/urban road usage conflicts.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon will work with many parties to make sure that traffic safety is improved within the Town.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Initiate conversations with WDOT and the Village of Elderon about traffic along STH 49.
- Initiate conversations and gather information from WDOT on the intersection of STH 49 and STH 29.
- Consider development of a driveway permitting process that examines various safety and road management issues.
- Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the County Sheriff's Department to educate the public about slow-moving vehicles and other farm uses that may impede regular traffic.
- Consider posting signs directing traffic to other routes from certain roads which may have a high level of farm traffic on a given day.

Goal 2: Maintain and improve Town roads.

- **Objective: To continue the annual road budgeting process so that maintenance and improvements can be programmed.**
- **Objective: To secure adequate sources of revenue to fund needed maintenance and improvements.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon supports programs to help maintain and improve the condition of Town roads.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Meet annually to prioritize and program road repair and improvements.
- Initiate talks with the County and the State about sources on revenue to fund road improvements.

Goal 3: Improve access management along STH 29.

- **Objective:** To work with surrounding communities, the County and the State to carry out a corridor study along STH 29.
- **Objective:** To continue to ensure that development along STH 29 occurs in areas that will have adequate access in the future.

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages coordination between local, County, and State entities regarding development and access along STH 29.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Maintain contact with the State and continue to express interest in a corridor study along STH 29.
- Be sure that Elderon is represented in any committees or meetings held by the state or other entities on the STH 29 corridor.
- Identify and map areas along the STH 29 corridor in Elderon that are most appropriate for future development and have appropriate access.
- Use the generated future land use map to guide development reviews in the STH 29 corridor.

Road Improvements

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation requires all incorporated communities to prepare a Pavement Management Plan using a pavement rating system for their local roads. These plans were to be submitted for review by December 2001. The data from these plans is intended to provide the foundation for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR), which is a computer resource that will enable communities and the State to begin to assess Wisconsin's local roadway system.

The PASER system, which was designed by the Transportation Information Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the rating system used most by Wisconsin communities. PASER rates road surfaces on a scale of 1 to 10.

This scale is broken down as follows:

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

In addition to its use in the new WISLR, the rating system gives communities a detailed assessment of the appropriate maintenance method for each road segment under their jurisdiction. This assessment is then incorporated into the community's Pavement Management Plan. WISLR ratings and surface types in the Town of Elderon are shown on Figures 4-1 and 4-2, and summarized in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Summary of Pavement Conditions

Surface Type Code (miles)						
Unimproved Road	Graded Earth Road	Gravel Road	Wearing Surface	Cold Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Cold Mix Resurfacing with < 7" Base	Cold Mix Resurfacing with > 7" Base
0.08	1.53	3.61	0.76			
Cold Mix Asphalt Base < 7"	Cold Mix Asphalt Base > 7"	Hot Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Hot Mix Resurfacing	Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement	Concrete Pavement	Brick or Block Pavement
10.46	28.86					

Surface Condition Rating - WISLR Data						
No Data	Failed	Very Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
4.57		0.87	3.38	15.92	10.21	10.35

Source: WDOT (WISLR), 8/10/04

The roads that display a surface rating of “Good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to promote safe travel conditions. Further information is necessary for those roads that display no surface rating data. This data collection effort will help ensure safe travel conditions along those routes.

Paving Gravel Roads – Approximately five miles of roads within the Town remain unpaved. When paving gravel roads, there are many factors that should be taken into consideration. Appendix F outlines some general guidelines to help the Town decide if or when to pave gravel roads.

4. Utilities Element

The Town of Elderon does not provide public sewer or water service. All development relies on private wells and waste disposal systems. Town of Elderon residents are concerned with planning for efficient private waste disposal systems, as well as protecting the Town's water supply.

Goal 1: Ensure a safe, sufficient supply of potable water.

- **Objective: To work with Marathon County to protect critical groundwater recharge areas.**
- **Objective: To work with Marathon County to ensure that Elderon's 6 high capacity irrigation wells do not deplete groundwater supplies.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon supports the maintenance and protection of its drinking water supply.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Work with the County to identify and map critical groundwater recharge areas.

Goal 2: Ensure that groundwater pollution from agricultural run-off or other pollutants is minimized.

- **Objective: To encourage residents to conduct regular well testing to ensure that water is safe.**
- **Objective: To the extent possible, limit uncontrolled runoff, overuse of fertilizers, and other waterway contaminants.**

POLICIES

The Town of Elderon supports actions to ensure that groundwater pollution is minimized.

ACTIONS/STRATEGIES

- Educate residents on well testing through brochures or speakers on the subject. Utilize the resources of Marathon County and UW-Extension for this information.

Goal 3: Plan for efficient on-site sanitary waste disposal systems in Elderon.

- **Objective: To ensure that lot sizes are adequate for private waste disposal systems.**
- **Objective: To ensure that waste disposal systems will not have negative effects on wetlands, rivers, or streams in Elderon.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages appropriate and efficient use of on-site sanitary waste disposal systems.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Develop and adopt a minimum lot size relative to a certain size of waste disposal systems.

5. Community Facilities Element

The Town of Elderon is served primarily by the Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District. The Town is also part of the Hatley Area Fire and Ambulance District. Law enforcement is provided by the Marathon County Sheriff's Department. The Town of Elderon's goals reflect the desire to support existing facilities and services.

Goal 1: Support and maintain existing community facilities.

- **Objective: To maintain the Town Hall as a seat of local government and community meeting hall.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon recognizes the importance of the Town Hall as a gathering place for the community and as a government center of the Town.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Identify necessary repairs and allocate funds to maintain and/or improve the Town Hall on a regular basis.

Goal 2: Ensure adequate fire and emergency service provision.

- **Objective: To continue to participate in the Hatley Area Fire and Ambulance District and maintain and improve equipment and service.**

- **Objective: To examine whether there is a need for a second fire hall in the southern half of the district.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon recognizes the importance of adequate fire and emergency service provisions.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Meet regularly to review and determine if existing service is adequate, or if another fire hall is needed.

6. Agriculture/Natural Resources Element

The Town of Elderon places a high priority on protection of its agriculture, forestry and water resources, and wishes to protect these resources from intensive development. The Town of Elderon has developed the following goals and actions to demonstrate its support.

Goal 1: Keep agriculture, forestry and recreation uses of the land resource a priority in the Town of Elderon.

- **Objective: To encourage participation in programs such as Managed Forest Law to aid property owners in efficient land management.**
- **Objective: To guide development in order to prevent fragmentation of large areas of cropland and woodlands.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon views agricultural, forestry, and recreational uses of land as a priority.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Identify large areas of cropland and woodlands, and use this information to identify non-preferred locations for development.
- Distribute information on Managed Forest Law.

- Work with UW-Extension and Marathon County to address the maintenance of pasture land and woodlands.
- Work with the County to identify prime woodlot areas.

Goal 2: Encourage the protection and preservation of prime farmland for agricultural production.

- **Objective: To continue use of agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce soil erosion, decrease sedimentation into surface waters, and increase proper nutrient crediting to protect surface resources.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon recognizes the importance of prime farmland as an important agricultural resource, now and in the future.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the NRCS to implement and monitor farmland conservation practices, including BMPs.

Goal 3: Protect the Town's water resources, including potable water.

- **Objective: To work with Marathon County to protect critical groundwater recharge areas.**

- **Objective:** To encourage residents to conduct regular well testing to ensure that water is safe.

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon strongly supports the protection of water resources.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Identify and map critical groundwater recharge areas.
- Consult with the County to identify ways to protect recharge areas.
- Educate residents on well testing through brochures or speakers on the subject. Utilize the resources of the UW-Extension for this information.

Goal 4: Protect the aesthetic and environmental qualities of Elderon's lakes.

- **Objective: To minimize intensive development around Elderon's lakes that could affect water quality, habitat or natural vegetation near the lakes.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages the protection of local lakes.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Establish guidelines for developments located near lakes, including type and use (i.e. single family residential only).
- Enforce and check up on required buffer zones and setbacks.
- Work with UW-Extension and the County on how to implement conservation or shoreland buffers.

Goal 5: Protect natural resources, including forest, wetland and lake communities, from intensive development.

- **Objective: To continue working with Marathon County to ensure appropriate preservation of wetlands and shorelines.**
- **Objective: To provide leadership in disseminating information about wetland preservation and forest management to Town residents.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages the protection of natural resources.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Identify a point person who will be responsible for gathering and distributing wetland information to Elderon residents.
- Work with UW-Extension to generate wetland and forest preservation and management information.

Goal 6: Protect and enhance surface waters from intensive development.

- **Objective: To minimize intensive development in areas that could affect the water quality and habitat.**

- **Objective: To the extent possible, limit uncontrolled runoff, over use of fertilizers, and other waterway contaminants to surface water.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages the protection and enhancement of local surface waters.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Utilize currently established state and county guidelines to regulate development located near surface waters.
- Offer incentives to landowners who take steps to protect surface waters on or adjacent to their property.
- Work with UW-Extension and the County on how to implement conservation buffers and native vegetation.

7. Cultural Resources Element

Although there are no properties in the Town of Elderon listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Charles Berke house has been determined eligible for listing. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has identified two archaeological sites and one historic cemetery in the Town of Elderon. The Town does not have a local historic preservation commission, but wishes to cooperate with any future studies done by Marathon County.

Goal 1: Preserve historically significant buildings and sites.

- **Objective: To work with the local historical society and/or the County Historical Society to identify historic resources so they may be considered in future planning.**
- **Objective: To ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or any development activities.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon supports the preservation of historically significant buildings and sites.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Work with the County Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Office to determine if structures are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

- Map historic buildings, cemeteries/burials, and archaeological sites, and make maps readily available for project planning and development review.

8. Parks Element

The Town of Elderon does not own or operate any public parks. Nearby, however, the Village of Elderon owns and maintains three public parks, South Park, North Park, and McNulty Park. There are also no major Marathon County parks in the Town of Elderon, but Mission Lake County Park is located in the southeast corner of the Town of Reid, on the border with the Town of Elderon. While the Town of Elderon sees no need for additional parkland at this time, it wishes to support existing facilities.

Goal 1: Support the Marathon County park and forest system that serves Elderon residents.

- **Objective: To encourage appropriate funding for maintenance and improvements of local Marathon County parks and forests.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon recognizes the County and local park systems as an important asset to the community.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Initiate conversations with the County to learn of plans for improvements or maintenance to area parks.
- Report misuse or abuse of the County park and forest system to the County.

9. Economic Development Element

Employment opportunities within the Town of Elderon are limited to mostly agricultural employment, as there is limited commercial and industrial use within the Town. As overall agricultural employment is anticipated to decrease in Marathon County overall, the Town of Elderon is expected to see a decrease in overall employment through the year 2030. The Town recognizes the importance of agriculture to its economy, and has set forth goals and actions to maintain a viable agricultural base.

Goal 1: Strengthen the viability of the local agricultural economy to ensure that existing farms are able to remain in agriculture as long as they choose.

- **Objective: To encourage residential development to locate away from large blocks of farmland and forest land.**
- **Objective: To support the creation of niche markets or other opportunities that will help farmers to stay in business.**
- **Objective: To encourage the use of agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) to increase productivity of farmland.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon supports agriculture as a prime economic force in the Town.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Adopt guidelines or ordinances to guide residential development to certain areas, away from active farmland.
- Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the NRCS to implement farmland conservation practices, including BMPs.

10. Intergovernmental Cooperation Element

In light of possible future development along STH 29 and increasing development pressure in the Pike Lake and Bass Lake areas, the Town of Elderon recognizes the importance of coordination with adjacent communities. It also shares services with other communities, and wishes to provide the most efficient and cost-effective services possible. The Town of Elderon's goals and actions indicate its desire to work effectively with other communities to address these issues.

Goal 1: Provide the most cost-efficient, effective services to residents in areas such as road maintenance, snowplowing, or other services.

- **Objective: To explore opportunities to work with adjacent communities where there are potential cost savings in service delivery.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon supports working with adjacent communities to provide cost savings in road maintenance and services.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Initiate meetings with surrounding Towns and the County to discuss road maintenance schedules.

- Initiate meetings with surrounding communities to discuss snow-plowing and other service activities.

Goal 2: Improve access management along STH 29.

- **Objective: To work with surrounding communities, the County and the State to carry out a corridor study along STH 29.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages coordination between local, County, and State entities regarding development and access along STH 29.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Maintain contact with the State and continue to express interest in a corridor study along STH 29.
- Be sure that the Town of Elderon is represented in any committees or meetings held by the state or other entities on the STH 29 corridor.
- Identify and map areas along the STH 29 corridor in Elderon that are most appropriate for future development and have appropriate access. Share this information with other communities.
- Share and coordinate future land use maps with other communities.

Goal 3: Plan to manage development around Pike Lake and Bass Lake to preserve the aesthetic and environmental qualities of the lakes.

- **Objective: To work with the Towns of Reid and Norrie to develop joint land use policies for areas around the lakes.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages joint land use planning for Pike Lake and Bass Lake.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Initiate discussions with the Towns of Norrie and Reid about development around each of the lakes.

Goal 4: Encourage participation by Town officials and residents in all levels of government.

- **Objective: To encourage local officials to participate in county and state government activities and organizations.**
- **Objective: To encourage regular participation and feedback from residents through surveys, informational public meetings, newsletters or other activities.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages local officials and residents to participate in local planning activities and organizations.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Invite representatives from county and state activities and organizations to speak at Town meetings.
- Develop a survey which can be mailed out to residents, asking for suggestions or feedback on proposed or recently constructed projects (roads, residential developments, etc.)
- Designate a main contact person who will be responsible for organizing and/or distributing public information materials.

11. Land Use Element

Like the other towns in southeastern Marathon County, Elderon contains both woodlands and croplands. Woodland predominates on the northern, western and southwestern areas of the Town. Cropland is most evident in the eastern half of Elderon with large areas along STH 49 and STH 29 in the northeast corner. Other crop land is along CTH II and along Cherry Drive in the center of the Town.

In terms of development patterns, Elderon retains more large parcels of land than some adjacent towns. Although there are some smaller parcels, the 40-acre parcel is more typical in Elderon.

The Town of Elderon's goals reflect a desire to preserve the rural character and agricultural livelihood that exists in the Town, as well as controlling development in the popular lake areas.

Goal 1: Preserve the rural character settlement pattern in Elderon.

- **Objective: To determine an appropriate lot size that will support Elderon's concept of rural character.**
- **Objective: To establish development regulations that will support rural character.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon recognizes its rural character as an important and attractive asset.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Set and adopt guidelines for minimum lot size.
- Guide higher density development to areas that would not greatly compromise rural character.
- Clearly identify and map the areas suitable for higher density development, and those areas that should remain low-density.

Goal 2: Encourage development to locate away from prime farmland.

- **Objective: To discourage residential development in identified farming areas to prevent fragmentation of large blocks of farmland.**
- **Objective: To restrict the placement of non-farm commercial or industrial uses in identified prime farming areas.**
- **Objective: To discourage development in identified farming areas in order to minimize conflicts between non-farm residents and farms and their operating characteristics.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon recognizes the importance of farmland as an important agricultural resource, now and in the future.
- The Town of Elderon supports the minimization of farm/non-farm conflicts.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Identify prime farm and other important farm areas.
- Research exclusive agricultural zoning.
- Meet with property owners, Marathon County, and UW-Extension to develop a program to direct new agricultural operators to existing operators of prime farmland who wish to sell.
- Actively support and participate in the ongoing program that Marathon County and UW-Extension is developing to direct new/young farmers into the County.

Goal 3: Proactively plan for increased demand for rural residential land development.

- **Objective: To direct rural residential uses to locations that complement adjacent areas and to respond to availability of water and other infrastructure.**
- **Objective: To direct rural residential uses away from sensitive lands such as wetlands, creeks and rivers.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon discourages development in areas not served by available infrastructure.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Work with the County to identify and map areas where different residential development types should occur, such as the most appropriate place for large lots.

Goal 4: Provide tools for managing growth.

- **Objective: To base land use decisions on Elderon’s adopted plan for future development.**
- **Objective: To develop subdivision regulations that guide development review and specify subdivision requirements.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages the use and adoption of tools to manage new growth.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Use the adopted plan for future development as a tool when reviewing development applications.
- Develop and adopt subdivision regulations.

Goal 5: Preserve the environmental and aesthetic qualities of lakes in Elderon.

- **Objective: Work to establish consistent development regulations around lakes.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Elderon encourages the protection of local lakes.

STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Establish guidelines for developments located near lakes, including type and use.

Accommodating Future Growth

Future Land Use – The Town of Elderon Future Land Use map, shown in Figure 11-1 illustrates the anticipated future pattern of land uses. The map includes fourteen land use categories to guide where new residential and non-residential development should be encouraged to locate or where development should be discouraged. Descriptions of each land use category and the number of acres within each category are provided in Table 11-1. Figure 11-3 shows areas with development constraints due to environmental conditions such as wetlands and floodplains, or policy constraints such as restrictive zoning or other programs (i.e., Exclusive Agriculture, Forest Crop Law). Areas where existing development precludes additional development are also shown.

A majority of the future land use in the Town of Elderon is anticipated to be in woodland and agricultural use (combined 90%). Only about two percent of land is designated for residential use. These will be mostly single-family homes on larger lots scattered throughout the Town along County and other major roads.

Table 11-1: Future Land Use, 2005

Land Cover Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
Single Family Residential	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes	500	2%
Multi-Family Residential	Multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments	1	<1%
Commercial Services	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	8	<1%
Industrial	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers	0	0
Quarries/ Gravel Pits	Mining operations	0	0
Cropland	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland	6311	27%
Other Agriculture	Fallow, pasture and undetermined agriculture, power lines and towers, water towers, municipal wells	1513	7%
Public/ Quasi-Public	Schools, churches, cemeteries, libraries, government buildings, National Guard, utility facilities.	65	<1%
Park and Recreation	Public and private parks, trails, ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, camp grounds, shooting ranges, etc.	438	2%
Woodlands	Privately-owned forested land, including nurseries, paper mill forests, etc.	12865	56%
Water and Wetlands	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc.	309	1%
Transportation	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	580	3%
Barren Land	Unused open land in wooded areas, along streams, along roadsides	478	2%
Total Land Area		23068	100%

Source: Future Land Use map (acreage corresponds to map dated 5/20/05)

Land Needs – Projections of future population and employment growth in the Town of Elderon are provided in the *Issues and Conditions* report. These were used to estimate the amount of land needed to accommodate future residential and non-residential development over the next 20 years. Acreage projections were based on assumptions about density of houses per acre and employees per acre.

It is estimated over the next 20 years, 5 acres will be needed to accommodate future residential development and 4 acres are needed for future non-residential development. Sufficient acreage to meet estimated demand for new residential development is provided, however sufficient acreage has not been provided for non-residential. The Town of Elderon has not identified areas for potential residential and non-residential acres at this time. The future land use map reflects known land platted for future development. It is likely that new large-lot, single-family development will continue to occur in areas currently designated as agriculture or private woodland. Requests for non-residential uses will be evaluated at the time of proposal.

Land developed for new residential and commercial use will most likely be converted from agricultural use and limited woodland use, instead of subdividing existing residential lots. This trend is illustrated in Table 11-2 below.

Table 11-2: Acreage Projections, 2000-2030

	Estimated Acreage Needed by Year						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Agricultural	15144	15142.5	15141	15139.5	15138	15136.5	15135
Residential	483	483.83	484.66	485.49	486.32	487.15	487.98
Commercial	8	8.67	9.34	10.01	10.68	11.35	12.02
Industrial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Acreage based on estimates from Regional Planning Commission dated 10/29/03 and Marathon County

The agricultural category includes cropland, other agriculture, woodlands and barren land use categories. The residential category includes single-family and multi-family uses. The non-residential category includes commercial, industrial and quarry uses. This table does not include land use categories that are generally not developable, such as public/quasi-public, recreation, water/wetlands, and transportation.

Consistency between Land Use and Zoning – Land use and zoning designations are related, but not necessarily identical. Land use categories tend to be fairly general whereas zoning districts regulate specific land uses and development requirements. Because the land use categories are general it is common for more than one zoning district to correspond to each land use category. It is also possible that some zoning districts might be consistent with more than one land use designation.

Achieving consistency between land use and zoning is required by State Statutes. This generally occurs when a community is considering a proposed zoning change. The decision to approve a zoning change must be based on the adopted comprehensive plan, and specifically, the future land use map. Generally, if a the requested zoning is consistent with the land use designation on the property it should be approved, unless unique circumstances indicated the rezoning would negatively impact surrounding properties or the community. If a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation, the community should consider denying the rezoning request.

In situations where a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation - but the community believes the requested zoning is appropriate in the specific location and would benefit the community - the zoning change can be approved, however, the

Town of Elderon

land use map should be amended accordingly to establish land use and zoning consistency. The process for amending the land use map is discussed in greater detail in the Implementation Element.

12. Implementation Element

The primary reason a community prepares a comprehensive plan is to establish a framework to influence decisions regarding management of growth and regulation of development to maintain the desired community character, and to set priorities for public expenditures. To be effective, this plan should be actively used as a tool to guide decisions concerning:

- The implementation and enforcement of regulatory ordinances based on the goals and objectives identified in this plan.
- The development of programs and support systems that further the goals and objectives set forth in this plan.
- The implementation of specific community improvements as identified in the comprehensive plan.
- The establishment and support of a continued planning process providing for periodic review and updates to this plan and other land use control measures.

Implementation Tools

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. The most common implementation tools are the Town official controls or regulatory codes. In particular, the zoning ordinance and subdivision (or land division) regulations comprise the principal regulatory devices used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development as identified in this comprehensive plan. There are also non-regulatory approaches to implementing the comprehensive plan; these generally involve decisions about how the community will spend its limited funding resources on capital improvements and staffing.

The State planning law requires that by January 1, 2010 certain programs and/or actions that affect land use must be consistent with the locally adopted comprehensive plan. To meet this deadline, the Town of Elderon should update related ordinances on or before the year 2010. The Town Board officially adopts these regulatory and land use control measures as ordinances (or as revisions to the existing ordinances).

- **Zoning Ordinance and Map:** Zoning is used to manage and control how land is used and developed. Zoning ordinances typically establish detailed regulations concerning how land may be developed, including setbacks, the density or intensity of development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose of zoning is to minimize undesirable side effects resulting from development by segregating and/or buffering incompatible uses and by maintaining standards that ensure development will not negatively impact the community's character or environment.

The establishment of zoning districts and the zoning map indicates where specific types of development can and should be located. Zoning districts shown on the zoning map should be coordinated with the land use plan and map. While the zoning map and land use map do not need to directly match at the time the land use map is adopted, the intent is that the land use map will serve as a guide indicating how the property should eventually be zoned. Therefore, indiscriminate zoning changes may result in weakening of the comprehensive plan. In fact, changes to zoning district boundaries should only be made if they are consistent with the adopted land use map.

However, there may be situations where changing the zoning district boundary makes sense and is in the best interest of the

community. If changing the zoning would result in a conflict with the future land use map, the land use map should also be changed. However, the future land use map should only be changed if it does not accurately reflect the community's desired land use pattern. Achieving consistency between zoning and land use designation is also discussed in the Land Use Element.

As discussed below, the comprehensive plan (and future land use map) should be periodically reviewed and updated to adjust for unforeseen changes or events that were not considered at the time the initial plan and land use map were developed.

The Town Board makes the final decisions regarding changes to the content of the zoning ordinance and the district map. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the plan commission.

- **Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance:** Subdivision regulations serve as an important function by ensuring the orderly development of unplatted and/or undeveloped land. These regulations may set forth reasonable regulations for lot sizes, road access, street design, public utilities, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be an asset. The Board makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the plan commission.
- **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP):** This is an ongoing financial planning program that allows local communities to plan ahead for capital expenditures and minimize unplanned

expenses. A capital improvement plan consists of a list of proposed projects according to a schedule of priorities over a four-to-six year period. It identifies needed public improvements, estimates their costs, and identifies financing methods and sources. Public improvements or expenditures typically considered in a CIP include:

- Public buildings (i.e., fire and police stations)
- Park and trail acquisition and development
- Roads and highways (maintenance and new construction/paving)
- Utility system construction/expansion, treatment plants, water towers, wells, etc.
- Joint school and other community development projects
- Fire and police protection equipment

A CIP is simply a method of planning for and scheduling expenditures for public improvements over a period of several years in order to maximize the use of limited public funds. Each year the CIP should be reviewed and extended one year to compensate for the previous year that was completed. This keeps the improvement program current and allows for modifications to meet the community's changing needs.

The preparation of a CIP is normally a joint responsibility between the Town Board, plan commission, staff, and citizen commissions. The preparation of a capital improvement program may vary from community to community depending on local preferences, the local form of government and available staff. The proposed capital improvement plan should be reviewed in light of the priorities outlined in the comprehensive plan.

Plan Adoption, Monitoring, and Amendments

While this comprehensive plan is intended to provide a long-term framework to guide development and public spending decisions, it must also respond to the continuous stream of changes that occur in the community and/or region that may not have been foreseen when the plan was initially adopted. It is appropriate that some elements of the plan are rarely amended while others are subject to updating on a more regular basis. Plan maps should also be updated periodically. In general, key maps, such as the future land use map, should be reviewed annually to make sure they are still current.

Plan Adoption: The first step in implementing this plan involves adoption of the plan by local officials. The formal review and adoption process involves plan review by the Plan Commission (or other planning committee) who must adopt the plan by resolution of majority vote. The Plan Commission recommendation is forwarded to the Town Board who must adopt the plan by ordinance (of majority vote). A public hearing is required to allow public comment on the ordinance prior to Board final action to adopt the plan. Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local development decisions over the next 20 years. The adopted plan should also be recognized as a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and goals and objectives regarding coordination of growth and development.

Plan Use, Monitoring and Evaluation: The adopted plan should be used as a tool by the Town of Elderon when making land use and development decisions. Decisions concerning private development proposals, public investments, regulations,

incentives, and other actions should be consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations outlined in this plan.

Although this plan describes policies and actions for future implementation, it is impossible to predict the exact future condition of the Town of Elderon. As such, the goals, objectives, and actions in this plan should be monitored on a regular basis to maintain concurrence with changing conditions and respond to unanticipated events.

This plan should be evaluated at least every 5 years, and updated at least every 10 years. Members of the Town Board, Plan Commission, and any other local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated. The evaluation should involve first reviewing the goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires. Then the strategies and actions should be reviewed and refined to eliminate completed tasks and identify new approaches if appropriate. The evaluation should also include an updated timetable of actions to clarify priorities.

Plan Amendments: The Town of Elderon Comprehensive Plan may be amended at any time by the Town Board following the same process described above for initial Plan adoption, regardless of how minor the proposed amendment or change. Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change. These amendments will typically consist of minor changes to the plan text or maps. Large-scale changes or frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided or the plan loses integrity. A list of criteria to determine the merits of proposed amendments is included in Table 12-1.

As noted above, proposed amendments must be reviewed by the Plan Commission prior to final action and adoption by the Town Board. The public should be notified of proposed Plan changes and allowed an opportunity for review and comment. For major amendments, the Town might consider soliciting public opinion through surveys and/or community meetings prior to the official public hearing.

Plan Updates: According to the State comprehensive planning law, comprehensive plans must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to the more routine amendments described above, plan updates often involve re-writing of whole sections of the plan document and significant changes to supporting maps. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community’s goals and objectives based on an analysis of current growth trends and major changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption.

Table 12-1: Criteria to Consider When Reviewing Plan Changes

1. The change is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Town of Elderon Comprehensive Plan.
2. The change does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated.
3. Development resulting from the change does not create an undue impact on surrounding properties. Such development should be consistent with the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood or would upgrade and improve its viability.
4. The change allows a more viable transition to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current land use.
5. The change does not have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment including trees, slopes and groundwater, or the impact could be mitigated by improvements on the site or in the same vicinity.
6. There is a change in Town actions or neighborhood characteristics that would justify a change.
7. The change corrects an error made in the original plan.
8. There is a community or regional need identified in the comprehensive plan for the proposed land use or service.
9. The change does not adversely impact any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties unless mitigated through relocation, commemoration or dedication.

Consistency Among Plan Elements

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the Implementation Element describe how each of the required elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Since the Town of Elderon completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap naturally exists between the nine plan elements. Where deemed appropriate, goals, objectives, and actions have been repeated under all applicable elements to ensure they do not get “lost”.

This Comprehensive Plan also references previous and concurrent related planning efforts (e.g, LRTP, Groundwater Study) to ensure they are considered in planning decisions in conjunction with the recommendations of this Plan. Summary descriptions of recent and concurrent planning efforts are provided in the *Conditions and Issues Report*. Recommendations from other plans have been summarized and incorporated in this plan as deemed appropriate, to foster coordination and consistency between plans. Some related plans, such as the *Marathon County Hazard Mitigation Plan*, are incorporated by reference in this plan and are essentially considered appendices of this plan even though they are separate documents.

Action Plan

The table below provides a detailed list of major actions to complete in order to implement this comprehensive plan. It compiles the major short, mid, and long-term priorities described in each of the nine plan elements. It also identifies the parties that will play key roles in implementing the actions.

Table 12-2 is intended to be used by local officials in setting priorities for capital budgeting and resource allocation. It is expected that this table will be reviewed annually and revised, as necessary, to respond to changing priorities, financial limitations, and other unforeseen events. It should be noted that many of the actions require considerable cooperation with others, including the citizens of the Town of Elderon, staff, and other local/county/state agencies.

Priority ranking is defined as follows:

- Immediate = ASAP
- Short-term = 1-4 years
- Mid-term = 5-9 years
- Long-term = 10+ years
- On-going = Current activities that should continue indefinitely

Table 12-2: Implementation Plan Actions

Action	Priority
Housing	
Distinguish areas that are preferable to the Town for new rural residential development.	Immediate
Contact and meet with area housing agencies.	Short-term
Summarize meetings or obtain information to provide to the public.	Short-term
Transportation	
Initiate conversations with WDOT and the Village of Elderon about traffic along STH 49.	Short-term
Initiate conversations and gather information from WDOT on the intersection of STH 49 and STH 29.	Short-term
Consider development of a driveway permitting process that examines various safety and road management issues.	Short-term
Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the County Sheriff's Department to educate the public about slow-moving vehicles and other farm uses that may impede regular traffic.	Short-term
Consider posting signs directing traffic to other routes from certain roads which may have a high level of farm traffic on a given day.	Short-term
Meet annually to prioritize and program road repair and improvements.	Ongoing
Initiate talks with the County and the State about sources on revenue to fund road improvements.	Ongoing
Maintain contact with the State and continue to express interest in a corridor study along STH 29.	Ongoing
Be sure that Elderon is represented in any committees or meetings held by the state or other entities on the STH 29 corridor.	Short-term
Identify and map areas along the STH 29 corridor in Elderon that are most appropriate for future development and have appropriate access.	Short-term
Use the generated future land use map to guide development reviews in the STH 29 corridor.	Immediate

Action	Priority
Utilities	
Work with the County to identify and map critical groundwater recharge areas.	Short-term
Educate residents on well testing through brochures or speakers on the subject. Utilize the resources of Marathon County and UW-Extension for this information.	Short-term
Develop and adopt a minimum lot size relative to a certain size of waste disposal systems.	Short-term
Community Facilities	
Identify necessary repairs and allocate funds to maintain and/or improve the Town Hall on a regular basis.	Ongoing
Meet regularly to review and determine if existing service is adequate, or if another fire hall is needed.	Ongoing
Agriculture/Natural Resources	
Identify large areas of cropland and woodlands, and use this information to identify non-preferred locations for development.	Short-term
Distribute information on Managed Forest Law.	Short-term
Work with UW-Extension and Marathon County to address the maintenance of pasture land and woodlands.	Short-term
Work with the County to identify prime woodlot areas.	Short-term
Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the NRCS to implement and monitor farmland conservation practices, including BMPs.	Ongoing
Identify and map critical groundwater recharge areas.	Short-term
Consult with the County to identify ways to protect recharge areas.	Mid-term
Educate residents on well testing through brochures or speakers on the subject. Utilize the resources of the UW-Extension for this information.	Short-term
Establish guidelines for developments located near lakes, including type and use (i.e. single family residential only).	Short-term
Enforce and check up on required buffer zones and setbacks.	Ongoing
Work with UW-Extension and the County on how to implement conservation or shoreland buffers.	Short-term

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Action	Priority
Identify a point person who will be responsible for gathering and distributing wetland information to Elderon residents.	Immediate
Work with UW-Extension to generate wetland and forest preservation and management information.	Mid-term
Utilize currently established state and county guidelines to regulate development located near surface waters.	Ongoing
Offer incentives to landowners who take steps to protect surface waters on or adjacent to their property.	Mid-term
Work with UW-Extension and the County on how to implement conservation buffers and native vegetation.	Short-term
Cultural Resources	
Work with the County Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Office to determine if structures are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.	Mid-term
Map historic buildings, cemeteries/burials, and archaeological sites, and make maps readily available for project planning and development review.	Short-term
Parks and Recreation	
Initiate conversations with the County to learn of plans for improvements or maintenance to area parks.	Ongoing
Report misuse or abuse of the County park and forest system to the County.	Ongoing
Economic Development	
Adopt guidelines or ordinances to guide residential development to certain areas, away from active farmland.	Mid-term
Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the NRCS to implement farmland conservation practices, including BMPs.	Ongoing
Intergovernmental Cooperation	
Initiate meetings with surrounding Towns and the County to discuss road maintenance schedules.	Ongoing
Initiate meetings with surrounding communities to discuss snow-plowing and other service activities.	Ongoing
Maintain contact with the State and continue to express interest in a corridor study along STH 29.	Short-term

Action	Priority
Be sure that the Town of Elderon is represented in any committees or meetings held by the state or other entities on the STH 29 corridor.	Short-term
Identify and map areas along the STH 29 corridor in Elderon that are most appropriate for future development and have appropriate access. Share this information with other communities.	Short-term
Share and coordinate future land use maps with other communities.	Immediate
Initiate discussions with the Towns of Norrie and Reid about development around each of the lakes.	Short-term
Invite representatives from county and state activities and organizations to speak at Town meetings.	Short-term
Develop a survey which can be mailed out to residents, asking for suggestions or feedback on proposed or recently constructed projects (roads, residential developments, etc.)	Mid-term
Designate a main contact person who will be responsible for organizing and/or distributing public information	Immediate

Appendix A

State Comprehensive Planning Goals

Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 requires that the goals, objectives, policies, and programs of local governmental units be consistent with the fourteen planning goals in the State planning legislation, which include:

1. Promote the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
2. Encourage neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protect natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes and woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
4. Protect economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encourage land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state government, and utility costs.
6. Preserve cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
7. Encourage coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Build community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels throughout each community.
10. Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and a supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
11. Promote the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.
12. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Plan and develop land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that provides mobility, convenience, and safety, which meets the needs of all citizens including transit-dependent and disabled.

Appendix B

Marathon County Guiding Principles

Participants in the Marathon County comprehensive planning process worked cooperatively, through several meetings with sub-area groups, to develop a set of guiding principles that describe broad characteristics of a desired future for their communities and Marathon County. The guiding principles consist of a series of statements that reflect shared values and priorities regarding future growth and development. These principles were used to provide a general frame of reference for developing local goals and objectives. The ten guiding principles include:

- 1. Respect Local Governance** - Planning in Marathon County should build on local town, village and city government as a system that is unique, has served residents well, and is a strong component of local identity.
- 2. Preserve Working Agriculture** - Agriculture has been central to the culture and economy of Marathon County for over 100 years. Farming has been a way of life for generations of county residents and is fundamental to both community and individual identity. Efforts such as protecting prime farmland from development, exploring niche markets, and supporting cooperative practices can be implemented at the local level to help maintain and preserve working agriculture.
- 3. Maintain a Sense of Place** - As Marathon County's population grows and changes, communities will need to ensure that important physical features, buildings, and landscapes that exemplify their local identity are retained.

These features provide a sense of heritage and continuity that contribute to a community's identity and sense of place.

- 4. Preserve Rural Character** - Shifts in the farm economy and urban expansion are altering the County's rural landscape characterized by working farms, woodlands, rolling hills, marsh areas, and plentiful water bodies. As open spaces, farms, and woodlands are being lost or fragmented by development, Marathon County communities will need to make some important choices in order to preserve the qualities and character of the rural landscape.
- 5. Safeguard Natural Resources** - Marathon County is graced with abundant natural resources including numerous rivers, wetlands, forests, and wildlife. Careful stewardship of natural resources is essential to protect against fragmentation and degradation and ensure these resources continue to contribute to the ecology, character, quality of life, and economy of Marathon County into the future.
- 6. Foster Managed Growth and Coordinated Development** - Managing growth is important to ensure that no area is overwhelmed by development, land use conflicts are minimized, and development occurs in a quality manner that minimizes impacts on natural resources. Managing growth requires coordination of land uses and infrastructure, within and between communities, and recognizes that high quality growth in any one community will benefit surrounding communities as well.
- 7. Cost-Effective and Efficient Provision of Public Services** - Marathon County residents are clear in their desire to keep local taxes reasonable. One of the most effective

means to keep taxes under control is to ensure that public services are efficiently organized to provide the best service possible for the taxpayer dollar. Communities have a responsibility to provide the highest level of services possible given limited resources. To ensure cost-effective public services, local communities may want to consider options such as greater coordination, cost-sharing and consolidation if such efforts improve access to services and service delivery.

concern for many communities, often as a result of annexation, increases in public land ownership, and shifting economic markets. Efforts to attract additional revenue generators and coordinate with adjacent municipalities can help communities protect and preserve their local tax base.

8. Build Social and Civic Capacity - Marathon County residents take pride in their long tradition of local government. Ideally, participation in community affairs embraces and builds upon the diversity of cultures and values present in the community. Providing opportunities to share ideas and participate in community decision-making is essential to building and maintaining a strong sense of local community.

9. Support Rural Service Centers - Rural centers are part of a web of services that support residents, give local identity and are part of the rural way of life that residents want to preserve. Most villages in the County grew as centers to provide goods and services for nearby farmers, but have evolved as rural activity centers including the local school, churches, and some goods and services. Just as city neighborhoods are stronger with nearby commercial services, rural areas are stronger with nearby villages that provide a central meeting place to connect with other rural residents. As more people move to rural areas, it makes sense to concentrate new development in areas that can efficiently provide utilities and other services.

10. Preserve and Enhance Local Tax Base - A strong tax base allows a community to deliver needed services to residents while helping to keep taxes low. Erosion of local tax base is a

Town of Elderon Comprehensive Plan

Public Participation Plan

Introduction

Public participation is the process which people who will be affected by or interested in a decision by a governmental body have an opportunity to influence its content before the decision is made.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning statute recognizes the necessity of effective public participation and requires the adoption of a written public participation plan as stated in Chapter 66.1001(4)(a).

“The governing body of a local government unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments”.

In preparation of the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Elderon, the Town Board and Planning Commission are committed to providing on-going opportunities for public participation throughout the planning process. The Town of Elderon is therefore committed to completing the following tasks in order to provide opportunities for public participation.

Posting/Notification of all planning commission meetings.

Public notification for Plan Commission meetings will be posted at the following locations:

- Elderon Town Hall

Town Board and Plan Commission members will regularly check these sites to see that posted notifications are replaced if removed. These notifications will be posted during the entire Comprehensive Planning process until the adoption of a comprehensive plan by the Town of Elderon.

Town Meetings

The Town of Elderon Planning Commission will hold periodic public informational hearings/input sessions during the course of the planning process.

In addition, the Planning Commission will hold two public hearings as required by Chapter 66.1001(4)(d). These meetings will be held upon the completion of the Elderon Comprehensive Plan and prior to Board voting to accept or deny the Comprehensive Plan. A notice of the hearing must be published at least 30 days before the hearing in a newspaper likely to give notice in the area. The notice

will meet the requirements for proper notification regarding date, time, location, etc.

Sub-Area / Consultant Meetings

All meetings conducted Marathon County or the Consultant will be open to the public and posted similar to planning commission meetings.

Town Newsletters

The Town Board along with the Planning Commission will prepare a newsletter for property owners and residents in the Town of Elderon. This newsletter will be sent with property tax bills. The newsletter will include important news and updates about the comprehensive planning process.

Newspaper Notices

The Town of Elderon Planning Commission will prepare notices of meetings in the local paper. Notices will be published in the Northerner.

Public Comments

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

Other

Planning is a continuous process that does not end with the adoption of the plan. Unforeseen issues at the time this document was prepared, or as future issues arise, the planning commission may organize additional public participation activities or as it considers specific planning issues and amendments to the comprehensive plan. The topics of the meetings or open houses will depend on these issues and will be designed to feature opportunities for public education, input, and interaction.

Ordinance No. 107-01

An Ordinance to Adopt the Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Elderon, Marathon County, Wisconsin.

The Town Board of the Town of Elderon, Marathon County Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to section [59.69(2) and (3)(for counties)/62.23(2) and (3)(for cities, and towns exercising City powers under 60.22(3))] of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Elderon 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 Elderon, Marathon County 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 Elderon, by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to Town Board the adoption of the document entitled "Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Elderon," 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 Elderon, Marathon County Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Elderon," pursuant to section 66.1001(4)(c) 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 [publication/posting] as required by law.

Adopted this 10th ^{DAY} ~~Elderon~~ of November, 2007

Town Board President 

(Published/Posted): October 2, 2007

(Approved, Vetoed): Approved

Attest: Mary Ostrawski, Clerk
Town Clerk

RESOLUTION

RE: ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS PREPARED BY THE TOWN OF ELDERON PLANNING COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Elderon established a Plan Commission for the purposes of preparing a recommended Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Elderon; and

WHEREAS, numerous persons involved in local planning provided information at regular and special meetings called by the Town of Elderon Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, members of the public were invited to make comments at said meetings, wherein the Comprehensive Plan herein adopted was reviewed and commented upon by members of the public; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Elderon Planning Commission has reviewed the recommended Comprehensive Plan at a regular monthly meeting; and

WHEREAS, members of the public, adjacent and nearby local governmental units, and Marathon County will be given a 30-day review and comment period prior to the public hearing, which will be conducted by the Town Board for the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, after said public hearing, the Town Board will decide whether to adopt by ordinance the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan may be used as the basis for, among other things, updating the zoning ordinance, accomplishing extra-territorial zoning, and as a guide for approving or disapproving actions affecting growth and development within the jurisdiction of the Town of Elderon; and

WHEREAS, this Comprehensive Plan may from time to time be amended, extended, or added to in greater detail.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town of Elderon Planning Commission that the recommended Comprehensive Plan is hereby adopted as a part of the Town of Elderon's Comprehensive Plan pursuant to s.62.23 and s.66.0295, Wis. Stats. and that the Planning Commission recommends said Comprehensive Plan to the Town of Elderon for adoption by ordinance, after a 30-day public review and comment period and public hearing.

APPROVED:



Chairperson
Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Mary Ostrawski Clerk

Appendix E – Bibliography of Planning Related Studies, Regulations and Resources

Natural Resources

- **Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP)** - In 2005, Marathon County adopted the LWRMP in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). The primary intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County, to outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources and to ensure compliance of state agricultural performance standards and local ordinances.
- **Marathon County 2001 Groundwater Protection Guide** – This guide is an extension of the efforts established with adoption of the *Marathon County Groundwater Plan* in 1988. It is intended to guide local and County officials in setting policy to safeguard groundwater resources. It also serves as a resource of information about groundwater and other natural resources and recommends strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection.
- **Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2006 - 2015**
This plan includes recommendations to manage and protect the county forest on a sustainable basis for ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future generations. It provides substantial information on existing forest resources and information regarding the roles of the various agencies and regulatory framework related to forest management. The Marathon County Board of Supervisors will consider approval of the plan in September 2005 and the DNR will do so in December 2005.
- **Soil Survey for Marathon County**, published in 1990 by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and updated in 2003.
- **Marathon County Cropland Evaluation System (CES)** - This system rates soils on their ability to produce food, feed, forage, and fiber crops. The system is non-biased, defensible, and can be consistently applied.
- **Farm Preservation Program** is an income tax credit program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture (WDA), Trade & Consumer Protection. The goals of the program are twofold: to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning and soil conservation practices and to provide property tax relief to farmland owners. Landowners keeping land in agricultural use can claim a credit on their state income tax by obtaining a zoning certificate (if the land is zoned “exclusive agriculture”) or by signing a contract with the State.
- **Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan**, adopted in 1982, eight towns have adopted Exclusive Agriculture Zoning. These include: Stettin, Marathon, Mosinee, Hull, Brighton, Eau Pleine, McMillan, and Day. The intent of this zoning classification is to minimize fragmentation of farmland by imposing a minimum lot size of 35 acres. In order to adopt Exclusive Agriculture zoning, a municipality must be enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program.

- ***Marathon County Non-metallic Mining Ordinance***, adopted in 1989 requires reclamation of these sites to a purposeful and acceptable landscape appearance and use. The program is administered by the County DCPZ and includes incentives to reclaim abandoned excavations.
- ***Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) maps*** provided by the State of Wisconsin include general information on endangered resources are appropriate for general planning and assessment purposes only. The locations of endangered resources that are not considered vulnerable to collection are identified at the town level in Marathon County. Locations of more vulnerable species are generalized to minimize the potential for collection or disruption.

Land Use

- ***General Code of Ordinances for Marathon County*** includes several sections that specifically address land use and various development activities. Some of these include:
 - **Chapter 11 (Animal Waste and Manure Management)** includes regulations to prevent animal waste material from entering water bodies through issuance of construction permits for new and modified manure storage facilities. The ordinance also regulates the closure of abandoned manure storage facilities, mismanaged manure storage facilities and the application of manure onto cropland.
 - **Chapter 17 (Zoning Code)** includes development restrictions in shoreland and wetland areas and a wellhead protection overlay district that encompasses recharge areas for municipal water supply wells. Local communities in Marathon County may adopt their own zoning code, adopt the County zoning code, or choose to have no zoning.
 - **Chapter 16 (County Forests)** prescribes rules and regulations for the administration of County forests in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources. Provides for the establishment, protection, development and management of County forests to provide sustained yield of forest products for commercial use and the associated benefits of soil and water conservation, scenic and recreational values, fish and game resources, multiple-use purposes and related uses.
 - **Chapter 18 (Land Division)** The County's land division regulations apply in all unincorporated areas of the County. However, where a town has land division regulations that are more restrictive than the County's, the local regulations apply. Chapter 18 includes regulations for minimum lot sizes, street design and access requirements, land dedication, surface drainage and erosion control.
 - **Chapter 19 (Parks and Recreation)** includes regulations regarding use and management of all lands and water previously and subsequently acquired by the County for park or recreational purposes or placed under the jurisdiction of the Park Commission and including without limitation, parks, beaches, swimming pools and privately owned lands, the use of which has been granted or leased to the County for park, recreational or like public purposes.
 - **Chapter 21 (Non-metallic Mining)** includes requirements for reclamation that minimize impacts on groundwater quantity and quality.

- ***Marathon County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2005)*** – This plan, prepared in accordance with Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) directives of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, outlines strategies for pre-disaster planning and hazard mitigation. The intent is to minimize the effects of potential disasters and help streamline the administration of disaster relief.
- ***Forest Crop Law (FCL) and Managed Forest Law (MFL)*** - the FCL and the MFL programs were developed to encourage better forest management and provide tax relief to woodland owners. Land set aside under the FCL (which was combined into the MFL in 1986) required at least 40 acres in one quarter-quarter section, set aside under a 25- or 50-year contract, and public access for hunting and fishing activities. The MFL was enacted in 1985 and requires at least 10 acres of contiguous forest land. Landowners may close to the public up to 80 acres of their forest lands set aside under MFL. The remaining program acres must be open to public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing and cross-country skiing. Landowners must choose a 25- or 50-year contract. The landowner pays an Acreage Share Amount as part of their tax bill in lieu of taxes.

Transportation

Studies related to transportation are listed below under the jurisdiction who prepared the plan.

1. Marathon County (Conservation, Planning, and Zoning Department (CPZ) and/or Highway Department) is responsible for completing/updating/assisting with several plans/policies/studies relating to transportation including:

- ***State Trunk Highway 29 Corridor Land Use Review (1997)***
 - Recommends actions or measures local communities can make to protect areas within the STH 29 corridor from the negative impacts related to unplanned growth.
- ***Marathon County Functional / Jurisdictional Highway Classification Study (1988)***
 - Identifies and groups classes of roadways that provide similar levels of service. The plan recommended that the unit of government having the greatest basic interest in the roadway's function would carry out the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the classified roadways.
- ***Marathon County Program Evaluation Team (P.E.T.) Transportation Services Recommendations (2002)***
 - These recommendations, under direction of the Marathon County Human Services Committee, are intended to address issues related to specialized transportation services provided by various Marathon County Departments, including issues related to overlapping services.
- ***Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for the Non-Urbanized Area of Marathon County, Wisconsin (1996)***
 - Identifies suggested bicycle routes in Marathon County outside the Wausau area. Routes were based on traffic counts and condition of pavement. Formal action has not occurred to adopt these as officially designated bicycle routes.
- ***Marathon County Paratransit Study (2001)***
 - Studied paratransit services within the Wausau area provided primarily by Wausau Area Transit System Plus (WATS+). Identified issues with regard to

providing demand responsive services for persons in the Greater Wausau Area and Marathon County. Provides a plan for enhancing paratransit services over a five-year period primarily geared toward controlling costs and increasing efficiency and trip sharing on the WATS+ system.

- **County Trunk Highway Access-Driveway Policy**
 - Available through the Marathon County Highway Department, addresses the requirements regarding culverts, access width, slope, visibility and spacing. Marathon County issues driveway permits and implements access restrictions on all properties fronting a lettered county road.

2. Wausau Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MPO) - The MPO is responsible for completing/updating/assisting with several plans relating to transportation in the metropolitan area including:

- **Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Wausau Metropolitan Area (1996)**
 - The LRTP addresses needed improvements to the transportation system serving the Wausau urbanized area. LRTP recommendations are based on the relationship between land use policy and transportation facilities and services, including roadways, transit, bikeways, pedestrian ways, air, inter-city bus, and the movement of goods by air, rail, and truck. The 1996 plan was reaffirmed in 2001 and will be updated by 2005.
- **Local Arterial Circulation Plan (2000)**
 - The purpose of this plan was to guide public and private sector decisions concerning the infrastructure, right-of-way, Level of Service (LOS), land use compatibility, and safety needs of the local arterial transportation system over the next 20 to 30 years.
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**
 - The TIP includes all programmed transportation projects receiving federal and/or state funds. The TIP for 2005 – 2007 was adopted in 2005 and is updated every two years.
- **Wausau Area Transit System (WATS) Transit Development Plan (TDP) (1999)**
 - The TDP is updated every five years and provides a five-year capital improvement program and service recommendation plan. This plan is being updated in 2005.

3. Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) – WDOT has completed several statewide plans relating to most modes of transportation, including:

- **Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020**
 - Considers the highway system's current condition, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin's preservation, traffic movement, and safety needs. The plan is updated every six years to reflect changing transportation technologies, travel demand and economic conditions in Wisconsin.
- **Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020**
 - Outlines statewide and local measures to increase walking and promote pedestrian safety. The plan also clarifies the WDOT role in addressing

pedestrian issues and meeting pedestrian needs by establishing policies for better integrating pedestrian travel into the transportation system.

- **Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020**
 - Presents a blueprint for improving bicycling conditions and encouraging bicycling in the state and calls for the implementation of metropolitan area bicycle plans that have been prepared by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).
- **Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020**
 - Developed by WDOT, identifies information related to the state's aviation system. The plan is used by WDOT's Bureau of Aeronautics to pre-qualify airport improvement projects submitted by airport sponsors for funding consideration.
- **Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report (2004)**
 - Developed by WDOT, summarizes critical rail transportation issues, suggests opportunities for public sector involvement, and points out areas where additional research is needed. This report reflects input and guidance from a variety of sources including a State Rail Advisory Committee and a Rail Industry and Shippers' Advisory Group. The information in this report was originally intended for a State Rail Plan 2020. WDOT decided to incorporate the rail planning efforts into *Connections 2030*, WDOT's long-range all-mode transportation plan, and release the Issues and Opportunities Report in the interim. *Connections 2030* is currently being developed by WDOT, and is scheduled to be completed by Spring 2006.

4. Federal Highway Administration:

- **Federal Highway Administration's Highway Functional Classification: Concepts, Criteria and Procedures**
 - Outlines Federal regulations that States must follow to classify roadways.

Utilities

- **Sewer Service Area "208" Plans** - Section 208 of the Clean Water Act passed in 1972 required the preparation of area-wide water quality management plans. This was translated at the State level through NR 121 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, which requires that water quality management plans also address sanitary sewer service needs for 20 years into the future. These requirements form the basis of Sewer Service Area "208" Plans. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has review and approval authority over Sewer Service Area plans; however, the technical work to prepare the plan is typically done by local government staff.
 - Wausau Urban Area Sewer Service Plan for the Year 2000 (1981) – initial "208" Plan
 - Major Amendment to the Wausau Sewer Service Area Boundary completed in 1992 (City of Wausau) and 1998 (Towns of Kronenwetter and Rib Mountain, Villages of Weston and Rothschild).
 - Current amendment in progress; with all communities in the sewer service area participating. It is anticipated that the plan will be approved by the DNR in December, 2005.

- **Chapter 15 - General Code of Ordinances for Marathon County** incorporates by reference rules, regulations, and laws in the Wisconsin Statutes and Wisconsin Administrative Code governing private sewage systems.
- **Wellhead Protection Plans** - The State of Wisconsin mandates that **wellhead protection plans** be developed for any municipal well proposed after May 1, 1992. These plans must be approved by the WDNR before a community can use the new well. Section NR 811.16(5) of the Wisconsin Administrative Code defines specific requirements for required wellhead protection plans.

Parks and Recreation

- **Marathon County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for 1999-2004**, completed in May 1999, this plan identifies several needs related to parks and recreation and outlines several actions to address those needs.
 - The plan has received a one-year extension from the State of Wisconsin, and is in the process of being updated with a completion date in spring of 2006.
- **The Rivers Edge Master Plan**, adopted in June 1995, outlines a long-range (20-30 year) framework for improving access to the riverfront and enhancing the riverfront environment and provides a master plan to establish a bicycle/pedestrian trail along the banks of the Wisconsin River through the City of Wausau.

Economic Development

- **Marathon County Workforce Profile**, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), annually in October.
- **Final Report**, Marathon County Task Force on the Rural Economy, April 2003.
- **Agricultural Impacts in Marathon County**, University of Wisconsin – Extension (UWEX), Ken Barnett and Steve Deller, February 2003.
- **Status of Wisconsin Agriculture**, 2003, UWEX, Mike Wildeck and Ed Jesse, April 2003.
- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2002-2003**, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC), June 2002.

Appendix F: Guidelines for Paving Gravel Roads¹

When a local government considers paving a road, it is usually with a view toward reducing road maintenance costs and providing a smooth riding surface. But paving may not be the right answer. After all, paving is expensive. Municipalities should consider the following factors to help them make the most cost-effective decision. Taken together, these factors provide a framework for careful decision-making.

Traffic Demand

The number and weight of vehicles affects a road's lifespan. Generally speaking, the more vehicles using a road, the faster it will deteriorate. The average daily traffic volumes (ADT) used to justify paving generally range from a low of 50 vehicles per day (vpd) to 400 or 500 vpd. When traffic volumes reach this range, serious consideration should be given to some kind of paving. However, traffic volumes alone are merely guides.

Types of traffic should also be considered. Different types of traffic (and drivers) make different demands on roads. Will the road be used primarily by standard passenger cars or will it be a connecting road with considerable truck traffic or heavy farm equipment? Overloaded trucks are most damaging to paved roads. The functional importance of the road should also be considered. Generally speaking, a major road should probably be paved before residential or side roads are paved. On the other hand, a residential street may be economically sealed or paved while a road with heavy truck or farm equipment usage may best be surfaced with gravel and left unpaved until sufficient funds are available to place a thick load-bearing pavement on the road.

Maintenance Considerations

The following questions should be considered when assessing costs associated with maintaining existing gravel roads:

- How often must new gravel be applied to the gravel road? (Some roads require more than others do.)
- How many times per year must the gravel road be graded?
- How often and in what locations should calcium chloride or other road stabilizers be applied?
- What is the plan for ditching and shouldering?

Base and Drainage Needs

"Build up the road base and improve drainage before paving." This cardinal rule cannot be stressed enough. If the foundation fails, the pavement fails. If water is not drained away from the road, the pavement fails. Paving a road with a poor base or inadequate drainage is a waste of money. It is far more important to ask, "Does this road need strengthening and drainage work?" than it is to ask, "Should we pave this gravel road?"

¹ "When to Pave a Gravel Road" Gravel Roads Maintenance and Design Manual (2001); Kentucky Transportation Center, University of Kentucky at Lexington, KY, adapted from an article from the Vermont Local Roads Program, Saint Michael's College; posted by Local Technical Assistance Program and the National Local Technical Assistance Program Association and sponsored by the US Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration.

Safety and Design Considerations

Paving a road tempts drivers to drive faster. As speed increases, the road must be straighter, wider, and as free as possible from obstructions for it to be safe. Paving low volume roads before correcting safety and design inadequacies encourages speeds that are unsafe, especially when the inadequacies "surprise" the driver. In areas with a large number of miles of low volume roads, it is difficult to reduce speeds by enforcement.

Poorly designed and hazardous roads – Roads must be designed to provide safe travel for the expected traffic volume at the design speed. To do this a number of physical features must be considered:

- Sight Distance
- Design Speed
- Alignment and Curves
- Surface Friction
- Lane Width
- Superelevation

Some engineers insist that no road should be paved that is less than 22 feet wide. If this standard is accepted, gravel roads may need to be widened prior to paving. Likewise, bridges along these roads may need widening. It may also be necessary to remove trees or other obstructions such as boulders from the road edge. Considering these and other safety and design factors in the early stages of decision-making can help to achieve the most cost-effective road design that meets desired transportation needs.

Geometric Guidelines for Very Low-Volume Local Roads (< 400 ADT): The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) publishes road design guidelines, including Geometric Guidelines for Very Low-Volume Local Roads (those with <400 ADT). Less stringent design criteria are generally acceptable on these low volume roads because:

- Lower traffic volumes present substantially reduced opportunities for multiple vehicle collisions, and
- Most drivers are familiar with the roadway design characteristics.

The guidelines offer more flexibility for road designers to maintain existing geometric features, which have not been shown to be a safety problem. Allowing less stringent design standards for very low volume roads provides an opportunity to reduce improvement costs, which may be better utilized elsewhere.

Costs

The decision to pave a gravel road involves determining when it becomes economical to pave; and ultimately when the benefits of paving exceed the costs.

Road Preparation Costs – Road preparation costs related to road bed construction activities that occur before paving actually takes place. Costs will vary greatly from project to project depending on topography, types of soils, and availability of good crushed stone or gravel, traffic demands and other factors. Road design should comply with standards in the municipality's road policy; which is one reason to carefully consider, and routinely update, what is contained in the road policy. For larger projects it may be desirable to hire an engineering consulting firm (another cost) to design the road and make cost estimations. For smaller projects construction costs can be fairly closely calculated by adding the estimated costs of materials, equipment and labor required to complete the job.

Maintenance Costs – Another financial consideration is to compare maintenance costs of a paved road to maintenance costs of a gravel road. To make a realistic comparison, estimate the years of pavement life (how long the pavement will be of service before it requires treatment or overlay) and the actual cost of paving. Then compare those costs with those associated with gravel roads as noted above.

User Costs – Not all road costs are directly reflected in a road budget. There is a significant difference in the cost to the user between driving on a gravel surface and on a paved surface. It costs more to operate vehicles on gravel surfaces than on paved surfaces, often 2 or 3 times greater than for bituminous or concrete roads in the same locations. There is greater rolling resistance and less traction, which increase fuel consumption. The roughness of the surface contributes to additional tire wear and influences maintenance and repair expenses. Dust causes extra engine wear, oil consumption and maintenance costs.

By including vehicle-operating costs with construction and maintenance costs, a more comprehensive total cost can be derived.

Public Opinion

Public opinion as to whether to pave a road can be revealing, but it should not be relied upon to the exclusion of any one of the factors already discussed. If a decision to pave is not based on facts, it can be very costly. Public opinion should not be ignored, of course, but there is an obligation by government leaders to inform the public about other important factors before making the decision to pave.

Staged Construction

Local government may consider using "stage construction design" as an approach to improving roads. This is how it works: A design is prepared for the completed road, from base and drainage to completed paving. Rather than accomplishing all the work in one season, the construction is spread out over three to five years. Paving occurs only after the base and drainage have been proven sufficient over approximately one year. Crushed gravel treated with calcium chloride serves as the wearing course for the interim period. Once all weak spots have been repaired, the road can be shaped for paving.

Following are some advantages to keeping a road open to traffic for one or more seasons before paving:

1. Weak spots that show up in the sub-grade or base can be corrected before the hard surface is applied, eliminating later expensive repair;
2. Risky late season paving is eliminated;
3. More mileage is improved sooner;
4. The cost of construction is spread over several years.

Note: Advantages may disappear if timely maintenance is not performed. In addition, the surface may deteriorate more rapidly because it is thinner than a designed pavement.

Summary

Some existing local roads are not engineered to accommodate the traffic they receive. Larger volumes of heavy trucks and other vehicles are weakening these roads at a fast rate. Paving roads as a sole means of improving them without considering other factors can be a costly mistake. Careful consideration of the factors described above will help to assure local government officials that they are making the right decision before paving a gravel road.

Appendix G: Economic Development Programs

The following list provides a summary of the major programs and resources available to assist with economic development efforts. This is not an exhaustive list and local officials are encouraged to contact Marathon County and MCDEVCO for more complete and current information.

Federal Programs

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural, Development: Provides a wide range of programs aimed at farming and rural areas, including:

- **Business and Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program:** Provides financial backing for rural businesses to create and maintain employment. Assistance includes loans for working capital, machinery and equipment, buildings and real estate, and certain types of debt refinancing.
- **Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) Program:** Provides grants to public entities, private nonprofit corporations, and Federally-recognized Indian Tribal groups to finance and facilitate small and emerging private businesses located outside a city or urbanizing area.
- **Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) Program:** Provides grants to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs.

Economic Development Administration (EDA): Provides a variety of assistance programs focusing on long-term economic growth targeted to areas with demonstrated need or economic distress, including:

- **Public Works Program:** Investments aimed at revitalization, expansion, and upgrades to physical infrastructure specifically to attract new businesses and generate private sector jobs. Examples: water and sewer facilities, rail spurs, port improvements, access improvements.
- **Economic Adjustment Program:** Assistance to mitigate local economic changes resulting from corporate restructuring, natural disasters, depletion of natural resources, or new federal laws or requirements.
- **Technical Assistance Program (Local):** Assistance to help fill knowledge and information gaps to help local leaders in distressed areas make informed decisions regarding economic development.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA): The SBA provides financial, technical, and management assistance generally aimed at business startup and growth. Some programs include:

- **Certified Development Company (504 non-profit corporation) Loan Program:** Long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and building improvements.

Wisconsin State Programs

Most State programs are provided through the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, although other departments also offer limited programs. Primary State programs include:

- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG):** There are several CDBG programs focusing on different aspects of economic development.
 - **Economic Development Program** – grants to establish loans for business start-up, retention, and expansion.
 - **Public Facilities for Economic Development Program:** Helps underwrite the costs of necessary public infrastructure to retain or create employment opportunities.
 - **Public Facilities Program:** Helps finance infrastructure and facilities to serve low and moderate income persons.
 - **Emergency Grant Program:** Helps restore or replace critical infrastructure damaged or destroyed as a result of natural or manmade catastrophes.

- **Community Based Economic Development Program (CBED):** Provides funding assistance to local governments and community-based organizations that undertake planning, development, and technical assistance projects supporting business development.

- **Main Street Program:** Supports efforts to help communities organize to revitalize their downtowns.

- **Wisconsin Technology Zone Program:** Offers tax-credits to high-tech firms that meet certain criteria.

- **Wisconsin Development Zone Program:** Tax benefit initiative to encourage private investment and improve both the quality and quantity of employment opportunities.

- **Enterprise Zone Program:** Provides tax incentives to new or expanding businesses whose projects will enhance distressed areas.

- **Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) Program:** Allocation of Federal tax-exempt status on bonds that will be issued by a business to finance an expansion project. Program is limited to small and mid-size manufacturers with strong financial statements.

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD): This department offers several programs aimed at investing in the workforce, including programs in apprenticeship, vocational rehabilitation, employee training, child care, etc.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR): The Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment consolidates state and federal clean up programs and provides assistance to help businesses clean up and re-use existing brownfield sites.

Forward Wisconsin, Inc.: This is a State public-private marketing and business recruitment organization that focuses on marketing outside Wisconsin to attract new economic development to the State.

County, Regional, and Local Programs

The primary financial assistance available at the County and local level are revolving loan funds. The primary entities in Marathon County that participate in economic development related efforts include:

- **North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC):** The NCWRPC is a designated Economic Development District and provides services such as economic research, marketing, financial packaging, evaluation and analysis of public infrastructure needs that support private economic development activity. The NCWRPC also works with local units of government to maintain eligibility for certain grants.
- **North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC):** A regional organization created for the purpose of managing a regional revolving loan fund. The NCWDC is staffed by the NCWRPC.
- **Wausau Region/Marathon County Chamber of Commerce:** The Chamber provides leadership and support for economic development efforts in the region, including a variety of networking programs, mentoring services, workshops and business counseling services.
- **Marathon County Development Corporation (MCDEVCO):** This is the economic development arm of the Wausau Area Chamber of Commerce. MCDEVCO serves all businesses and communities in Marathon County. MCDEVCO works with individual business, municipalities, and the banking community to facilitate investment in the region. Specific programs administered by MCDEVCO include a revolving loan fund, a small business incubator, and job training funds.
- **Wausau/Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB):** The CVB promotes the area to the business and leisure traveler and provides information on the area to visitors and residents.

- █ Principal Arterial
- █ Minor Arterial
- █ Major Collector
- █ Minor Collector

- F County Highways
- 52 State Highways
- 51 US Highways
- 39 Interstate

 Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

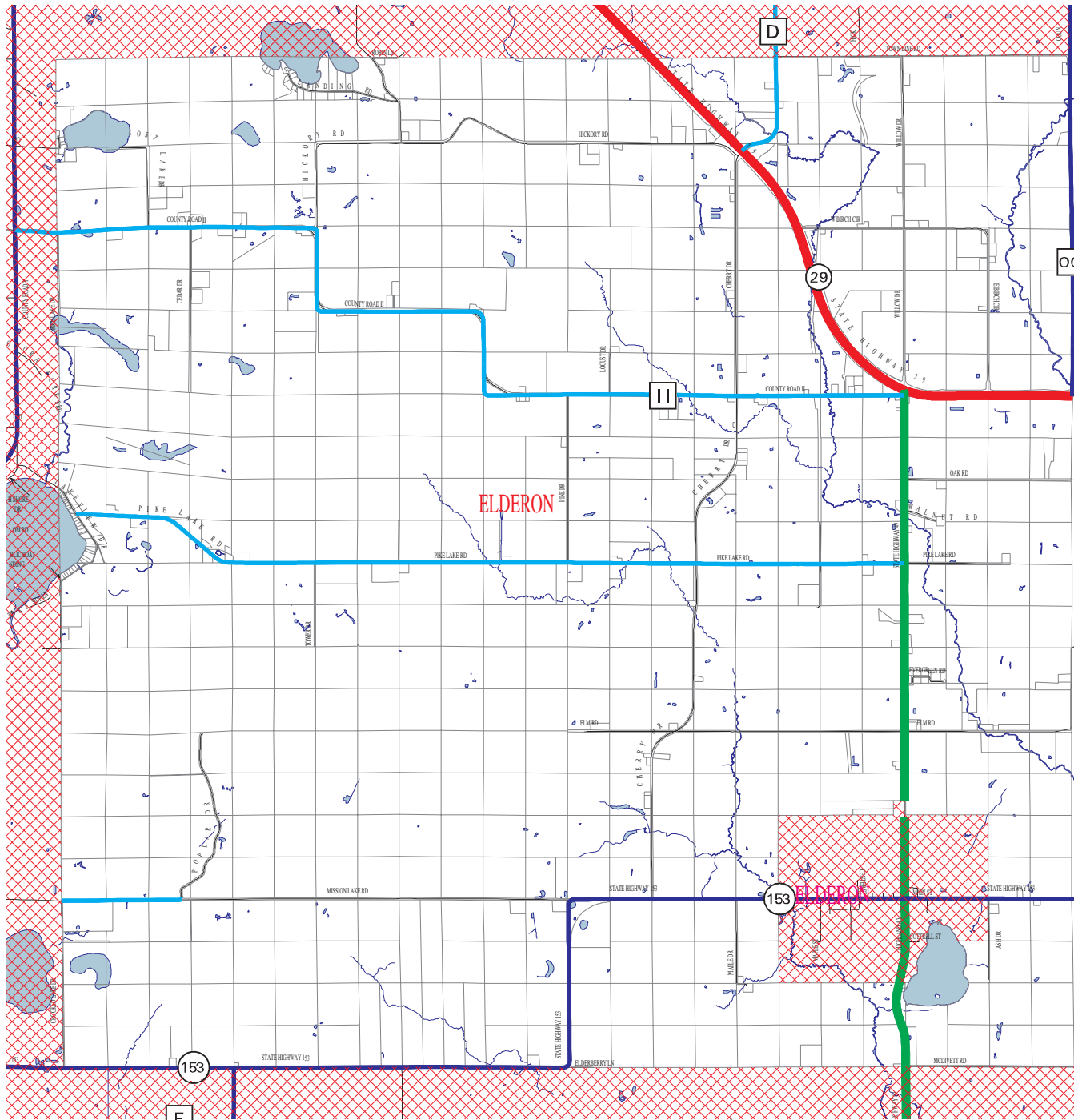


Figure 3-1
Functional Classification of Roads
 T-ELDERON

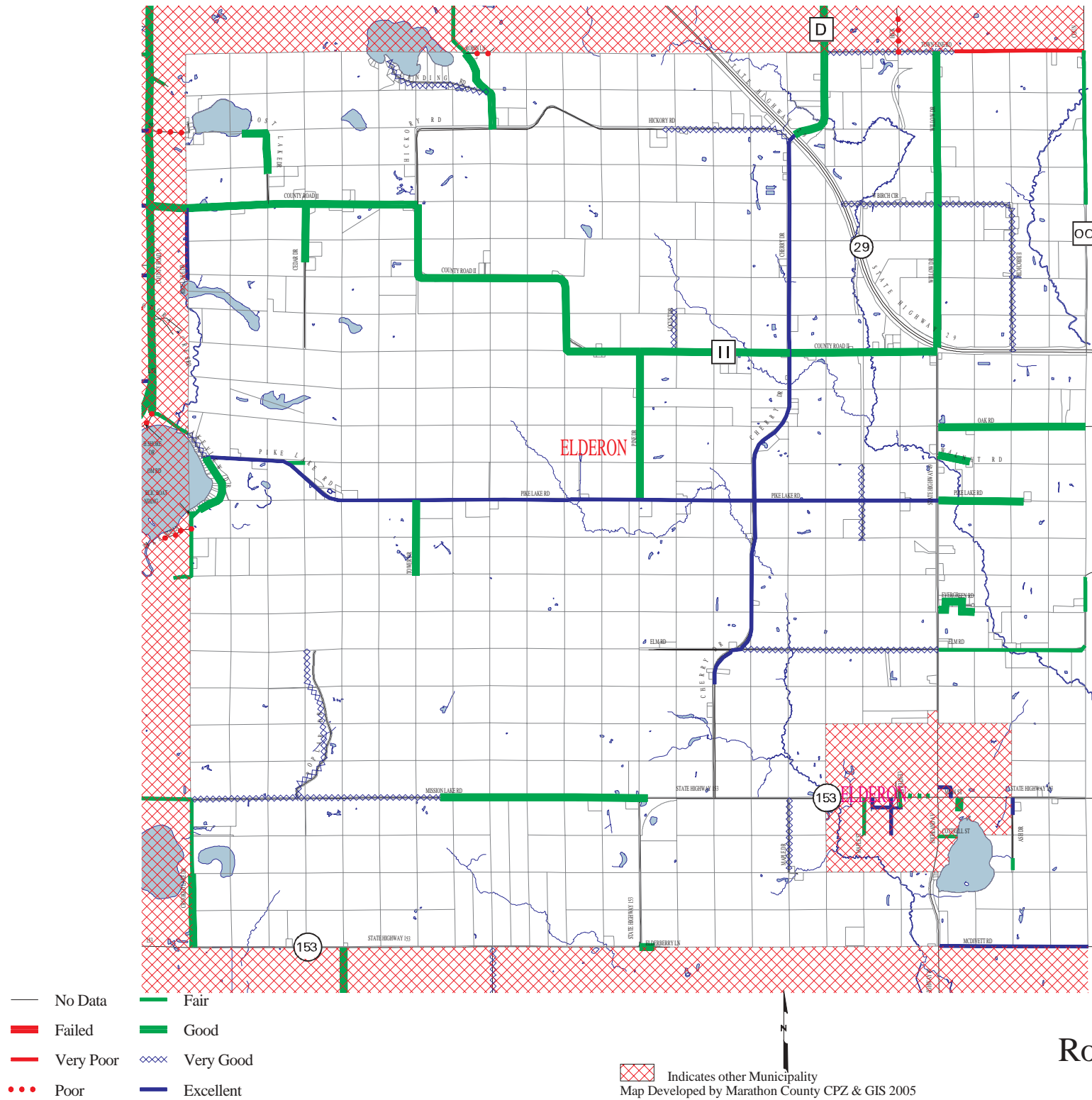
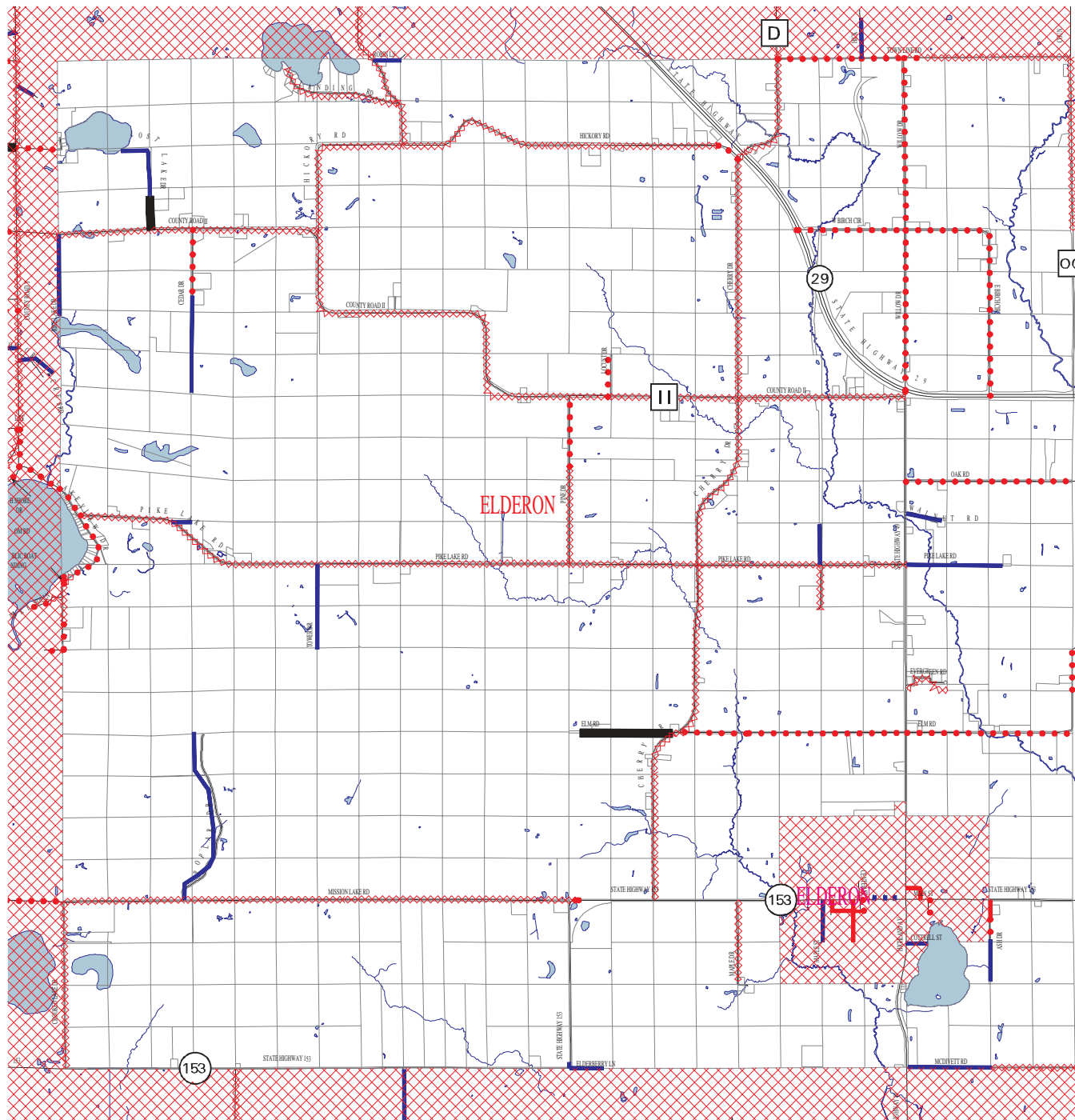


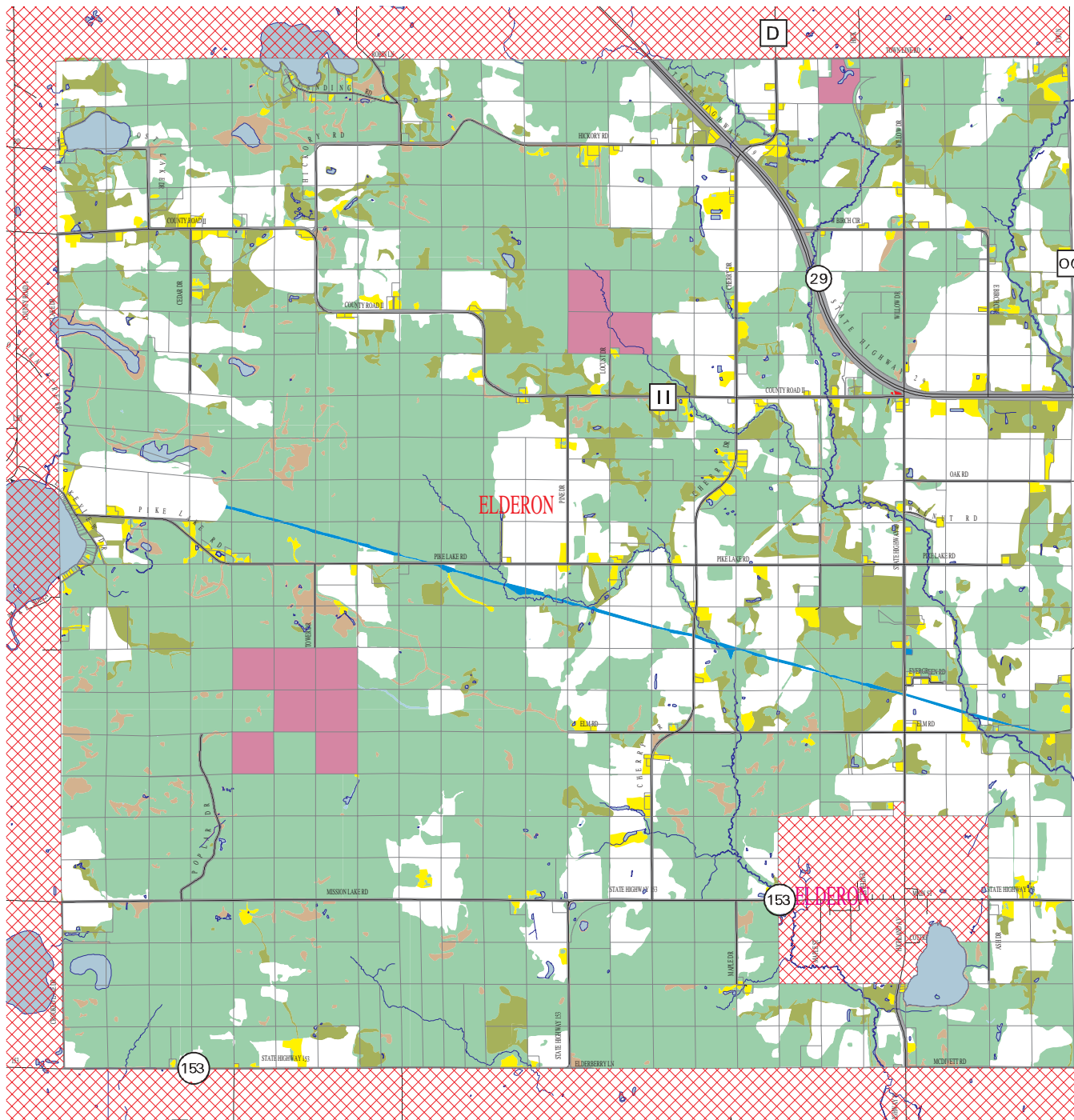
Figure 3-2
Road Surface Rating
T-ELDERON



- No Data
- Concrete Pavement
- <1" Wearing Surface
- Asphalt Pavement
- Asphalt Pavement on Concrete
- Asphalt Pavement with Base >7"
- Asphalt Pavement With Base <7"
- Unimproved Road
- Brick or Block Pavement

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

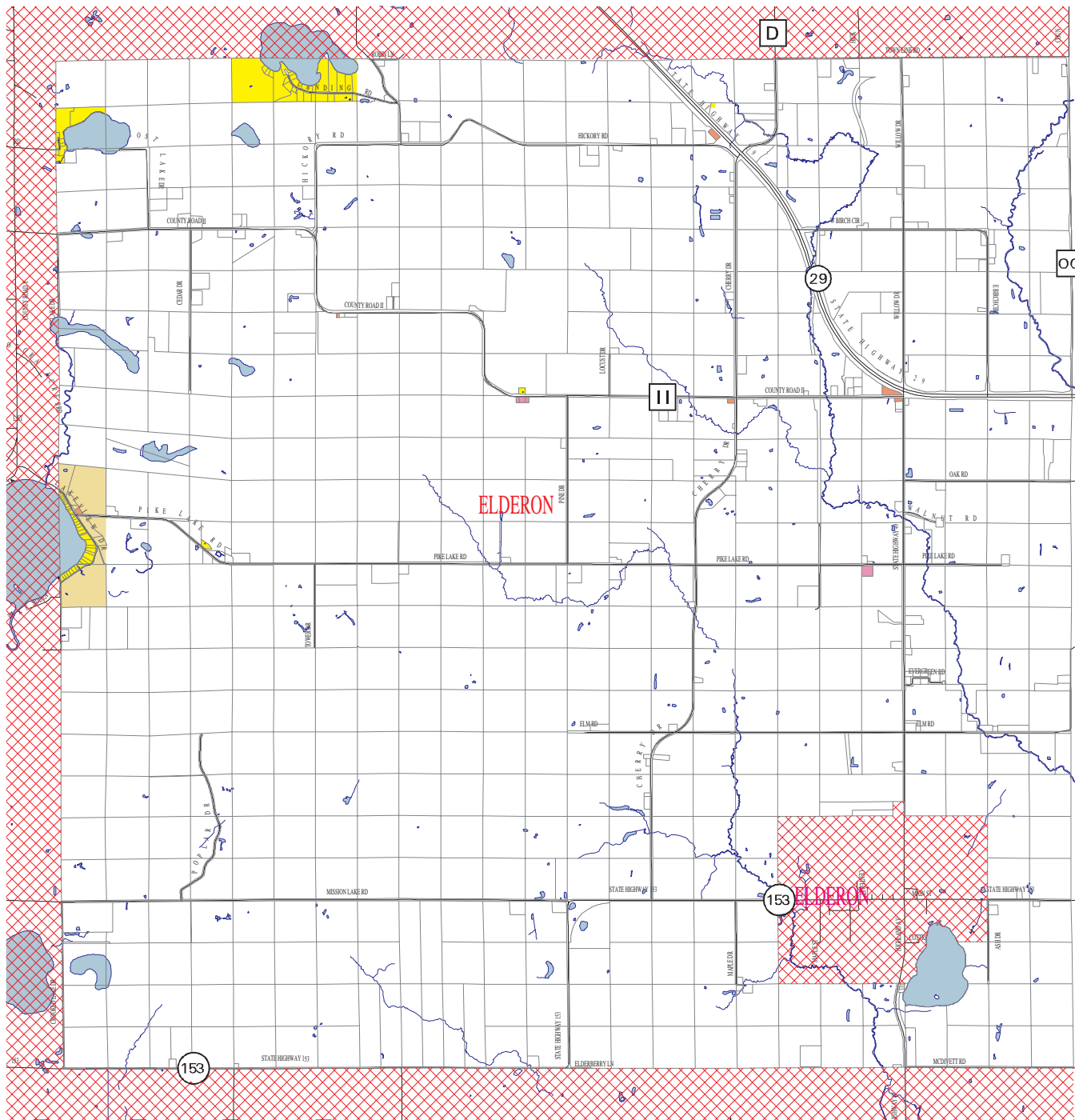
Figure 3-3
Road Surface Types
T-ELDERON



- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Single Family Residential | Crop Land | Recreational |
| Multi-Family Residential | Other Agriculture | Transportation |
| Commercial | Forest Land | Water |
| Barren | Public/Quasi-Public | |

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

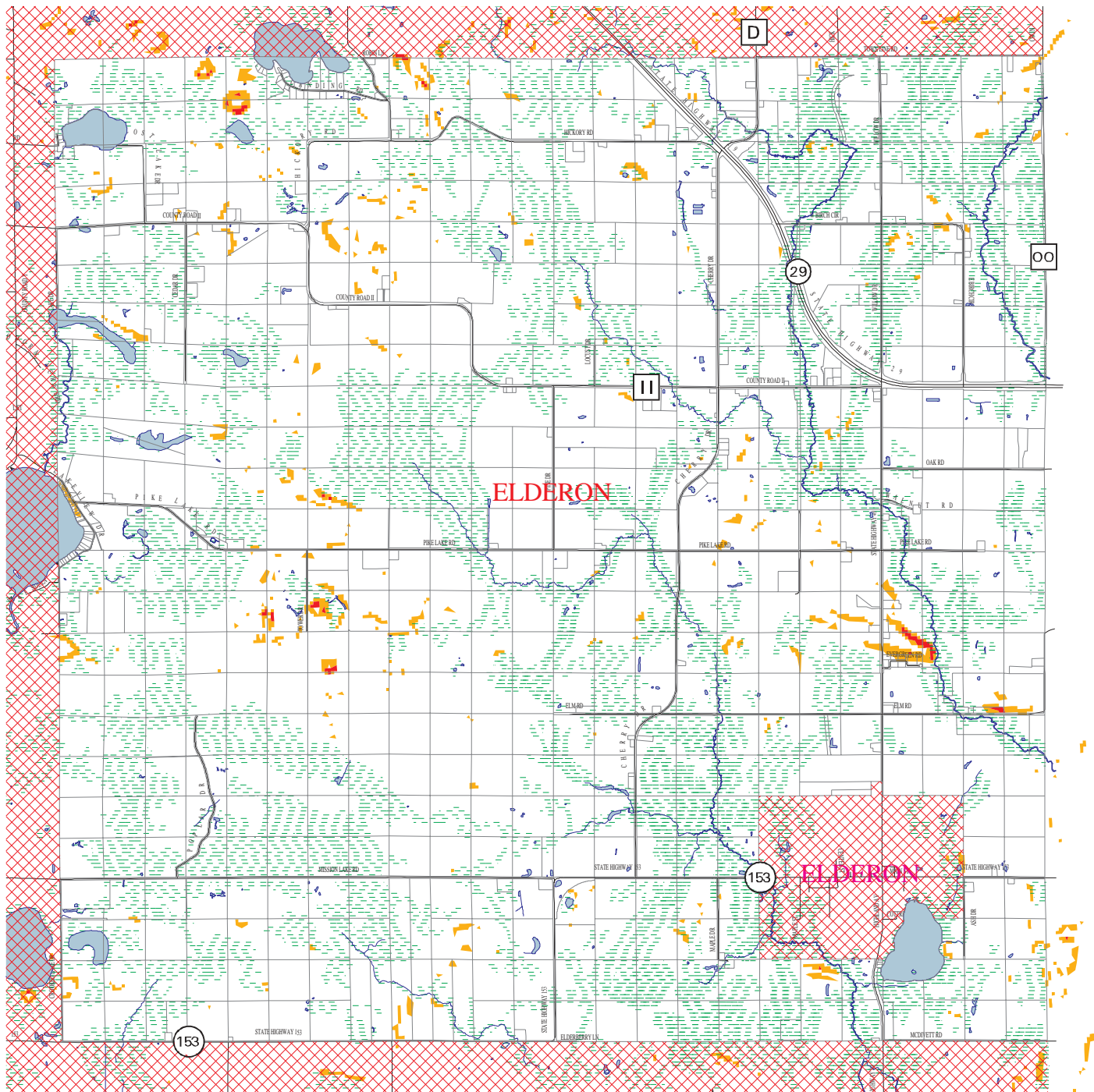
Figure 11-1
 Future Land Use
 T-ELDERON



- | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|
| RS-1/20 | RP | A-2 | A-4-M | AE/M | M-2 | WP-C |
| RS-1/40 | CV | A-3 | AR | HI | UV | |
| RS-2 | RC | A-3-M | AR/M | C-1 | WP-A | |
| RM | A-1/5 | A-4 | AE | M-1 | WP-B | |

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 11-2
 County Zoning
 T-ELDERON



- Environmental Constraints
- Slopes Generally 12-20%
- Slopes generally greater than 20%

Indicates other Municipality
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 11-3
Development Constraints
T-ELDERON