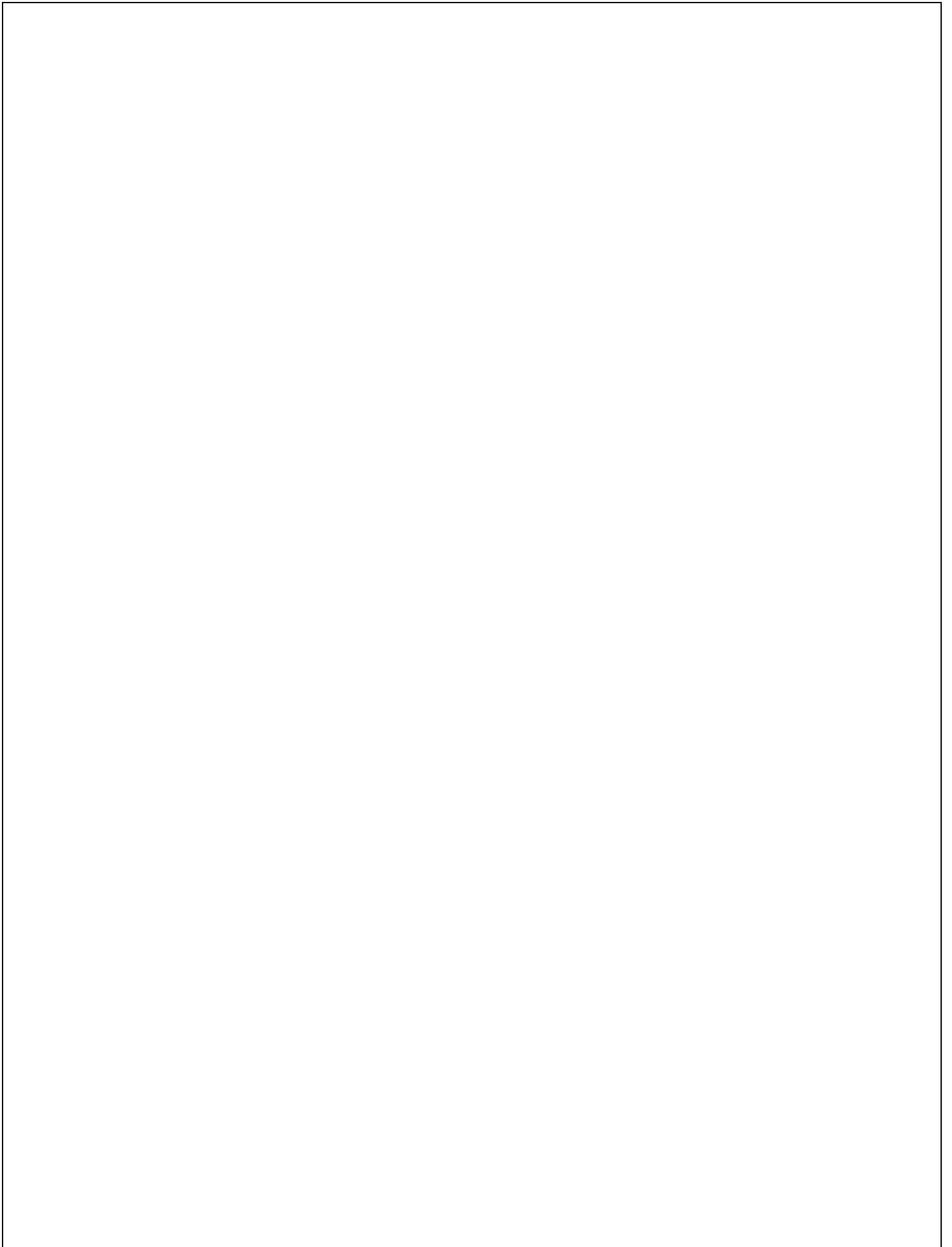


# TOWN OF GUENTHER

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2018

Town of Guenther Town Board



# **Town of Guenther Conditions and Issues**

**2018**

# Town of Guenther Conditions and Issues

## Elements

<b>1. Introduction and Summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Demographics .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Natural Resources .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Land Use .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5. Transportation .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>6. Utilities.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>7. Housing .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>8. Cultural Resources.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>9. Community Facilities .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>10. Parks .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>11. Economic Development .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>12. Intergovernmental Cooperation.....</b>	<b>44</b>

## List of Tables

<b>Table 2-1: Demographic Change, 1980-2010 .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Table 2-2: Population by Age Group, 2010 .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Table 2-3: Population Projections – 2000-2030 .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Table 2-3b: Population Projections – 2010-2040 .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Table 2-4: Household Projections – 2000-2030.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Table 2-4b: Household Projections – 2010-2040.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Table 2-5: Educational Attainment (population age 25 and over) .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Table 2-6: Household Income Levels, 2015 .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Table 2-7: Occupation by Sector, 2015 .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Table 4-1: Land Use Cover Classification, 2000 .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Table 4-2: Land in Forest Preservation Programs (in acres), 1998 – 2016.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Table 4-3: Public Owned Land (in acres), 1998-2016 .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Table 4-4: Per Acre Assessed Land Values (in dollars), 1998 – 2016.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Table 5-1: WISLR Road Types .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Table 5-2: WISLR Surface Type /PASER Rating.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Table 5-3a: WISLR Rating by Type .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Table 5-3b: Miles of Road Type.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Table 7-1: Number of Housing Units by Type and Tenure.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Table 7-2: Changes in Housing Stock.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Table 7-3: Age of Community Housing Stock.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Table 7-4: Physical Housing Stock .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Table 7-5: Median Housing Value .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Table 7-6: Range of Housing Values .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Table 7-7: Housing Affordability .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Table 9-1: Mosinee School District Enrollment .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Table 9-2: Child Care Referrals .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Table 11-1: Marathon County Top 10 Employers.....</b>	<b>42</b>

**Table 11-2: Population and Employment by Sector, 2015..... 42**  
**Table 11-3: Employment Projections in 5-Year Increments..... 43**  
**Table 11-4: Percent Change in Employment, 2000-2030..... 43**

## List of Figures

- Figure 3-1: 100 Year Floodplain**
- Figure 3-2: Wetland Types**
- Figure 3-3: Depth to Groundwater**
- Figure 3-4: Depth to Bedrock**
- Figure 3-5: Soil Association**
- Figure 3-6: Prime Farm Land**
- Figure 3-7: Slopes**
- Figure 4-1: 2000 Existing Land Use/ Land Cover**
- Figure 4-2: Existing Zoning**
- Figure 4-3: Farm Preservation Contracts and Existing Agricultural Zoning**
- Figure 5-1: Functional Classification**
- Figure 5-2: WISLR Surface Rating**
- Figure 5-3: WISLR Road Surface Type**
- Figure 5-4: Right of Way Road Widths**
- Figure 5-5: Regional Trails**
- Figure 6-1: Depth to Bedrock**
- Figure 6-2: Suitable Soils for Septic Tank Absorption**
- Figure 6-3: Major Watersheds**
- Figure 9-1: Marathon County School Districts**
- Figure 9-2: Police Service Districts**
- Figure 9-3: Fire Service Areas**
- Figure 9-4: Emergency Medical Service Areas**
- Figure 10-1: Regional Recreation Facilities**

## 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)

**CRP**—Conservation Reserve Program

**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

**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 **REA**—

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative

**SHPO**—State Historic Preservation Office

**SPS 83**—Chapter 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Safety and Professional Services, setting standards for regulation of private waste disposal systems.

**TIP**—Transportation Improvement Program (Marathon County)

**USDA**—United States Department of Agriculture

**USH**—U.S. Highway

**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

**WPS**—Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

## 1. Introduction and Summary

The Town of Guenther'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 Guenther 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 Guenther. Some key findings in this report include:

- The Town of Guenther is located in south central Marathon County east of I-39. Guenther's population in 2000 was the same as in 1970, after having declined and increased in the intervening years. Guenther is somewhat sparsely populated with 341 persons (2010 US Census). Median age and income is slightly higher than the County and State medians.
- Guenther residents support the preservation of their natural resources, specifically water resources and ensuring that they remain free of pollution.
- Maintaining the Town's tax base is a concern, and Guenther does not want the County to acquire additional land because it will reduce the tax base needed to support Town services.
- There are over 4,400 acres of County forest lands located in the Town of Guenther, part of the Leather Camp Forest that provides recreational activities for the Town and nearby communities. The Town supports some improvements to the Forest, such as water facilities, bathrooms, and better road access that would enhance Forest use. No other park needs are anticipated.
- Guenther residents want to manage new development and preserve the rural character of the Town. Minimum lot size is 2.5 acres.
- Residents are divided on whether industrial or commercial development should occur in Guenther. There is limited support for some uses, but residents prefer to respond to new uses and development on a case-by-case basis.
- Housing in Guenther is primarily single family and is anticipated to stay that way. Residents indicated some support for adding a housing inspector in the Town to ensure high quality new residential construction.
- Fire and ambulance services in Guenther are provided under contract.
- In 2012 the town of Guenther implemented First Responders to address the concerns regarding ambulance response times.



## 2. Demographics

This analysis is intended to describe the existing demographics of the Town of Guenther and identify the major demographic trends impacting Guenther 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, Guenther’s population has grown slightly over the past three decades, and shows approximately the same total in 2000 as it had in 1980. Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin both grew by 14 percent over the same time period. Household growth over the past decade was higher than that of the County but lower than the State of 26%. The average household size has decreased in the past decade, and the County and State experienced a similar trend.

**Table 2-1: Demographic Change, 1980-2010**

	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1980 to 2000	% Change 2000 to 2010
<b>Total Population</b>						
<b>Guenther</b>	297	258	302	341	2%	13%
<b>County</b>	111,270	115,400	125,834	134,063	13%	7%
<b>State</b>	4,705,767	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	14%	6%
<b>Total Households</b>						
<b>Guenther</b>	108	99	114	133	6%	17%
<b>County</b>	37,865	41,534	47,402	53,176	25%	12%
<b>State</b>	1,652,261	1,822,118	2,084,544	2,624,358	26%	26%
<b>Average Household Size</b>						
<b>Guenther</b>	2.75	2.61	2.65	2.56	-4%	-3%
<b>County</b>	2.90	2.75	2.60	2.49	-10%	-4%
<b>State</b>	2.35	2.68	2.50	2.43	6%	-3%

*Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.*

Table 2-2 describes the percentage of population in various age groups. The percentage of persons in each age group in Guenther was generally proportional to the categories for the County and State. Guenther’s median age of 40.5 was slightly higher than the County at 39.4, and the State median age of 38.5.

**Table 2-2: Population by Age Group, 2010**

Age Group	Percent of Population		
	Guenther	County	State
Under 5 years	6%	7%	6%
5 to 9 years	6%	7%	6%
10 to 14 years	7%	7%	7%
15 to 19 years	6%	7%	7%
20 to 24 years	4%	5%	7%
25 to 34 years	13%	12%	13%
35 to 44 years	18%	13%	13%
45 to 54 years	19%	16%	15%
55 to 59 years	4%	7%	7%
60 to 64 years	5%	5%	6%
65 to 74 years	9%	7%	7%
75 to 84 years	4%	5%	5%
85 years and over	1%	2%	2%
<b>Median Age</b>	40.5	39.4	38.5

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, 2010

**Population Forecasts**

Table 2-3 indicates population projections for Guenther 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 Guenther 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
<b>Guenther</b>	302	309	316	323	330	337	344
<b>County</b>	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 most recent census data (2010) while the NCWRPC numbers are based on census data from 2000. Since the WDOA’s projected populations are based on more recent data, they carry a greater weight and more accuracy. 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.

**Table 2-3b: Population Projections – 2010-2040**

	Total Population by Year							% change
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	
<b>Guenther</b>	341	355	375	395	415	425	435	+28%
<b>County</b>	132408	134816	140418	144652	147956	149674	150085	+13%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 5/4/2014  
The 2010 numbers are from the US Census data (2010).

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 more useful at the local municipality level. The WDOA projections in Table 2-3b show a faster rate of growth for Guenther than the NCWRPC projections. The WDOA projects a population of 375 by 2020, an increase of 9.9 percent within a decade.

**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 Guenther and for Marathon County. These projections are based on the population projections shown in Table 2-3 divided by the average household size of 2.65 (Table 2-1) in Guenther in 2000. Guenther shows a 14 percent change, or 16 additional households, compared to 13 percent change for Marathon County.

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

	Total Households by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
<b>Guenther</b>	114	117	119	122	125	127	130	+14%
<b>County</b>	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, 6/10/03*

Table 2-4b includes household projections based on population projections completed by the WDOA and assumes an average persons-per-household of 2.56 in Guenther in 2010. Like the WDOA population projections, the WDOA household projections show an increase of 9.9 percent by 2020.

**Table 2-4b: Household Projections – 2010-2040**

	Total Households by Year							
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Change
<b>Guenther</b>	133	140	149	158	168	174	180	35%
<b>County</b>	53176	54657	57394	59611	61524	62958	63730	20%

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 5/4/2014*

**Education and Income Levels**

According to 2010 Census data and the American Community Survey, 91.5 percent of Town of Guenther residents have a high school education or higher. This compares to 91 percent for the County, and 91 percent for the State. In the Town of Guenther, 14.2 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 23.7 percent and 27.8 percent respectively.

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

Educational Attainment	Guenther		County	State
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	5	2.10%	4.00%	3.10%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	15	6.40%	5.00%	5.80%
High School Graduate	115	49.40%	37.10%	32.00%
Some College, No Degree	42	18.00%	18.50%	21.10%
Associates Degree	23	9.90%	11.70%	10.10%
Bachelor's Degree	24	10.30%	16.10%	18.40%
Graduate or Professional Degree	9	3.90%	7.60%	9.40%
Percent high school graduate or higher		91.5%	91%	91%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher		14.2%	23.7%	27.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Median household income for Town of Guenther residents was \$60,625 in 2015. This is slightly higher than Marathon County with a median of \$54,083, and the State overall at \$53,357. Income distribution among all income levels is approximately proportionate to levels observed County- and State-wide.

**Table 2-6: Household Income Levels, 2015**

Income Level	Guenther		County	State
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than \$10,000	4	3.0%	5.1%	5.9%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	6	4.4%	4.5%	5.2%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	13	9.6%	11.4%	10.7%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	11	8.1%	10.2%	10.6%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	21	15.6%	15.0%	14.4%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	33	24.4%	20.5%	19.7%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	15	11.1%	14.6%	13.5%
\$100,000 - \$149,000	19	14.1%	12.5%	13.0%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	3	2.2%	3.4%	3.9%
\$200,000 or More	10	7.4%	2.8%	3.3%
Total Household	135	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$60,625*	-	\$54,083*	\$53,357*

Source: US Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics  
\*Adjusted for Inflation

## Employment Characteristics

Table 2-7 illustrates the breakdown, by occupation, of the employed population of Guenther in 2015. The “employed population” is defined as people living in Guenther who are 16 years and older. In 2015, the Town had an employed population of 184. Most residents were employed in production, transportation and material moving occupations;

sales and office occupations; or management, professional and related occupations. Employment projections are included in the Economic Development section.

**Table 2-7: Occupation by Sector, 2015**

Sector	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	41	22.3
Service occupations	33	17.9
Sales and office occupations	43	23.4
Natural resources, construction, extraction, farming and maintenance	19	10.3
Production, transportation, and material moving	48	26.1
<b>Total Employed*</b>	184	100

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey*  
 \* "Total Employed" represents employed civilian population 16 years and over

**Demographic Trends**

- Guenther’s population has changed only slightly over the past three decades, and is virtually the same in 2000 as it was in 1980. The County and State both grew by over 14 percent in that time period.
- Household growth over the past decade was between the County and State numbers. The average household size is 2.56, similar to that of the County and State.
- Guenther’s age breakdown was generally proportional to the categories for the County and State. The Town’s

median age of 40.5 was higher compared to 39.4 and 38.5 for the County and State.

- 91.5 percent of Guenther residents have a high school education or higher, compared to 91 percent for the County, and 91 percent for the State.
- In Guenther, 14.2 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 (23.7 percent) and the State (27.8 percent).
- Median Household income for Guenther was \$60,625, higher than the County and State median.
- Both population and households in Guenther are expected to grow about 30 percent between 2010 and 2040 (Wisconsin Department of Administration projections).
- In 2015, most Guenther residents were employed in production, transportation and material moving occupations; sales and office occupations; or management, professional and related occupations.

### 3. 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) Department 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 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2006-2020** – 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 higher levels of protection to top trout waters. As such, the 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.

There are no ORW and no ERW located in Guenther.

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 Guenther.

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 Guenther

**Streams/Rivers** – The Little Eau Claire River flows through the center of Guenther from northeast to southwest. Residents report that while sometimes navigable by canoe, the river often dries up in summer. Johnson Creek flows through the northwest corner of the Town. Guenther is located in the watersheds of Johnson Creek and the Little Eau Claire River. (Figure 3-1)

**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 Guenther, land within the 100-year floodplain is located in a band along the Little Eau Claire River, and a band along Johnson Creek.

**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 pond- weed, 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 are scattered throughout the Town of Guenther. Forested wetlands predominate and are particularly located in the northwest along Johnson Creek and all along the Little Eau Claire River. A large section of forested wetland is in the southeast and coincides with land set aside under the Forest Crop Law (FCL - discussed in the Land Use section). There is also a large section of scrub/shrub wetland in the southeast along the border with Bevent, and in the north central area along the border with Kronenwetter. (Figure 3-2)

**Groundwater** – According to resources maps, groundwater is located at a shallow depth throughout the Town. It is available in volumes adequate for industrial development, irrigation and domestic uses across the southeastern half of Guenther. Water is less plentiful across the northwestern half of the community, but generally adequate for domestic use and scattered urban development. Residents of Guenther report, however, that drilling for wells may require depths of 200 feet in some locations. Thus, although it appears water is available, in practice, finding well water at shallow levels is not guaranteed in all locations.



Bedrock is found in scattered locations throughout Guenther, with a stronger concentration in the southeast where there are a number of quarries. (Figure 3-4).

## **Soil Resources**

**Soils Types** – Virtually the only soil type present in Guenther is Mosinee-Meadland-Dancy. This soil type consists of soils on ground moraines and uplands, underlain by igneous and metamorphic bedrock, and tends to be located on a flat landscape. (Figure 3-5).

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 Guenther is very low, with maximum soil loss of less than 1.0 tons/acre/year.

**Prime Farm Soils** – Figure 3-6 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, defendable, and can be consistently applied. Additional information on Marathon County CES can be obtained from Marathon County DCPZ.

Prime farm soils in Guenther are scattered through the western half of the Town, with several larger sections in the northwest and center.

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 defined as slopes with gradients over 12 percent. Figure 3-7 illustrates that there are no steep slopes in Guenther. The map identifies two categories of steep slopes: Category D includes areas with slopes between 12 and 20 percent and Category E includes areas where slopes are all greater than 15 percent.

## **Biological Resources**

**Vegetation** – Woodland and wetlands make up the primary vegetative cover of Guenther, according to land cover maps. Over 4,400 acres in northeast Guenther is included as part of the Marathon County Forest. The next largest area is crop land and other agriculture, located mostly in the central and southwest sections of the Town.

**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, bear, badger, wolf, wild turkeys, 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.

The Kronenwetter and Leather Camp Forests are located in portions of the Town of Guenther, Town of Reid, and the Village of Kronenwetter. Together these County forests are nearly 10,000 acres in size. The Leather Camp Forest is in Guenther and is about 75 percent aspen. Efforts have been made to provide forest habitat for ruffed grouse, woodcock, deer, and other wildlife species.

**Threatened and Endangered Species** – Only one endangered species that can be identified at the local level has been located in Guenther.

### Fauna:

- **Arctic Shrew**— (*Sorex arcticus*) The Arctic Shrew is listed as of Special Concern in Wisconsin and believed imperiled because of its rarity.

## Issues

- **Preserve Water Resources**—Guenther residents want to preserve water resources, including rivers and streams and groundwater. In addition, they raised concerns about keeping water supplies clean and safe.
- **County Ownership of Land**— Guenther residents feel that the County has adequate forest land and should not purchase any more within their community. The County currently owns over 4,400 acres of forest in the town of Guenther.
- **Preservation of Natural Resources**—In a 2003 survey, residents indicated strong support for preserving woodlands and green space in Guenther. They indicated a similar level of support for wildlife and wildlife habitat preservation.

## 4. Land Use

The Town of Guenther is located along the southern border of Marathon County, east of I-39 and southeast of the Central Wisconsin Regional Airport.

### Current Pattern of Land Use

The Town of Guenther is entirely rural in character, with the majority of its land classified as woodlands. Accompanying the woodlands are areas classified as “barren lands,” including marshland and unused lands. The woodlands are predominantly along the eastern edge of Guenther, where over 4,400 acres are part of the Marathon County Forest. Known as the Leather Camp Forest Unit, this land connects with the larger Kronenwetter Forest Unit to the north to form one of the largest concentrations of forest in the County. In addition to County-owned forest land, there are an additional 65 acres of land set aside under the Forest Crop Law (FCL), 176.8 acres enrolled in Managed Forest Law (open) and 3,838.6 acres enrolled in Managed Forest Law (closed) in Guenther.

Crop land and other agricultural land form the next major land use in the Town. Concentrations of crop land are in the central and southwest sections, along the Little Eau Claire River, which flows from northeast to southwest through the Town. Johnson Creek flows through the northwest section of the Town as the other primary water body.

Residential development is scattered on lots ranging from 5- to 40-acre lots, with smaller parcels clustered along County Road X. The majority of Guenther is held in parcels greater than 35

acres. There are approximately 20 farms in operation in the Town, including six dairy farms, several specialty farms and the rest in general livestock farms. Approximately 265 acres are under Farmland Preservation Contracts.

**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 4-1 describes the various land use cover categories and Figure 4-1 illustrates the existing land cover. The acreage and percent of land shown on Table 4-1 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 4-1: Land Use Cover Classification, 2000**

Land Cover Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
<b>Single Family Residential</b>	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes	281	1.26
<b>Multi-Family Residential</b>	Multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments	0	0
<b>Commercial Services</b>	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	10	0.04
<b>Industrial</b>	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers	18	0.08
<b>Quarries/Gravel Pits</b>	Mining operations	51	0.23
<b>Cropland</b>	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland	3,123	14.06
<b>Specialty Crops</b>	Ginseng, orchards, vineyards, nurseries, groves, cranberries, etc.	4	0.02
<b>Other Agriculture</b>	Fallow, pasture and undetermined agriculture, power lines and towers, municipal wells	1,472	6.62
<b>Public/Quasi-Public</b>	Schools, churches, cemeteries, town halls, fire departments, National Guard	1	0.01
<b>Recreation</b>	Ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, parks, trails, camp grounds, shooting ranges	97	0.44
<b>Woodlands</b>	Forested land	9,942	44.75
<b>Water</b>	Open waters, lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, reservoirs, wetlands	5,786	26.04
<b>Transportation</b>	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	322	1.45
<b>Barren Land</b>	Unused open land in wooded areas, along streams, along roadsides	1,111	5.0
<b>Total Land Area</b>		22,218	100%

Source: Marathon County Land Use Cover Database

## Current Land Use Plans and Regulations

**Land Use Plan** – The Town of Guenther does currently have a land use plan.

**Zoning** – The Town uses County zoning. Except for the Marathon County forest land and several scattered parcels, the entire Town is zoned General Agriculture. Figure 4-2 illustrates the existing pattern of zoning in the Town.

**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 (7 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. There are approximately 270 acres under Farmland Preservation Contracts in Guenther, located in two blocks in the south central section of the Town. (Figure 4-3)

**Forest Crop Law 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.

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 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. Current rates through 2007 are \$0.83 per acre for land open to the public and \$1.95 per acre for closed land.

Table 4-2 indicates land in Guenther currently enrolled in the FCL and/or MFL programs. Land enrolled under FCL has declined as those contracts expire, with approximately 65.2 acres set aside under the FCL in Guenther. Land has been added into the MFL program, particularly in the category of land closed to the public, which has increased by over 400 acres in the last six years.

**Table 4-2: Land in Forest Preservation Programs (in acres), 1998 – 2016**

Year	Forest Crop Law (FCL)	Managed Forest Law (MFL) open	Managed Forest Law (MFL) closed
<b>1998</b>	796.3	143.9	1,274.6
<b>2002</b>	406.2	173.4	1,708.8
<b>2010</b>	185.2	256.8	3428.6
<b>2016</b>	65.2	176.8	3838.6
<b>Change 1998-2016</b>	-731.1	+32.9	+2564
<b>% Change 1998-2016</b>	-91.8%	+22.9%	+201.2%

*Source: Appraisal Services 2017*

## 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 4-1. 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 Guenther, 15,652 acres are identified as available for future development and 6,566 are considered unavailable. It should be noted that some of the land classified as “available” such as the over 4,400 acres in County Forest may be in public ownership, and is not in actuality available for development (Table 4-3).

**Table 4-3: Public Owned Land (in acres), 1998-2016**

Year	County Owned	State Owned	Federal Owned
1998	4138.4	0	0
2002	4554.7	0	0
2010	4554.7	0	0
2016	4554.7	0	0

Source: Marathon County

**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 Guenther, it is estimated that 10 acres of land will be needed to accommodate new residential development through 2030.

Between 2010 and 2016, 18 private onsite wastewater treatment systems (POWTS) permits for residential development were approved in the Town of Guenther. This represents an average of 3 new housing units 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 Guenther, it is estimated that only 2 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 employee’s declines.

The Town of Guenther believes the projections by NCWRPC underestimate the residential and non-residential acreage needed to accommodate future growth.

**Land Values** – Table 4-4 shows the change in per acre assessed land values in Guenther between 1998 and 2016. It also indicates percent change in acreage and land value for the Town. The major changes in Guenther are a decline of 1,047 acres assessed as agricultural land, and an increase of almost 536 acres assessed as swamp and waste land. A major change was the 3,823-acre decrease in land assessed as forest land. Per acre assessed values increased for all categories in Guenther except agricultural land.

**Table 4-4: Per Acre Assessed Land Values (in dollars), 1998 – 2016**

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
<b>1998</b>	174	\$1,070	12	\$775	59	\$342	7,367	\$254	660	\$114	7,068	\$362
<b>2016</b>	415	\$2,935	52	\$2,792	67	\$2,400	6,320	\$107	1,196	\$520	3,245	\$2,119
<b>Chg.</b>	+241	\$1,865	+40	\$2,017	+8	\$2,058	-1047	\$-147	+536	\$406	-3,823	\$1,757
Percent Change												
	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)
<b>Town</b>	139	174.3	333	260.3	13.6	601.8	-14.2	-57.9	81.2	356.1	-54.1	485.4

Source: *Appraisal Services 2017, Manufacturing Bureau*

## Major Opportunities and Constraints

- Limited Access** – Although not far from the Central Wisconsin Regional Airport, Guenther’s primary access is on County Road X and County Road C. While these roads are adequate, Guenther does not have any major highway access. This makes attracting business or industry more difficult, unless the business is related to the Town’s resources, such as the various quarries located off County Road C. There will not be additional

access created with the improvement of State Highway 51 in Portage County and a potential connection to County Road X that would lead to Guenther.

- Developable Land** – Over 4,400 acres of land in Guenther is Marathon County Forest, while other land cannot be developed because of its proximity to rivers and creeks, thus limiting where development could occur in the Town.

## Issues

- **Lot Size** – Maintain a minimum lot size that meets the desires of the Town of Guenther residents. The 2017 minimum lot size is one unit per 2.5 acres. Residents feel that it is important for the Town to have a minimum lot size.
- **Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance** – The Township of Guenther, Marathon County, Wisconsin has a Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance, No 2011.01, adopted June 13, 2011. As of May 1, 2017 Ordinance No 2011.01 is subject to updating and revision. Contact the Guenther Town Board for current and future requirements.
- **Rural Character Protection** – The community desires to retain a rural, agricultural character. There is support for sufficient regulation to protect rural character, which residents indicate is what they like best about the Town of Guenther.
- **Preservation of Farm Land**—In a 2003 survey of over 100 Guenther residents, over two-thirds supported preservation of prime farm land in the Town. Residents did not want agricultural land being developed for residential purposes. Most residents did not perceive conflicts between farm and non-farm neighbors over dust, noise, or odors.
- **Tax Values** –There is much concern about the purchase of additional land for County forest purposes. Removing this land from the tax rolls decreases the tax base the Town needs to maintain basic services.
- **Industrial Development** – In general, residents are divided over whether industrial development is needed in Guenther. A majority did not support either commercial or industrial development. There was support for agriculturally-related business. If an industrial development were under consideration, residents recommended that the Town respond on a case by case basis, and hold public hearings on such requests.
- **Commercial Development**—Residents are similarly divided on commercial development, but support limited commercial such as convenience stores, gas stations, or motels.
- **Nuisance Ordinances** — Guenther residents indicate support for ordinances to manage uses such as salvage yards, recycling and waste disposal, as well as ordinances that can manage “junk” or nuisance uses.



## 5. Transportation

### Background

In a 2003 survey, over 100 residents of Guenther rated both County and Town roads, and a majority felt that the roads were adequate. Responses were divided over whether more roads should be paved, but most residents indicated that they did not want increased taxes to pay for paving.

Guenther residents noted increased traffic on local roads, and forecasted that Camp Road, Sand Creek Road and Cisewski Road will have the greatest traffic increases over the next 10 years.

### 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:

- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**– The TIP includes all programmed transportation projects receiving Federal and/or State funds. The TIP was adopted in October 2001 and is updated every two years.
- **State Trunk Highway 29 Corridor Land Use Review (1997)**– This plan was prepared by a multi-departmental team working with communities along the State Highway 29 corridor in the western part of Marathon County. The primary goal was to identify recommendations to allow local communities to protect State Highway 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 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 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.<sup>1</sup>

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

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Conditions and Performance Report.

generally still the responsibility of the State Department of Transportation. Roadway jurisdictions (i.e. US, State, and County Roads) are indicated in Figure 5-1.

### Major Road Facilities

Following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in Guenther. All major roads are summarized by functional classification, jurisdiction, and Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), when available.

- **COUNTY ROAD C** is an east-west running major collector. Between County Road J (in Bevent) and County Road X, the road had an AADT of 450 in 2004 and 420 in 2010.
- **COUNTY ROAD X** is a north-south running major collector that serves as the Town’s western boundary. In 2010, County Road X had an AADT of 600 south of County Road C and 960 south of State Highway 153. In 2004, the AADT was 1,500 south of State Highway 153.

*\*\*AADT data from WisDOT interactive traffic count map, [www.wisconsin.gov](http://www.wisconsin.gov)*

### Road Maintenance

The majority of Guenther’s local roads are gravel. Camp, Sandy Creek, Knapp, Wisz and Cisewski Roads were seal coated as of 2017. The only other paved roads are County roads, which provide convenient access to I-39/US 51 and State Highway 153. About 67 percent of roads are considered in fairly good condition. Some roads are in need of repair/maintenance. Residents have noted that some blacktopped roads need a topcoat or to be sealed. The Town does provide snowplowing service.

The Town Board determines road improvement priorities, which is a system that appears to be working well. TRIP projects and complaints tend to influence project decisions. Roads are improved as funding allows. All road improvements come out of the general Town fund and there does not appear to be an interest in shifting road improvements to an assessment-based system.

There is a concern/frustration with logging trucks that are using local roads to access County Forest land. These heavy vehicles cause significant road damage and thus increase maintenance costs to the Town.

**Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER)** – The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (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 WISLR data is broken down by road types as outlined below in Table 5-1.

**Table 5-1: WISLR Road Types**

Road Type	Description
30	Graded and Drained Earth Road
35	Gravel road
40	<1" Wearing Surface
57	Cold Mix Asphalt Pavement (CMAC) Surface + Base >7"

Once the road type is established in the WISLR evaluation, the roads are evaluated and rated from 1-10 depending on road type and the Paser rating. Table 5-2 highlights the ratings that apply to the town depending on road type.

**Table 5-2: WISLR –Surface Type and Paser Rating Table**

<b>Type 30</b>		
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Pavement Condition</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	POOR	Reconstruction needed
2	FAIR	Significant grading required.
3	GOOD	Routine maintenance or spot grading helpful
4	VERY GOOD	No improvement needed.
<b>Type 35 &amp; 40</b>		
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Pavement Condition</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	FAILED	Complete rebuilding required -- travel is difficult.
2	POOR	Needs addition of aggregate plus drainage maintenance.
3	FAIR	Needs routine regarding plus minor ditch maintenance.
4	GOOD	Good crown and drainage.
5	EXCELLENT	Excellent crown and drainage.
<b>Type 57</b>		
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Pavement Condition</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	FAILED	Needs total reconstruction
2	VERY POOR	Sever deterioration
3	POOR	Needs patching and major overlay
4	FAIR	Significant aging, would benefit from overlay
5	FAIR	surface aging, needs sealcoat or overlay
6	GOOD	Shows signs of aging. Sound structural condition. Could extend with seal coat
7	GOOD	Maintain with routine crack filling
8	VERY GOOD	Recent sealcoat or new road mix.
9	EXCELLENT	Recent overlay
10	EXCELLENT	New construction

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 5-2, 5-3 and Table 5-3, illustrate the WISLR road assessment done in 2015 by surface type and condition rating. There are a total of 31.7 miles of road within the town of Guenther. Some of the roads in the Town are seal coated. 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. Although approximately 21.13 miles of the roads in the Town are rated in “Fair” or better condition, there are over 9.81 miles that will require some sort of reconstruction.

**Table 5-3a: WISLR Road Types for reference in Table 5-3b.**

Road Type	Description
30	Graded and Drained Earth Road
35	Gravel road
40	<1" Wearing Surface
57	Cold Mix Asphalt Pavement (CMAC) Surface + Base >7"

**Table 5-3b Miles of road within town of Guenther**

Rating	Road Type			
	30	35	40	57
Failed	----	2.6	----	----
Poor	0.52	7.21	----	----
Fair	0.24	9.63	8.16	----
Good	----	1.2	1.97	0.17

Source: 2015 WISLR Report, Wi.gov website

## 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.

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. The Town of Guenther requires driveway permits as of 01-01-2007.

**Traffic Generators** – The large amount of forest land in the eastern half of the Town generates traffic from hunters and other recreational users. Loggers work in the County Forest lands as well. There are four to five sandstone/stone quarries, which are the Town’s primary employers and have truck traffic.

**Trip Patterns** – Most residents work in Mosinee, Wausau, or Stevens Point, which are also the major shopping and entertainment destinations.

## Other Transportation Modes

**Pedestrian** – There are no public sidewalks in Guenther.

**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. Suggested bicycle routes in Guenther include County Road C and County Road X. (Figure 5-2)  
Snowmobile trails and horse riding trails are also marked in Guenther.

**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 Guenther.

**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. Between 1982 and 2007 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

- **Funding**— Guenther residents are concerned about having adequate revenue to pay for road improvements. As the tax base declines because of increasing County land ownership, there are less tax dollars to support road improvements. Residents have suggested asking the County to help with repairs because of the high amount of County-owned land in the Town.
- **Road Users and Maintenance Impacts**— Some local road users, such as the heavy logging trucks, tend to accelerate problems and lead to greater maintenance requirements. The Town is looking for ways to maintain the roads, given the heavy use and impact on the roads.

## 6. Utilities

This section describes the existing conditions and issues relative to utilities available to the Town of Guenther, 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 Guenther does not provide public sewer or water service. All development uses private wells and waste disposal systems. The Town, which has County zoning, requires a minimum lot size of 2.5 acres.

### 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:

- **SPS 83** – This refers to Chapter 83 in the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Safety and Professional Services. It sets standards for regulation of private waste disposal 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 SPS 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 in Guenther** – All development in Guenther uses on-site waste disposal systems. There are some concerns about septic system failures and the potential for groundwater contamination in some areas, but this has not been a major problem for Guenther. Depth to bedrock may pose problems for systems in some scattered areas of the

Town. Soils suitable for septic systems are also scattered throughout the Town. (Figure 6-1 and Figure 6-2)

**Water Wells** – All development in Guenther 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 6-3. 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. 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

There are no identified water erosion control problems in Guenther.

## **Electrical and Gas Utilities**

The Town of Guenther receives electric power from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS) and through the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (REA). Residents do not have natural gas service, but use individual propane tanks.

## **Telecommunication Facilities and Services**

- Television/Cable providers—Charter Communications
- Telephone/Fiber Optics—Mosinee Telephone Exchange
- Cell towers—There are no cell towers in Guenther.
- Satellite Dish / Direct TV

## **Solid Waste Management**

The Town of Guenther contracts with a private garbage company for waste management. 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**

The Town offers recycling drop-off at the Town Garage once a year typically in the spring.

## **Issues**

No utilities issues have been identified for Guenther.

## 7. 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 Guenther. Housing in the Town is predominantly single family, with 89% owner-occupied. Almost 24% of housing units were constructed over the last decade. Median housing values are higher 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 2010 Census, Summary File -1 Data, which was collected through a household-by-household census and represents responses from every household within the country. To get additional information, the U.S. Census Bureau sponsors the American Community Survey (ACS). ACS estimates are period estimates that describe the average characteristics of population and housing over a period data collection. The period used for reference in this document is from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015. Multi-year estimates cannot be used to say what is going on in any particular year in that period, only what the average trends are over the full period. Tables referencing the ACS data are noted in the source sections.

*\*\*ACS is sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau and is part of the Decennial Census Program. Information above is from the ACS Multi-year Accuracy of the data document from the U.S. Census Bureau.*

## Housing Inventory

### Housing Type and Tenure

As shown in Table 7-1, the Town of Guenther has 133 occupied housing units. 118 (or 88.7%) of these units are owner-occupied. The Town has an average household size of 2.65 persons. 21.8% of all households are classified as being “1 person households.” Approximately 21.8% of Town households have a householder 65 years or older.

**Table 7-1: Number of Housing Units by Type and Tenure**

Area	Guenther	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Total Occupied Housing Units	133	53,176	2,279,768
Owner Occupied Units	118	39,090	1,551,558
Renter Occupied Units	15	14,086	728,210
Average Household Size	2.65*	2.61*	2.55*
% Owner Occupied	88.7%	73.5%	68.1%
% 1 Person Households	21.8%	25.8%	28.2%
% With Householder 65 years or older	21.8%	22.7%	22.3%

*Source: U.S. Census, 2010 Summary File 1*

*\*Data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey*

### Changes in Housing Stock

Table 7-2 notes changes in the housing stock between 2000 and 2010 according to U.S. Census Data. Total housing units have increased by 29 while the number of occupied housing units rose by 26. Vacancy decreased from 13% to 12.5% between decades. The number of owner-occupied housing units increased by 24 or 25.5%. The census reported increases in the number of single-family units.

**Table 7-2: Changes in Housing Stock**

	2000	2010	# Change	% Change
Total Housing Units	123	152	29	23.6%
Occupied Housing Units (households)	107	133	26	24.3%
Vacancy%	13	12.5	-0.5	-3.8%
Owner Occupied Housing units	94	118	24	25.5%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	13	15	2	15.4%
Owner Occupied Housing Units as percent of Total	88	87.5	-0.5	-0.6%
Number homes for seasonal / Recreation use	6	9	3	50.0%
Number of Single Family Homes	113	119	6	5.3%
*Detached	113	119	6	5.3%
**Attached	0	0	0	0.0%
Number of Duplexes	0	0	0	0.0%
Multi Family Units 3-9 units	0	0	0	0.0%
Multi Family Units 10+	0	0	0	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010

\* 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 unit 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 unit 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 7-3 shows housing age for the community. In the Town of Guenther, data show that significant portions of the local housing stock were built prior to 1949 and in the 1970s. Recent housing growth from the 1990s makes up approximately 35.8% of the total housing stock. That is slightly higher than overall percentages for the County. The Census reports that housing units built in the 1990s make up 31.1% of the County’s overall housing stock.

**Table 7-3: Age of Community Housing Stock**

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT	Number	Percent
Total housing units	148	---
Built 2014 or later	0	0.00%
Built 2010 to 2013	7	4.70%
Built 2000 to 2009	32	21.60%
Built 1990 to 1999	14	9.50%
Built 1980 to 1989	13	8.80%
Built 1970 to 1979	26	17.60%
Built 1960 to 1969	5	3.40%
Built 1950 to 1959	13	8.80%
Built 1949 or earlier	38	25.70%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

**Physical Housing Stock**

Table 7-4 looks at several select measures of physical condition and compares them to figures for Marathon County and Wisconsin. The median housing unit size in the Town of Guenther is similar to the overall figures for the County and State, when measured by number of rooms. 97.3% of the community’s housing stock is classified as single family. This is significantly higher than the overall figures for the County or State. At the time of the 2010 census, there were no housing developments with more than 10 units. The 2010 Census data

## Town of Guenther

indicates that the Town had 1.8% of housing units lacking complete plumbing. Estimates in 2015 by the American Community Survey indicate that this metric is now zero.

**Table 7-4: 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
<b>Guenther</b>	5.6	97.3%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Marathon County</b>	5.8	75.9%	7.10%	0.50%	0.90%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	5.4	66.7%	10.50%	0.50%	0.90%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

## Housing Values

### Median Value

Table 7-5 shows housing unit value statistics for the community, County and State. Specifically, 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 housing units without a business or medical office on the property. Census data indicates that the Town of Guenther has a median housing unit value higher than that of the County and the State median value (dollars).

**Table 7-5: Median Housing Value**

	Median Value (\$)		
	2000	2010	2015
<b>Guenther</b>	80,000	189,800	195,000
<b>Marathon County</b>	95,800	139,500	144,500
<b>Wisconsin</b>	112,200	169,000	165,800

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

U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 -2015 American Community Survey

## Range of Values

Table 7-6 shows the range of housing values that exist in the community. Compared to overall percentages for Marathon County, the Town of Guenther has a higher percentage of homes valued at \$200,000 or greater. Housing units represent sample information and do not add up to total housing units in Guenther.

**Table 7-6: Range of Housing Values 2010-2015**

Housing Value	% of Houses Guenther		% Houses Marathon County	
	2010	2015	2010	2015
< \$49,999	1.9%	2.6%	4.7%	4.8%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	17.5%	7.9%	20.3%	19.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	22.3%	20.2%	31.2%	29.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	12.6%	20.2%	20.9%	20.2%
\$200,000 or more	45.6%	49.1%	23.0%	26.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 - 2015 American Community Survey

## 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 home. 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 Guenther that pay more than 35% of their income on housing costs is similar to that of the County and State among owner-occupied households.

Additionally, Table 7-7 shows that select Town median owner-occupied costs, both with and without a mortgage, are more than median figures for Marathon 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*).

**Table 7-7: Housing Affordability**

	Owner Occupied				Renter Occupied	
	Median monthly costs <sup>1</sup>				Median monthly costs <sup>1</sup>	
	With mortgage	% <sup>2</sup>	No Mortgage	% <sup>2</sup>	Median Gross Rent	% <sup>2</sup>
Guenther	\$1,325	26.50%	\$563	13.60%	---	10.50%
Marathon County	\$1,255	18.20%	\$481	9.10%	\$697	36.10%
WI	\$1,402	21.30%	\$532	11.70%	\$776	38.90%

<sup>1</sup>In dollars

<sup>2</sup>Percent paying over 35% of household income on housing

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

## 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 in the City of Antigo and the Wausau region. 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**

- **Rural Density Housing—** Guenther has mostly scattered, rural density (5- to 40-acre lots) single-family residential land uses. The current lot size minimum is one unit per 2.5 acres.
  
- **Single-Family Housing—** Residents support construction of single-family housing in Guenther. They did not indicate support for start-up type housing or other housing types.
  
- **Housing Inspection—** Residents indicated some support for adding a Town housing inspector to approve all new residential construction. An inspector was added in 2006.

## 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 Guenther

The Town of Guenther was one of the last towns created in Marathon County, when it was split off from Knowlton in 1909. Knowlton, along the Wisconsin River and early roads and railroads, was inhabited by the mid-nineteenth century. Among the earliest settlers was trader John Baptiste DuBay, who located along the Wisconsin River in an area that is now part of the man-made Lake DuBay. Other early settlers at Knowlton included Leonhard Guenther, who operated an early-day roadhouse on the Wausau and South Line Road. Guenther's four sons remained in the settlement of Knowlton, operating a saw mill, grist mill and general merchandise store as late as 1912.

By 1912, the area east of the settlement of Knowlton, including what is now Guenther, was still described as “uninhabited.” The southeastern section of the County, including

Kronenwetter, Guenther, Pike Lake and Bevent, experienced colonization efforts in this era. By 1922, a newspaper article told of 45 families in Guenther, located nine miles from Knowlton. Brought to the Town by the National Colonization Company of Madison, most of the settlers were skilled laborers from Milwaukee who knew little about farming and suffered while attempting to build up their farms. The early colonization efforts brought mixed results in terms of farming, but did succeed in getting people to live in the area.

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

There are no properties in Guenther listed on the NRHP. The Town does not have a local historic preservation commission.

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](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/ahi/index.html). There are no historic properties in Guenther that have been previously surveyed and included in the AHI.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has identified no archaeological sites and historic cemeteries in Guenther.

**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.

## 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 particularly important in Guenther, where no historic properties, or archaeological sites or cemeteries 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. Community Facilities

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

### Schools

#### Primary and Secondary Schools

The Town of Guenther is served by the Mosinee School District. The Mosinee School District has an elementary school (K –3), a middle school (4-8), and a high school. All three schools are located in the City of Mosinee. The district is anticipating slow to moderate growth of 5 to 20 students per year. Current facilities are not meeting needs due to an overcrowded elementary school, which has forced the district to create a “school within a school” for fourth and fifth graders at the middle school. Portable buildings house the kindergarten at the elementary school. The district has asked residents to fund construction of a new elementary school along Rangeline Road; however, referenda to fund the project failed in 1999, 2000, and 2001. The district has asked residents to fund building renovations / additions to the elementary, middle and high schools on referendums in 2016 and 2017. (Figure 9-1).

There are no private schools in Guenther.

**Table 9-1: Mosinee School District Enrollment**

Year	Enrollment PreK-12
2010-2011	2,143
2011-2012	2,109
2012-2013	2,085
2013-2014	2,096
2014-2015	2,011
2015-2016	2,082

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 2010-2011 was approximately 1,300 students.

**Northcentral Technical College (NTC)** - NTC, located in Wausau, offers 170 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.

### Libraries

The Town of Guenther is served by the Marathon County Public Library system. The Mosinee Branch-Joseph Dessert Library, located on Main Street in Mosinee, has a new addition

expanding its space to 18,913 square feet containing over 18,900 volumes, including books, magazines, and other materials. 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 was recently constructed on Grand Avenue, and has 3,240 square feet of space with over 31,500 volumes.

## **Public Protection**

### **Police**

Law enforcement is provided by the County sheriff. (Figure 9-2)

### **Fire and Emergency Response**

The Town of Guenther receives fire service from the Village of Kronenwetter. Ambulance service is provided by SAFER EMS. (Figure 9-4)

In 2012 the Town of Guenther created a First Responders team to help response time in critical situations.

**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. Marathon County's radio system consists of subscriber equipment manufactured by Tait, Harris, and Motorola. The microwave equipment is supplied by Alcatel, Motorola, and GE MDS. The Sheriff's Department has a radio technician on staff to maintain the equipment.

### **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.

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. The Rice Clinic is affiliated with St. Michael's Hospital.

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).

Saint Clare's Hospital is a verified level II trauma center that opened in Weston in 2005. Saint Clare's is within the Weston Regional Medical Center Campus, located near the intersection of State Highway 29 and County Road X. Saint Clare's provides a broad range of general and advanced healthcare services. It is a surgical center for the Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Health Care Heart Care Team and other programs.

**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 9-2: Child Care Referrals**

<b>Counties</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Taylor	Child Care Connection	<a href="http://www.childcareconnectionrr.org/">http://www.childcareconnectionrr.org/</a> (800) 848-5229
Portage	Mid Wisconsin Child Care Resource & Referral	715-342-0788

## **Issues**

- **Service Response Time**—In a recent survey, some residents indicated that response times from fire and ambulance are long. The Town may want to consider whether there are better options available.

## 10. Parks

### Existing Parks, Trails and Open Space

#### Local Parks and Recreational Facilities

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

#### County or State Parks, Forest and Trails

There are no Marathon County parks located in the Town of Guenther. Several County and State parks are located nearby Guenther. (Figure 10-1). Ashley Park, a 160-acre County park located on Lake DuBay, is located one mile west of Guenther in the Town of Knowlton. Mission Lake County Park, a 122-acre park located on the west bank of Mission Lake, is located in the southeast corner of the Town of Reid. A planned segment of the Ice Age Trail will be constructed in the park.

**Kronenwetter and Leather Camp Forests** - The Kronenwetter and Leather Camp Forests are located in portions of the Town of Guenther, Town of Reid, and the Village of Kronenwetter. Together these County forests are nearly 10,000 acres in size. The land is a mix of upland forests and marsh. The unit is open to recreational hunting, snowmobiling, and hiking. Improved and woods trails are maintained for access. The Leather Camp Forest is in Guenther and is about 75 percent aspen. Efforts have been made to provide forest

habitat for ruffed grouse, woodcock, deer, and other wildlife species.

**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.

#### Issues

- **Improvements to the Leather Camp Forest**— Guenther residents would like some improvements to Leather Camp Forest that would make it more user-friendly. Residents suggest adding bathrooms, a water source, a picnic area, and better road access.

## 11. 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 Guenther 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 Marathon County, the economic health and vitality of Guenther 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 11-1: Marathon County Top 10 Employers**

Establishment	Service or Products	# of Employees
Aspirus Wausau Hospital, Inc.	General medical and surgical hospitals	1,000+
Greenheck Fan Corp.	Industrial and commercial fan and blower manufacturing	1,000+
Kolbe & Kolbe Millwork Co. Inc.	Wood window and door manufacturing	500 to 999
Eastbay	Mail-order athletic footwear and apparel	500 to 999
Marathon Cheese	Dairy product merchant wholesalers	500 to 999
D.C. Everest Area School District	Elementary and secondary schools	500 to 999
North Central Health Care Facilities	Psychiatric and substance abuse hospitals	500 to 999
Northcentral Technical College	Junior colleges	500 to 999
Liberty Mutual Group Inc.	Direct property and casualty insurers	500 to 999
Wausau Metals/ Milco/Linetec	Metal window and door manufacturing	500 to 999

*\*data suppressed to maintain confidentiality*

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Marathon County Comprehensive Plan 2016*

## 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 11-2 illustrates population and employment information for the Town of Guenther. In 2015, there were 184 employed

people in the Town of Guenther. Data show that 10.3% people in Guenther were employed in natural resources, construction, farming and maintenance and are most likely self-employed.

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 11-2: Population and Employment by Sector, 2015**

Sector	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	41	22.3
Service occupations	33	17.9
Sales and office occupations	43	23.4
Natural resources, construction, extraction, farming and maintenance	19	10.3
Production, transportation, and material moving	48	26.1
<b>Total Employed*</b>	184	100

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey*

*\* “Total Employed” represents employed civilian population 16 years and over. Table 11-2 is identical to table 2-7.*

## 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 11-3.

**Table 11-3: Employment Projections in 5-Year Increments**

	Total Employment by Year						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>Guenther</b>	116	113	110	107	103	100	97
<b>County</b>	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 Guenther. By the year 2030, it is estimated that the Town of Guenther will provide employment for 97 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 11-4 shows the percent change in projected employment using the low, moderate and high growth scenario. The low and moderate growth percentages are similar for Guenther because of the relatively low numbers involved in the decline. Projected employment growth varies from a decrease of 17 percent (96 workers) to an increase of 8 percent (125 workers).

**Table 11-4: Percent Change in Employment, 2000-2030**

	Percent Change in Employment by Growth Rate		
	Low Growth	Moderate Growth	High Growth
<b>Guenther</b>	-17% (96)	-16% (97)	+8% (125)
<b>County</b>	21%	26%	34%

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

## Issues

No economic development issues have been identified in Guenther.

## 12. Intergovernmental Cooperation

This analysis presents an inventory of existing mechanisms that the Town of Guenther 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 Guenther 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-** The Town of Guenther receives fire service from Kronenwetter. Ambulance service is provided from SAFER EMS.

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

### Relationship to Other Governmental Entities

**Surrounding Municipalities** – The Town of Guenther is bordered by Village of Kronenwetter to the north, Town of Bevent the east, Portage County to the south, and Town of Knowlton to the west. The Village of Kronenwetter and Town of Knowlton are concurrently updating comprehensive plans, which will increase opportunities for coordination and cooperation on matters of common interest.

**School District-** Guenther is located in the Mosinee School District.

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. The County also provides oversight on on-metallic mining.

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

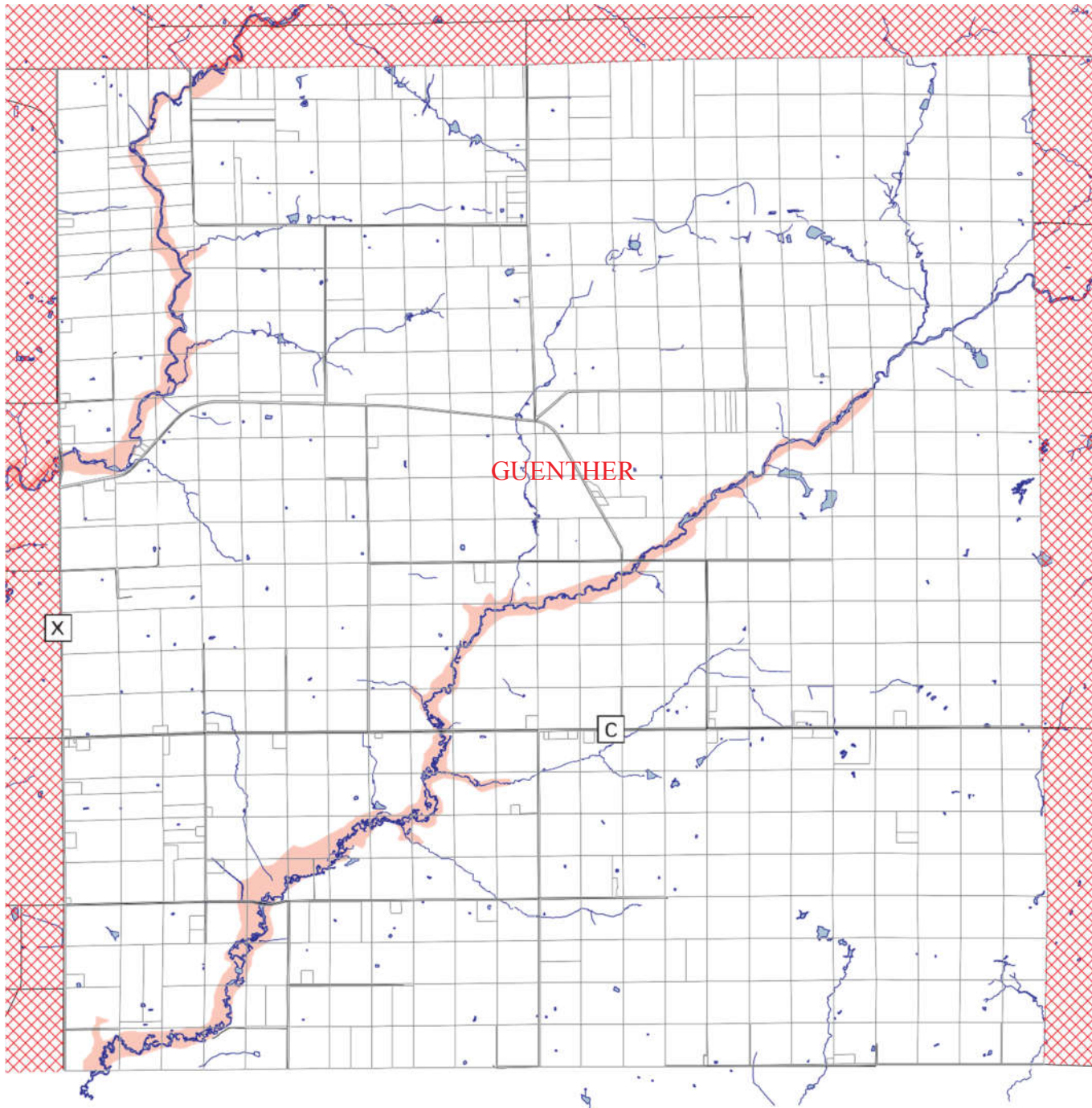
**State and Federal Agencies-** The Town has little direct contact with State or Federal agencies. However State agencies regulate certain activities such as access onto State roads, shoreland, floodplain and wetland zoning oversight, navigable waters protection, compliance with water quality standards,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

### **Cooperative Plans or Agreements**

**Mutual Aid—** The Town of Guenther receives fire service from Kronenwetter which is part of the MABAS system (Mutual Aid Box Alarm System) in Marathon County. Ambulance service is provided from SAFER EMS.

### **Existing or Potential Conflicts**

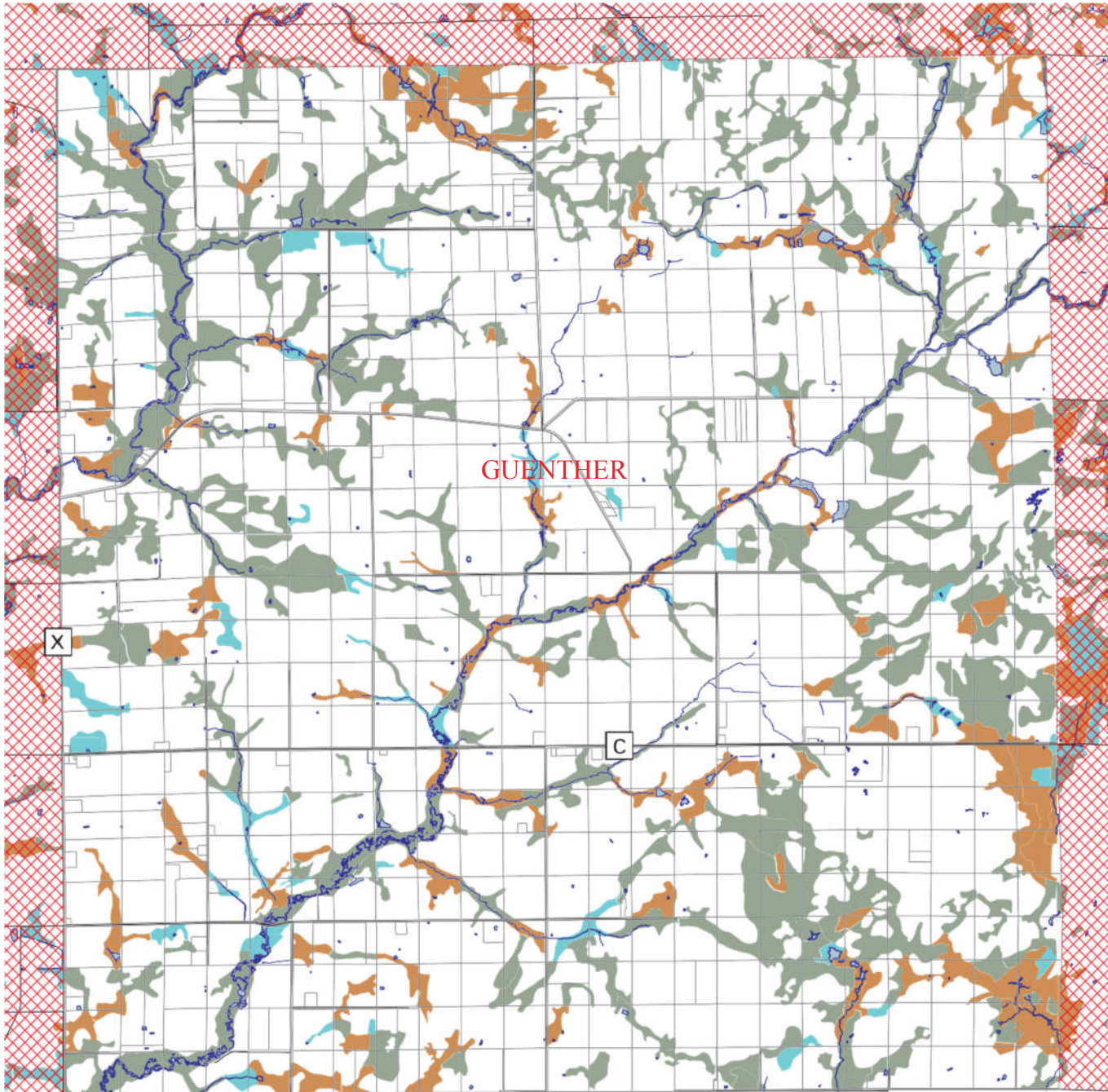
- No existing or potential conflicts were identified in the Town of Guenther.



■ FEMA Floodplain

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

Figure 3-1  
100 Year Floodplain  
GUENTHER

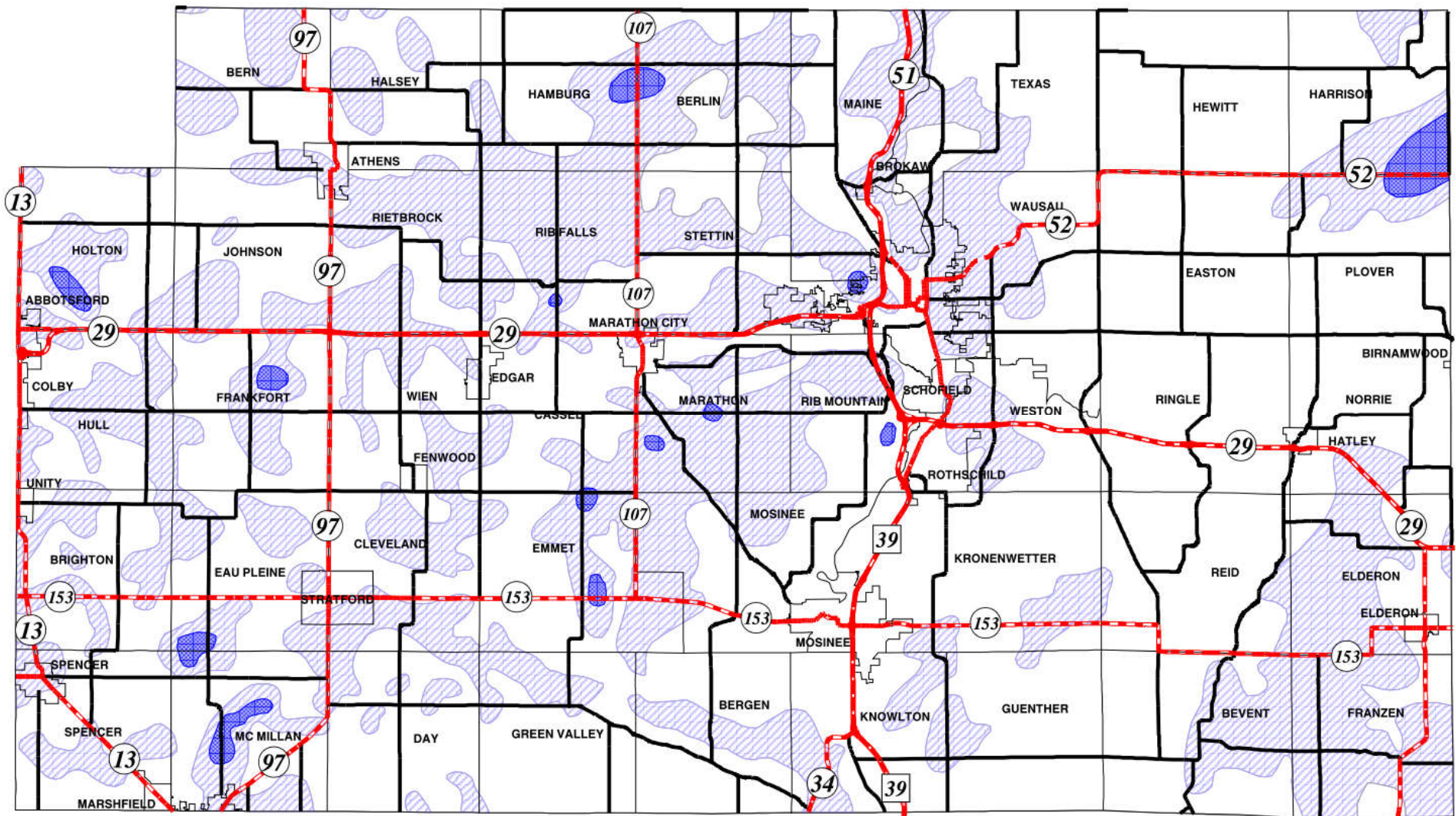


- Aquatic beds
- Emergent/wet meadow
- Filled/drained wetland
- Flats/unvegetated wet soil
- Forested
- Scrub/shrub

Indicates other Municipality  
 Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-2  
**Wetland Types**  
**GUENTHER**

# MARATHON COUNTY DEPTH TO GROUND WATER



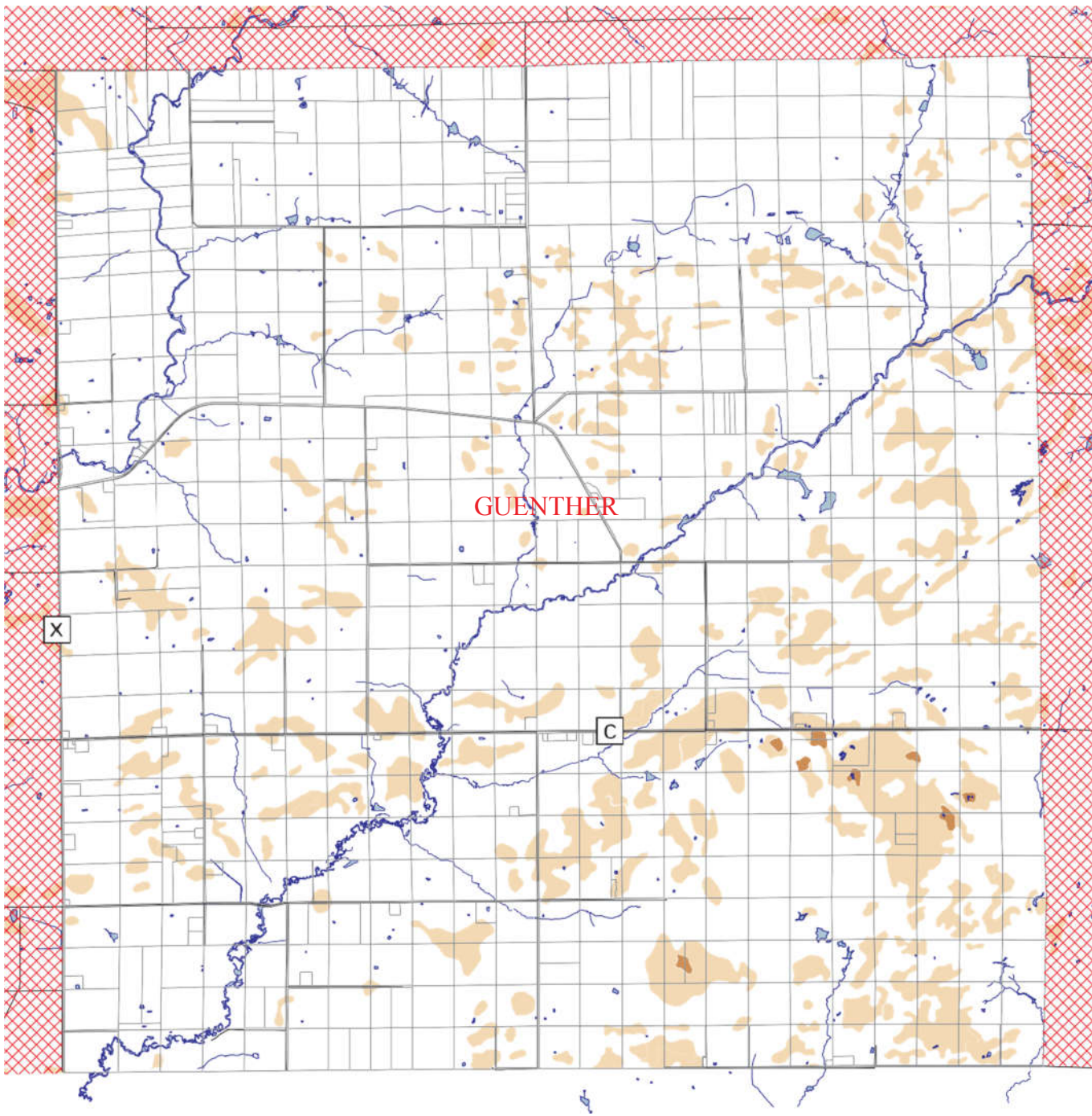
- State & Us Highways
- County Roads
- Municipal Boundary
- Ground Water Depth
- 0-20 feet
- 20-50 feet
- >50 feet



Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

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

Figure 3-3



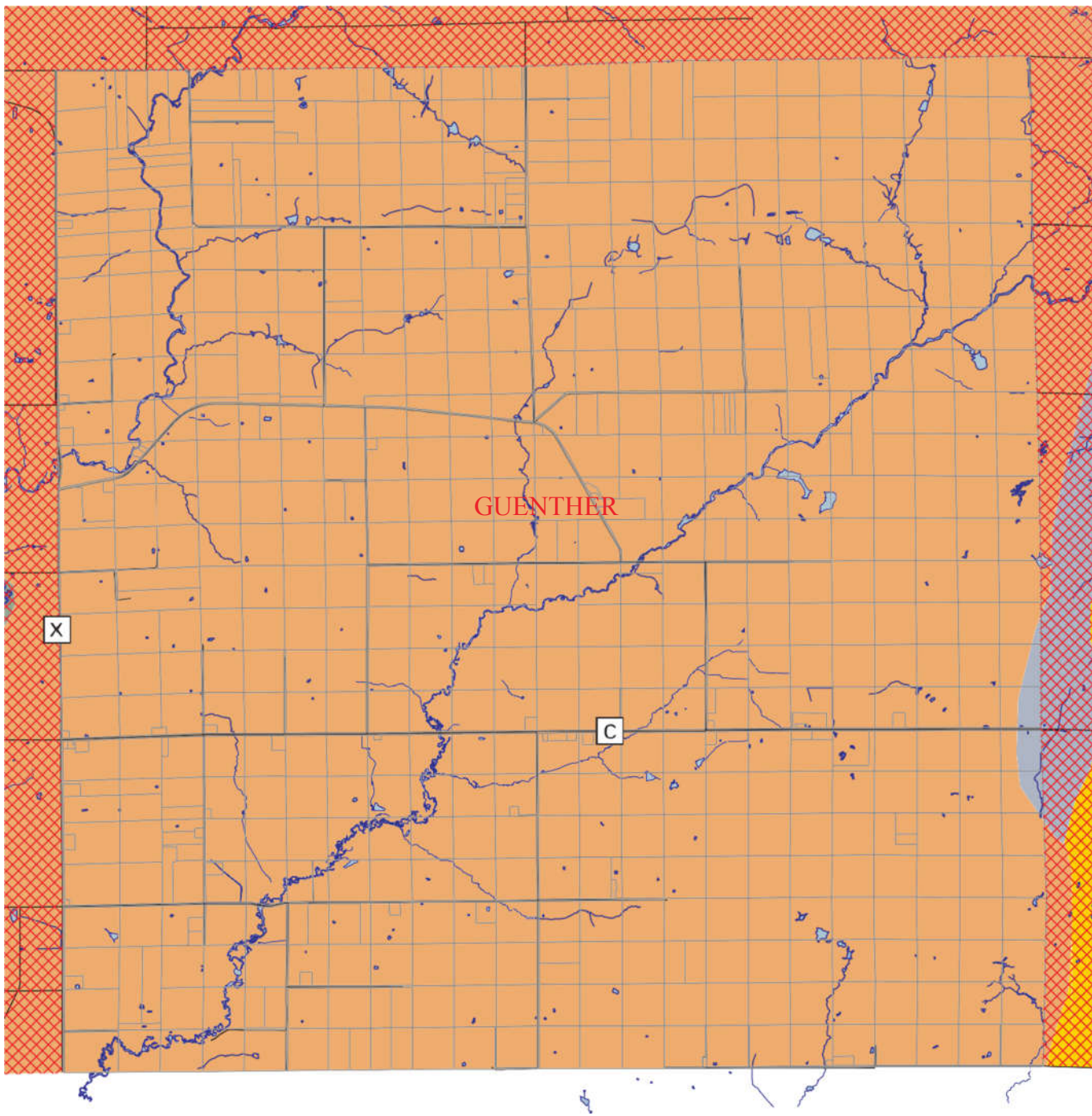
- 0 - 20" (Quarries)    □ >60"
- 20 - 40 "
- 40-60"

 Indicates other Municipality  
 Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005



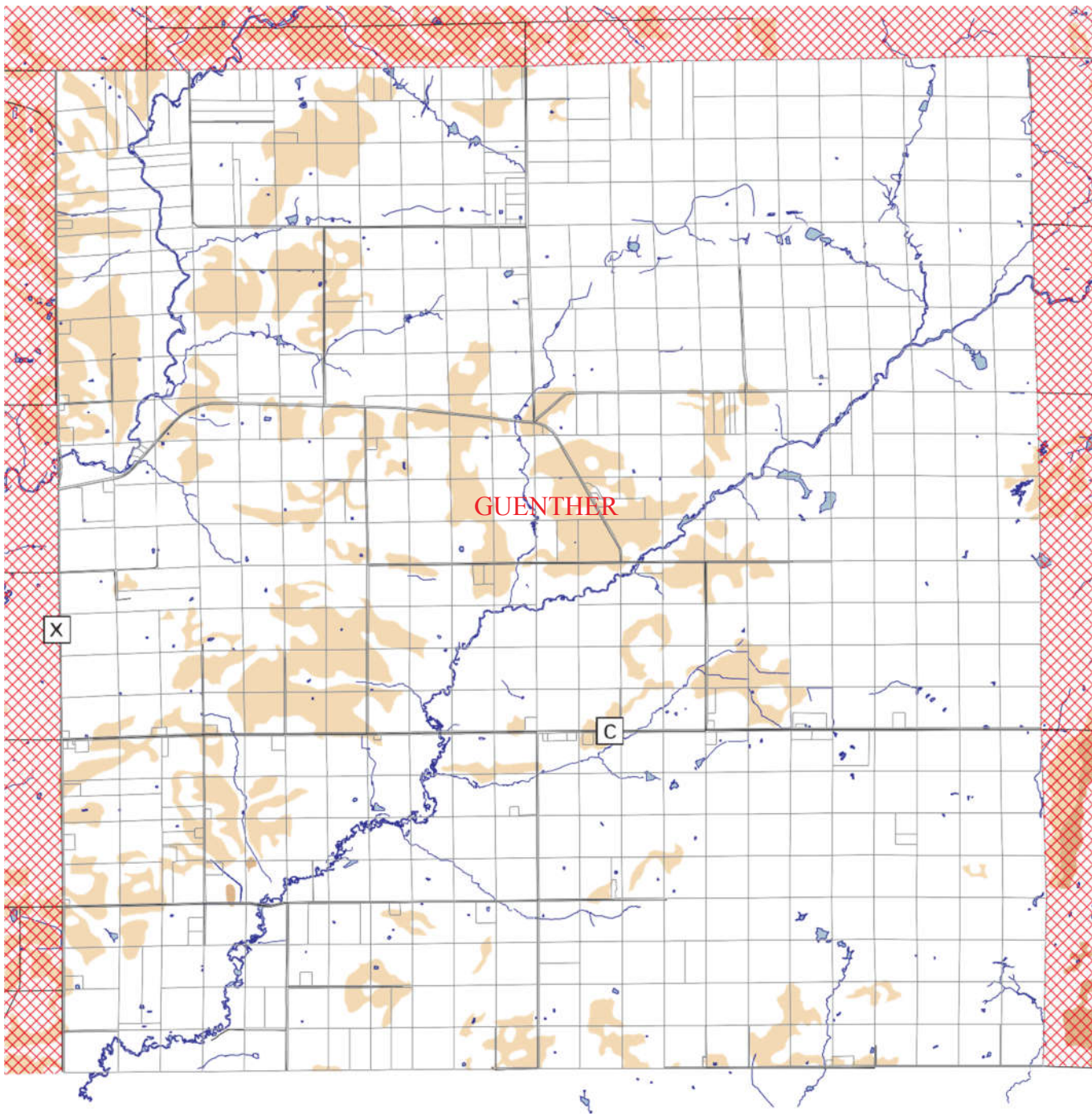
Figure 3-4  
**Depth To Bedrock**  
**GUENTHER**





- |                         |                               |                           |                              |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Magnor-Cable            | Marathon-Mylrea-Moberg        | Mahtomedi-Fordum-Sturgeon | Cathro-Seelyville            |
| Loyal-Withee-Marshfield | Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozellville | Chetek-Rosholt-Oesterle   | Indicates other Municipality |
| Kennan-Hatley           | Mosinee-Meadland-Dancy        | Mahtomedi-Graycalm-Meehan |                              |
- Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-5  
Soil Associations  
GUENTHER



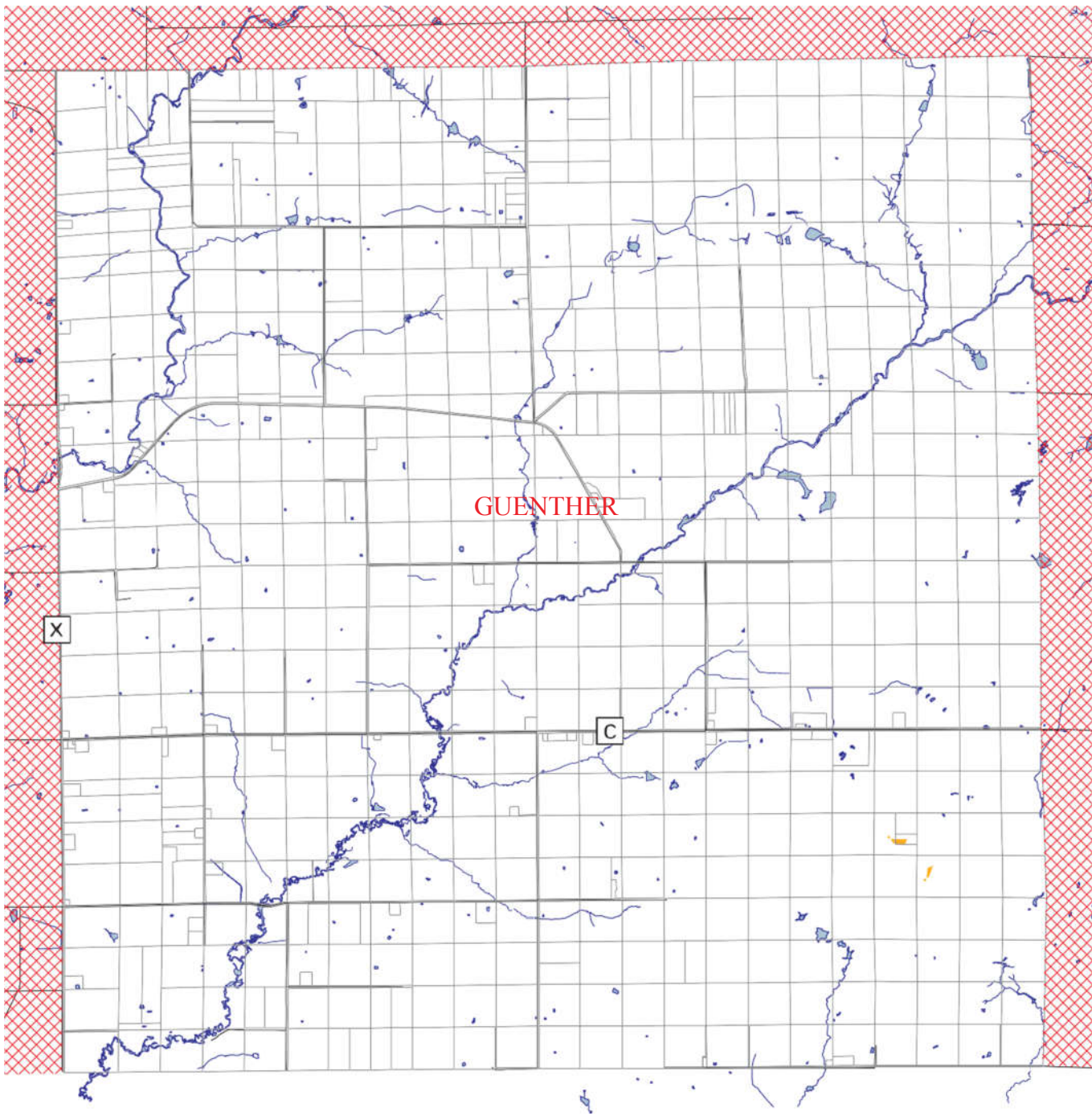
Group 1: The soils in this group are the very best in Marathon County. The USDA classification for these soils are prime farmland Class 2 due to climate and growing season length. They are well suited for growing all crops.

Group 2: The soils in this group are very good agricultural soils. They also are designated as prime farmland Class 2. These soils differ by having restricted drainage. In wet years they are more difficult to work and crops needing well drained condition (alfalfa, ginseng) do very poorly.

Indicates other Municipality  
 Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005



Figure 3-6  
**Prime Farm Land**  
**GUENTHER**



■ D - generally 12-20% slopes

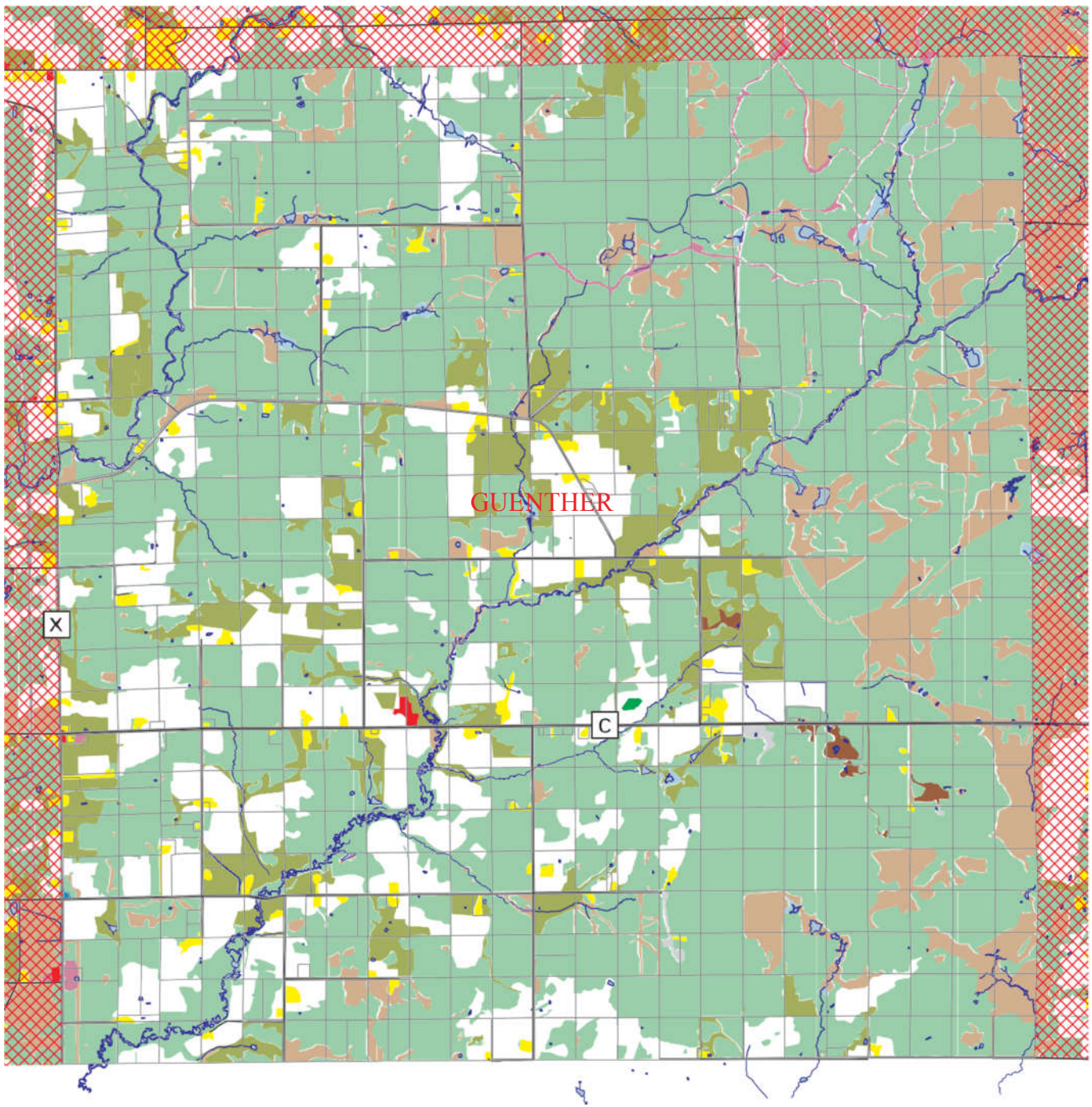
■ E - generally greater than 15% slopes.



Indicates other Municipality

Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-7  
Slopes  
GUENTHER

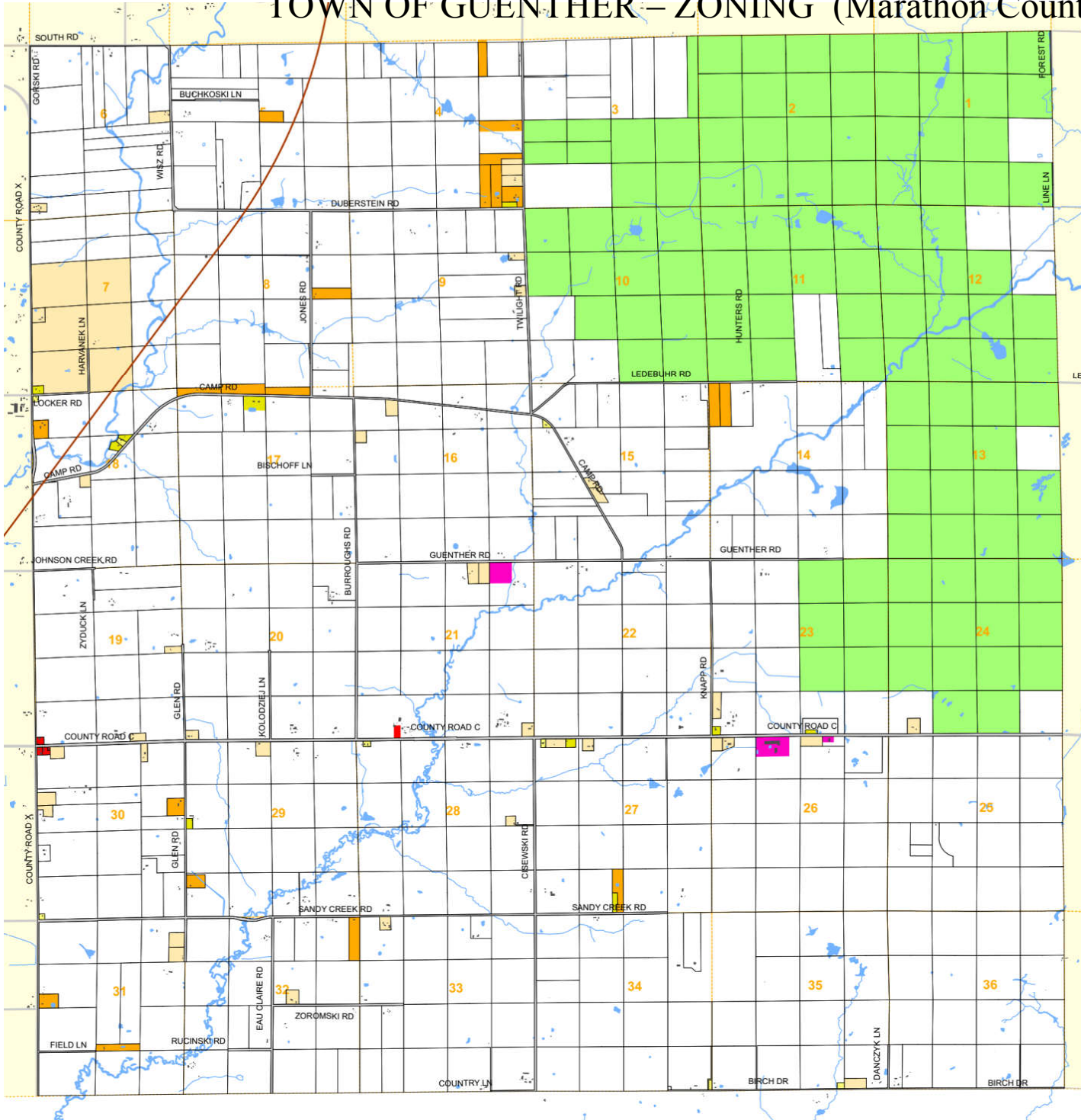


- |                           |                      |                     |            |                              |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------------------|
| Single Family Residential | Industrial           | Specialty 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 |

Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 4-1  
 2000 Landuse/Landcover  
 GUENTHER

# TOWN OF GUENTHER – ZONING (Marathon County)



## CLASSIFICATIONS

- U-R (Urban Residential)
- L-D-R (Low Density Residential)
- R-R (Rural Residential)
- R-E (Rural Estate)
- M-H (Manufactured/Mobile Home Park)
- C (Commercial Regional)
- N-C (Neighborhood Commercial)
- B-R (Business Regional)
- L-I (Light Industrial)
- H-I (Heavy Industrial)
- G-A (General Agriculture)
- F-P (Farmland Preservation)
- C-V/R-C (Conservancy & Recreation)
- HWY (Hwy Corridor & Interchange Overlay)
- A-A-P (Airport Approach Protection)
- W-P (Wellhead Protection Overlay)

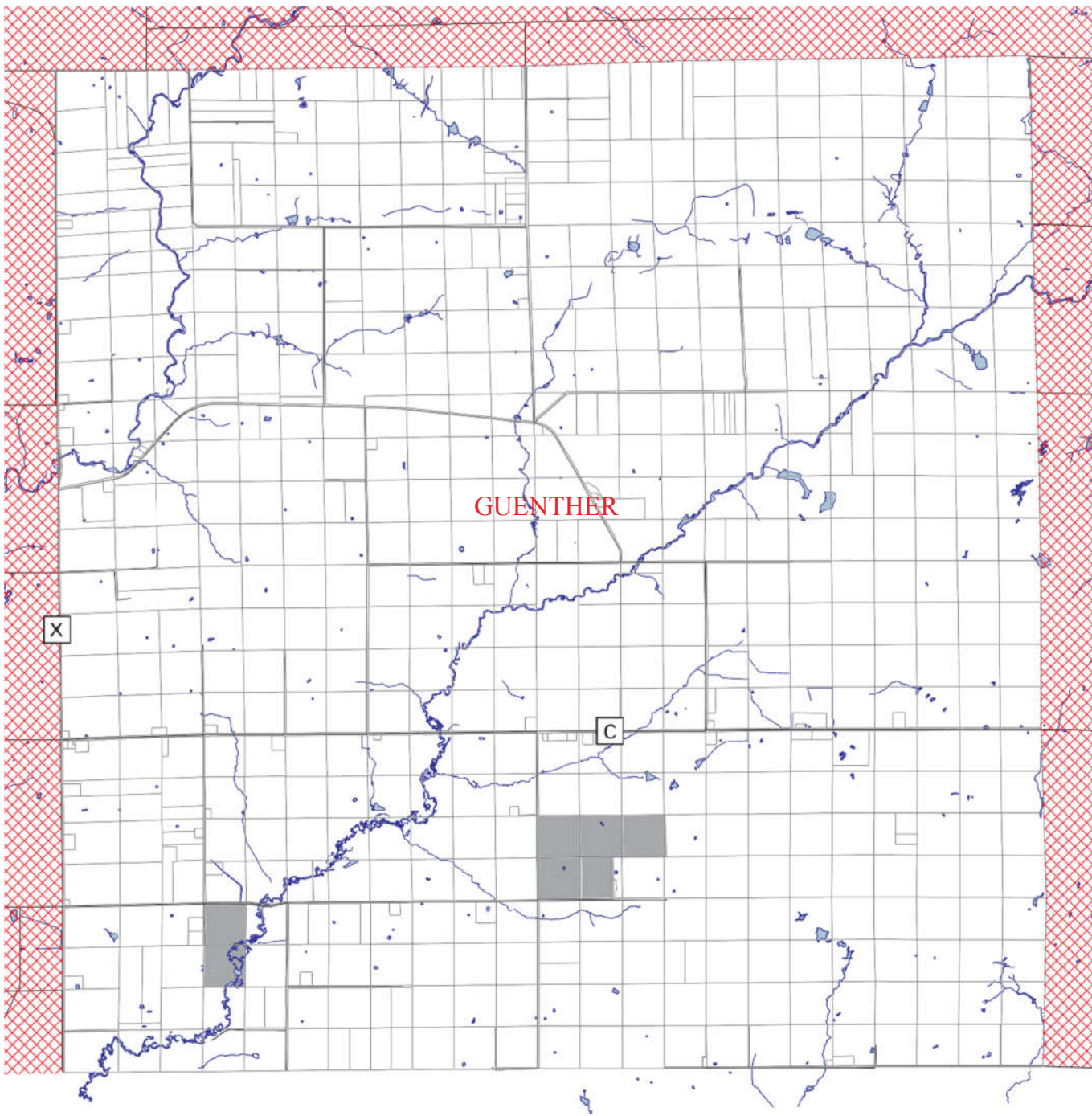
## Features

- Parcels
- Buildings2015
- Sections Lines (est.)
- Railroads - Active
- Water Features
- Other Municipality



Base Map Features from May 2000/2005/2010 Aerial Photography.  
 Map Developed by Marathon County Conservation, Planning & Zoning Dept  
 COUNTY APPROVAL DATE: 16-FEB-2016  
 TOWN APPROVAL DATE: 12-DEC-2016  
 REVISION DATE:

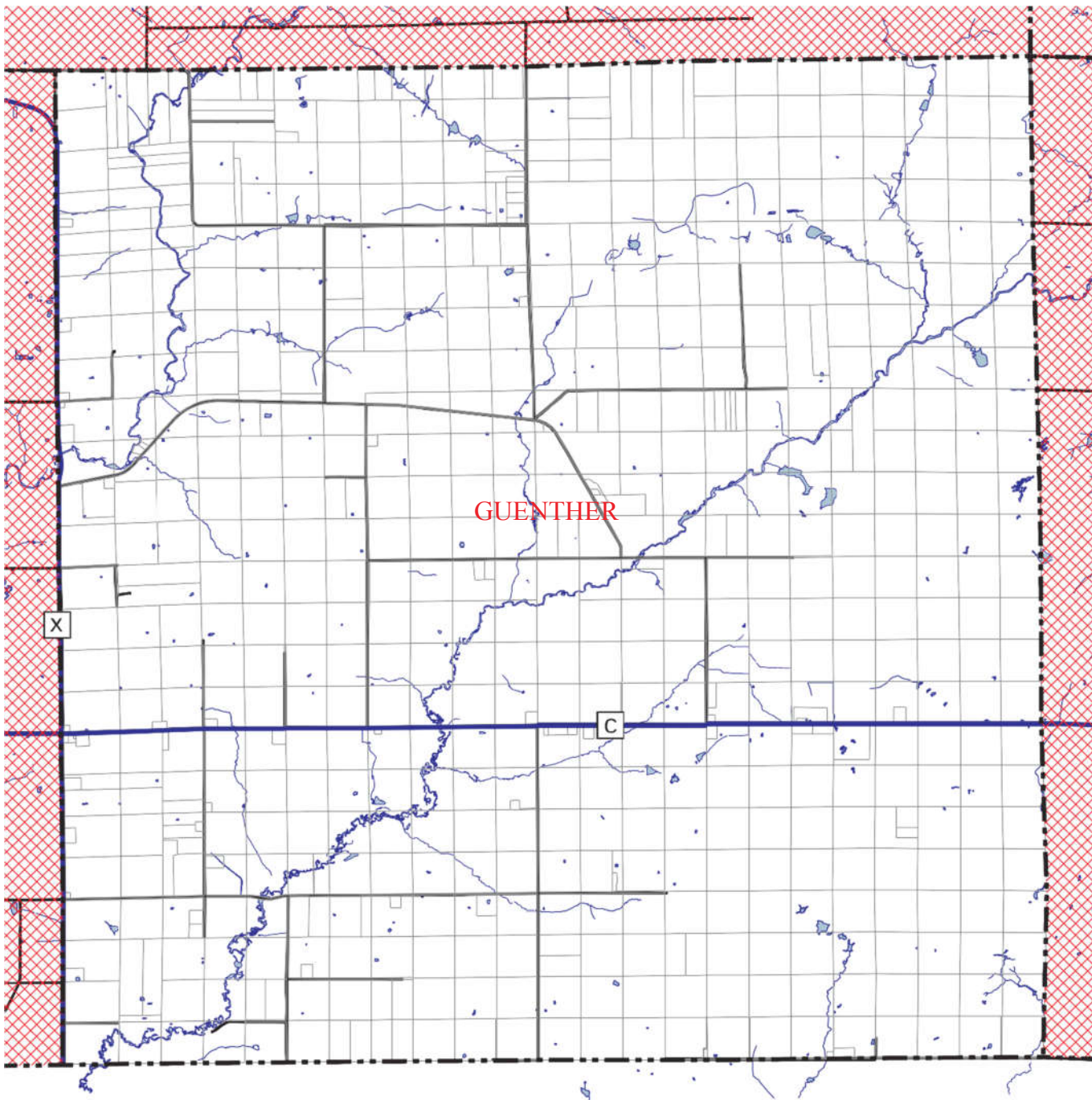
Figure 4-2  
**GUENTHER**



- Exclusive ag zoning
- Farmland pres contracts

 Indicates other Municipality  
 Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 4-3  
**Exclusive Ag & Farmland Preservation**  
**GUENTHER**



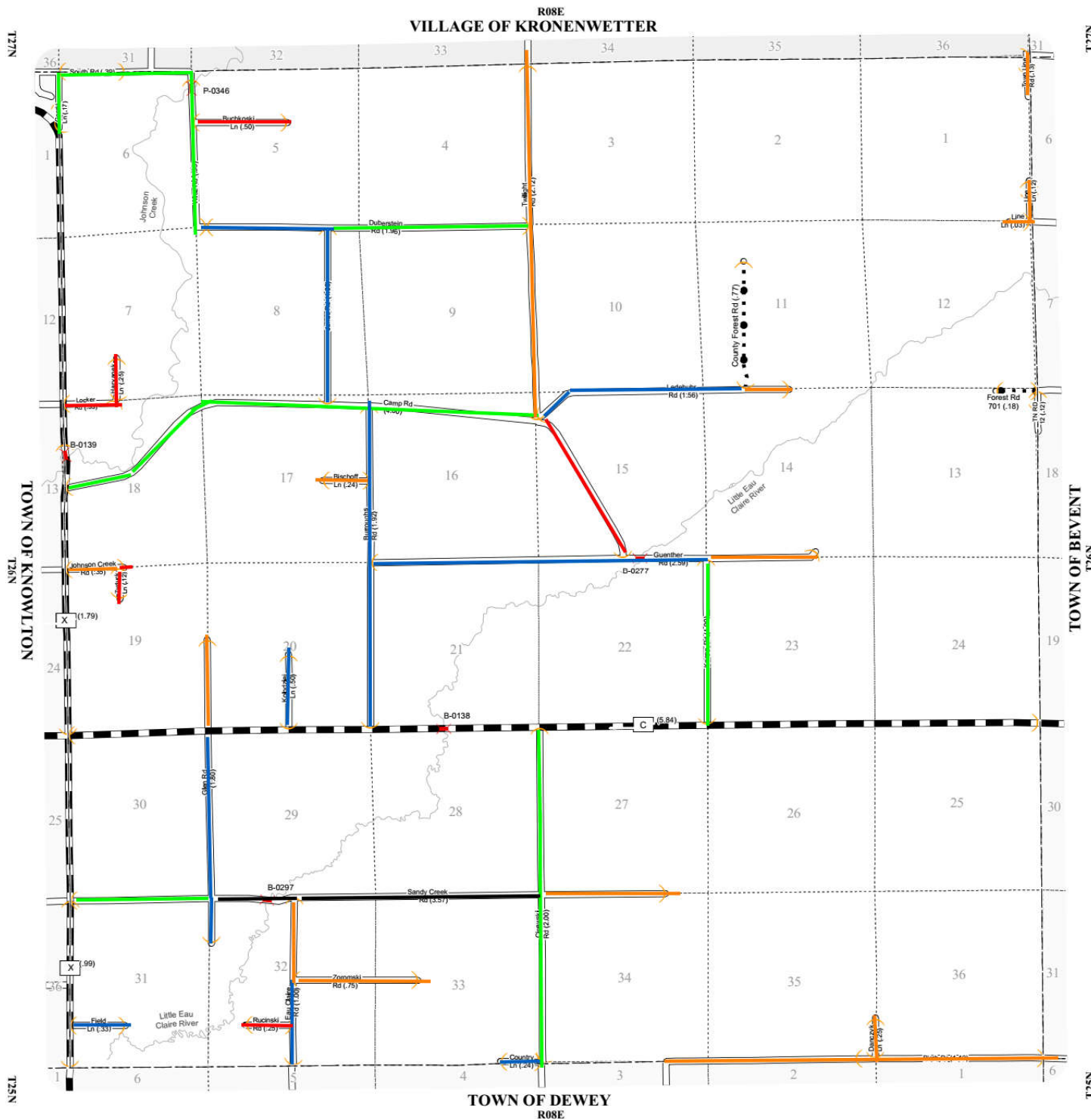
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Interstate

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

Map

Figure 5-1  
**Functional Classification of Roads**  
 GUENTHER

y CPZ & GIS 2005



**LEGEND:**

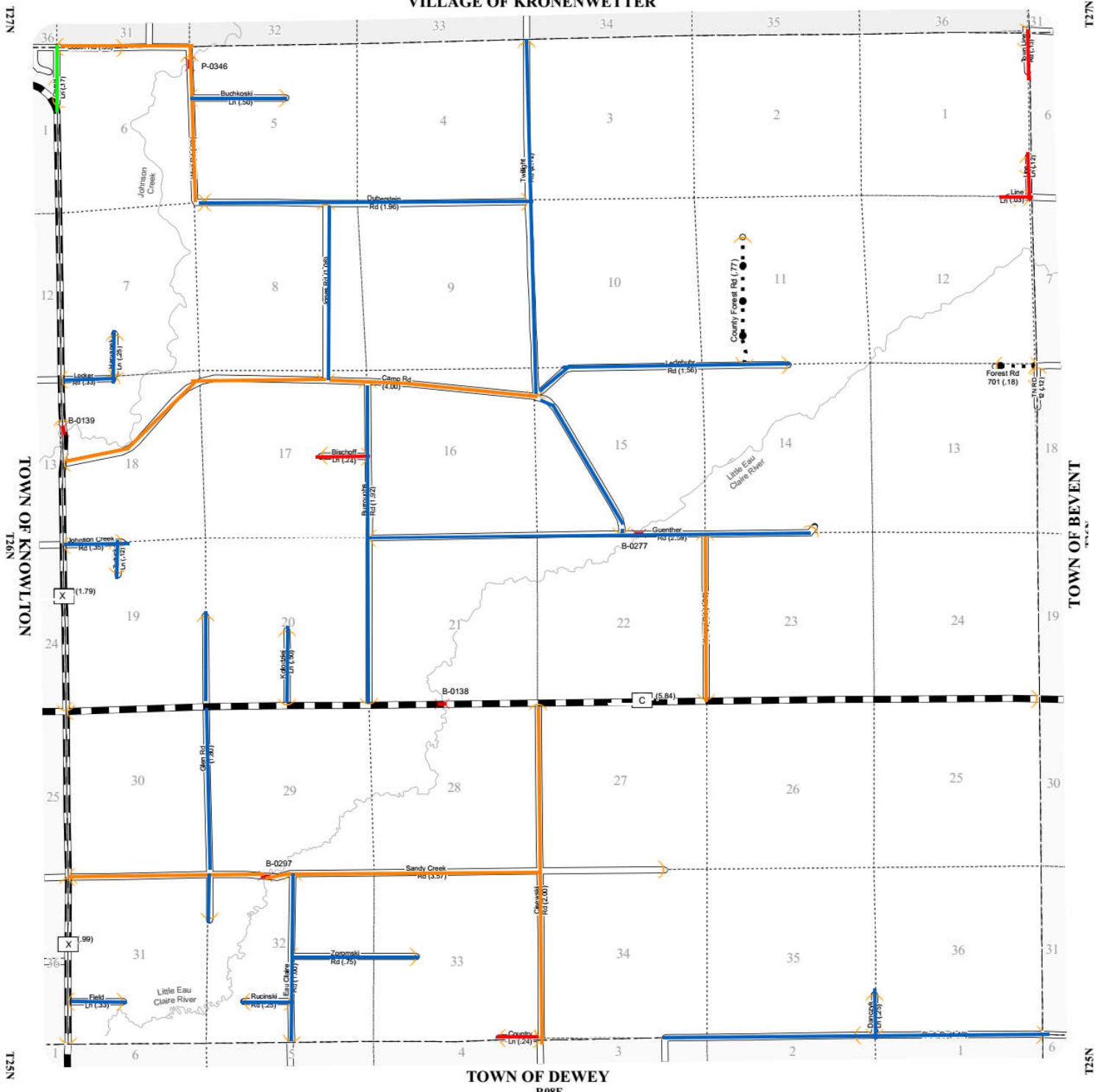
- County Trunk Highway
- Local Road
- County Forest - Eligible
- CVT Border
- PLSS Border
- Bridge
- Route Identifier
- FAILED
- POOR
- FAIR
- GOOD
- EXCELLENT



Figure 5-2  
WISLR Surface Rating  
GUENTHER

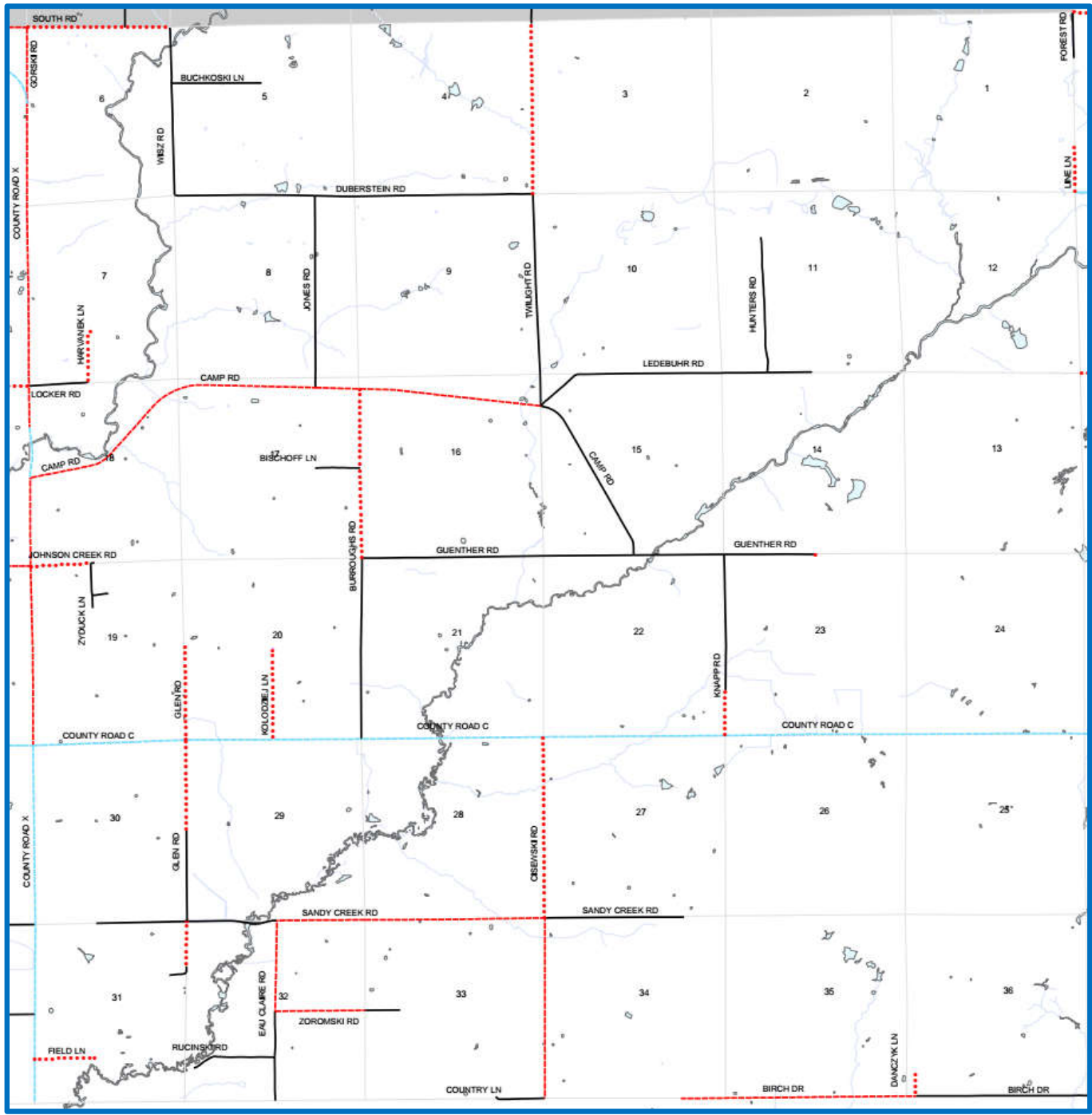


R08E  
VILLAGE OF KRONENWETTER

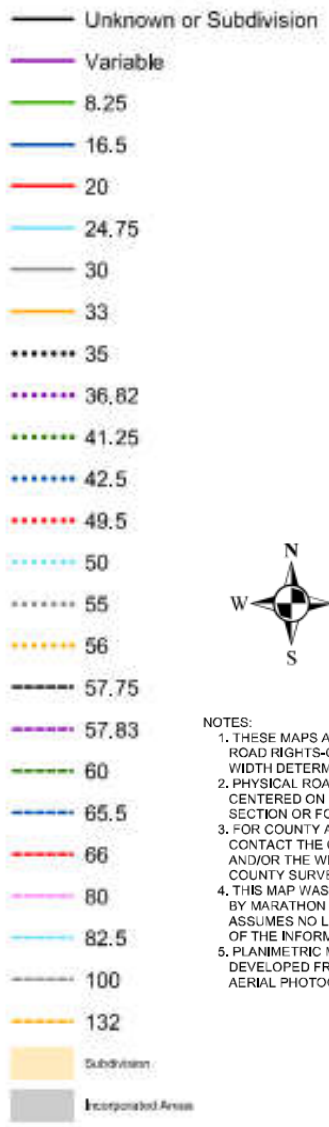


- LEGEND:**
- County Trunk Highway
  - Local Road
  - County Forest - Eligible
  - CVT Border
  - PLSS Border
  - Bridge
  - Route Identifier
  - Type 30
  - Type 35
  - Type 40
  - Type 57

Figure 5-3  
Road Surface Types  
GUENTHER



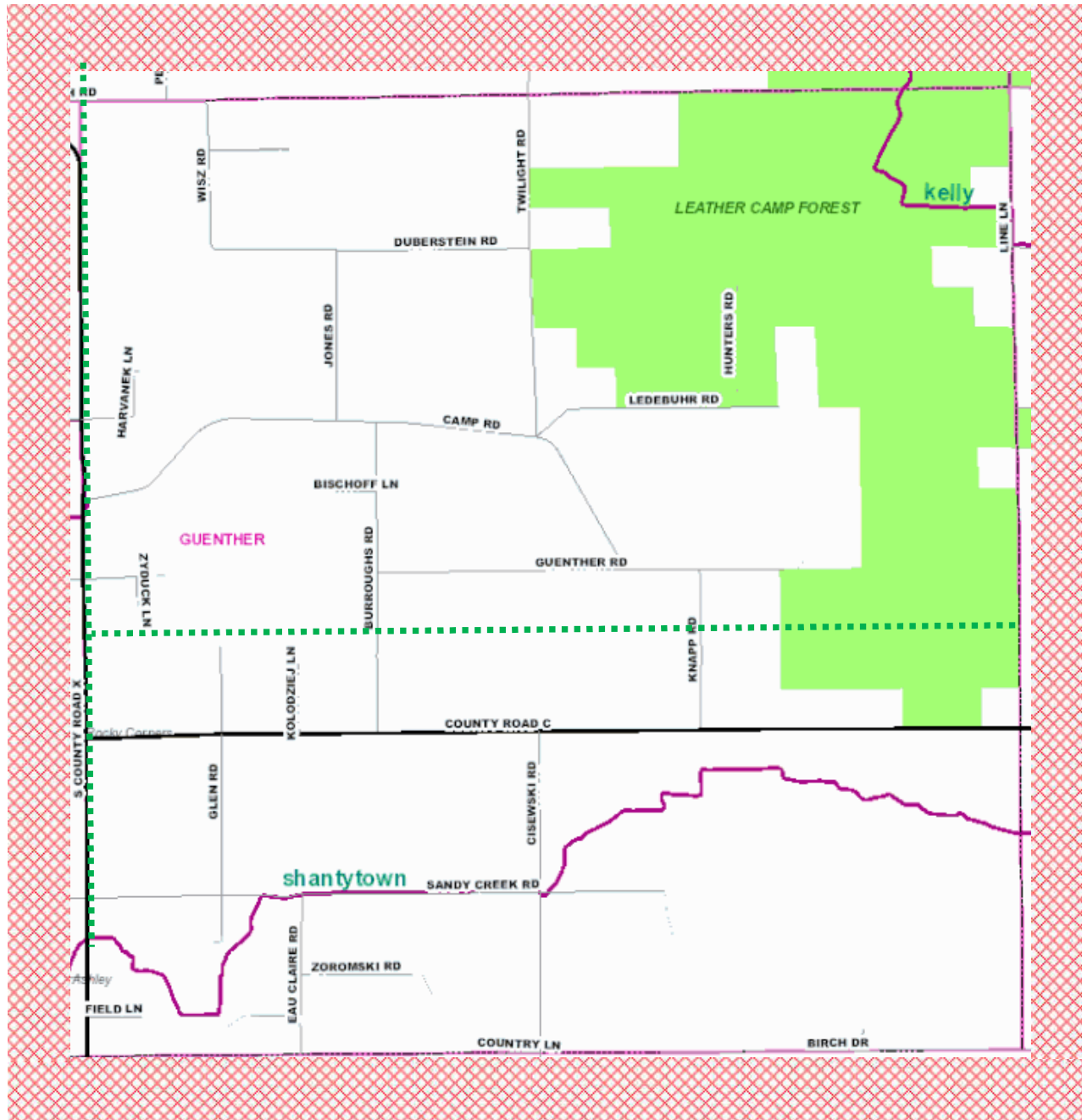
**ROW Widths (in feet)**



- NOTES:
1. THESE MAPS ARE TO BE USED FOR ROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAY WIDTH DETERMINATION ONLY.
  2. PHYSICAL ROAD LOCATIONS MAY NOT BE CENTERED ON SECTION, QUARTER SECTION OR FORTY LINES.
  3. FOR COUNTY AND STATE HIGHWAY WIDTHS CONTACT THE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT AND/OR THE WIDOT. SOME MAPS ARE AT COUNTY SURVEYORS OFFICE.
  4. THIS MAP WAS COMPILED AND DEVELOPED BY MARATHON COUNTY. MARATHON COUNTY ASSUMES NO LIABILITY FOR THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN.
  5. PLANIMETRIC MAP FEATURES ORIGINALLY DEVELOPED FROM 1990 and/or 2000 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY.

MARATHON COUNTY CPZ DEPARTMENT  
 Friday, April 27, 2017 8:08:59 AM  
 O:\Common\gisdata\mxd\projects\rowproject.mxd

Figure 5-4  
 Road Right of Way (width)  
 GUENTHER

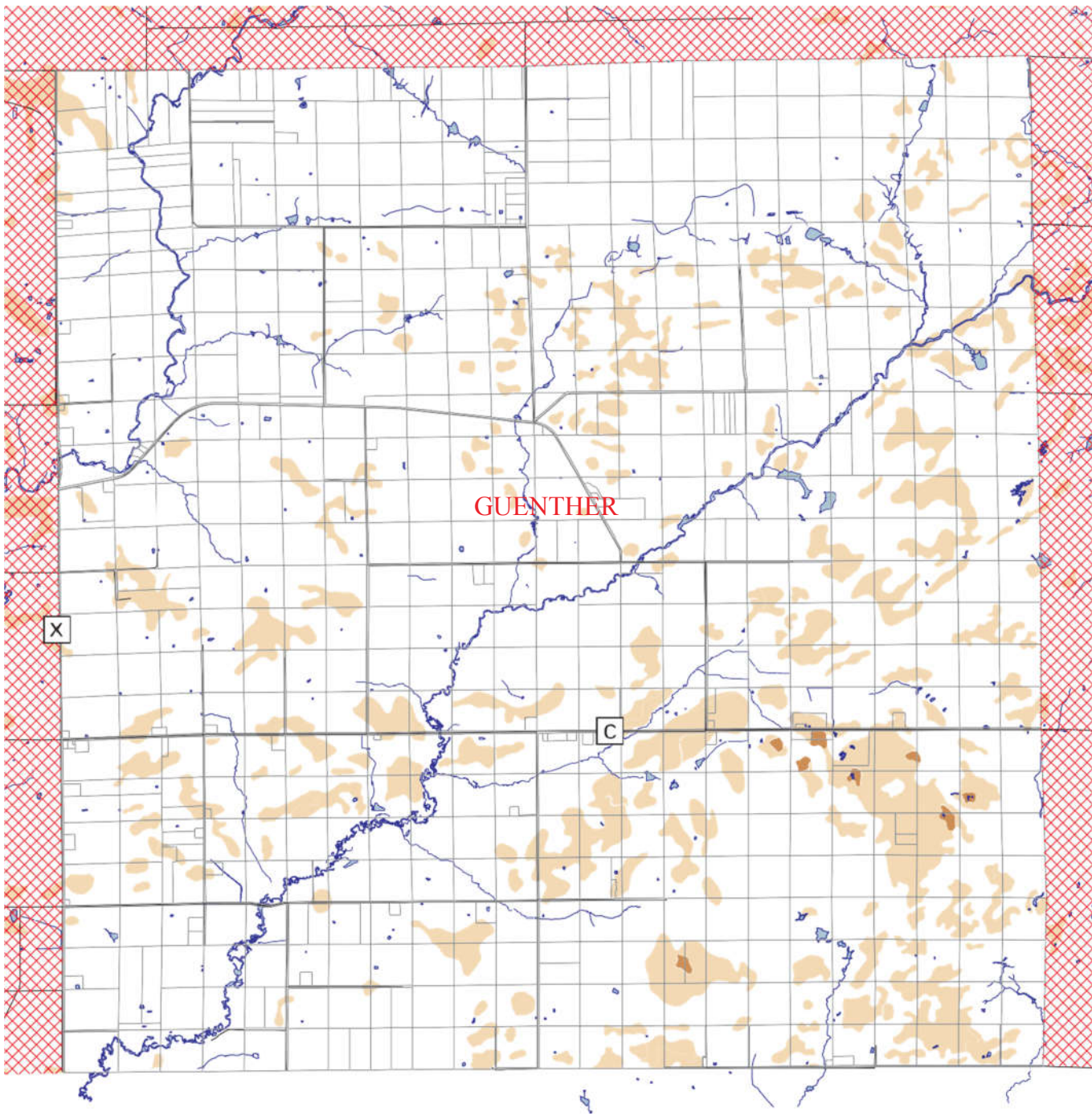


- 2016 Snowmobile Trails
- - - Mountain Bay Trail
- - - Ice Age Trail
- - - Suggested Bike Routes

  Indicates other Municipality  
 Map generated on Marathon County Interactive Mapping Application



Figure 5-5  
 Trails  
 GUENTHER

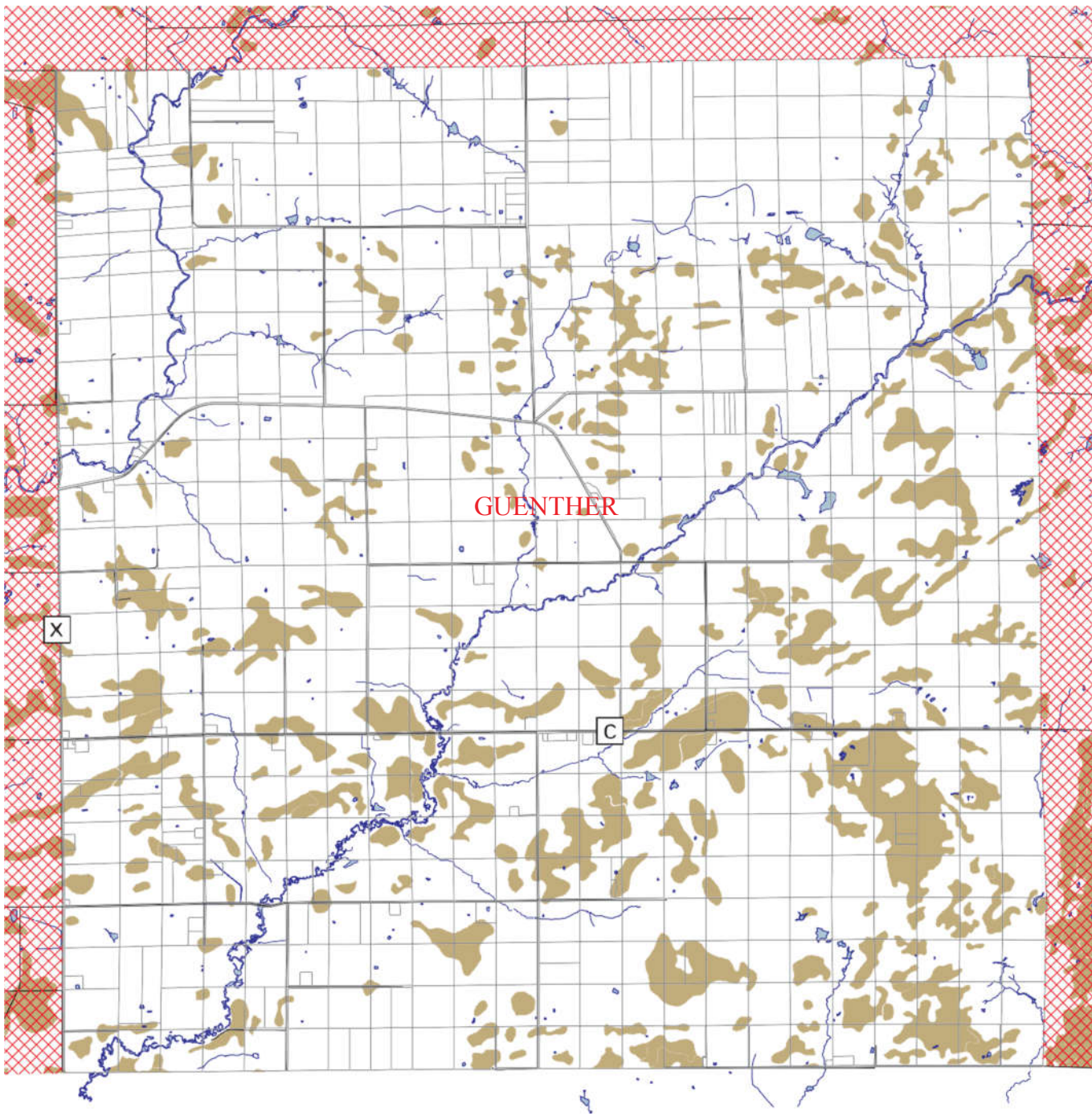


- 0 - 20" (Quarries)
- 20 - 40 "
- 40-60"
- >60"

Indicates other Municipality  
 Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005



Figure 6-1  
**Depth To Bedrock**  
**GUENTHER**

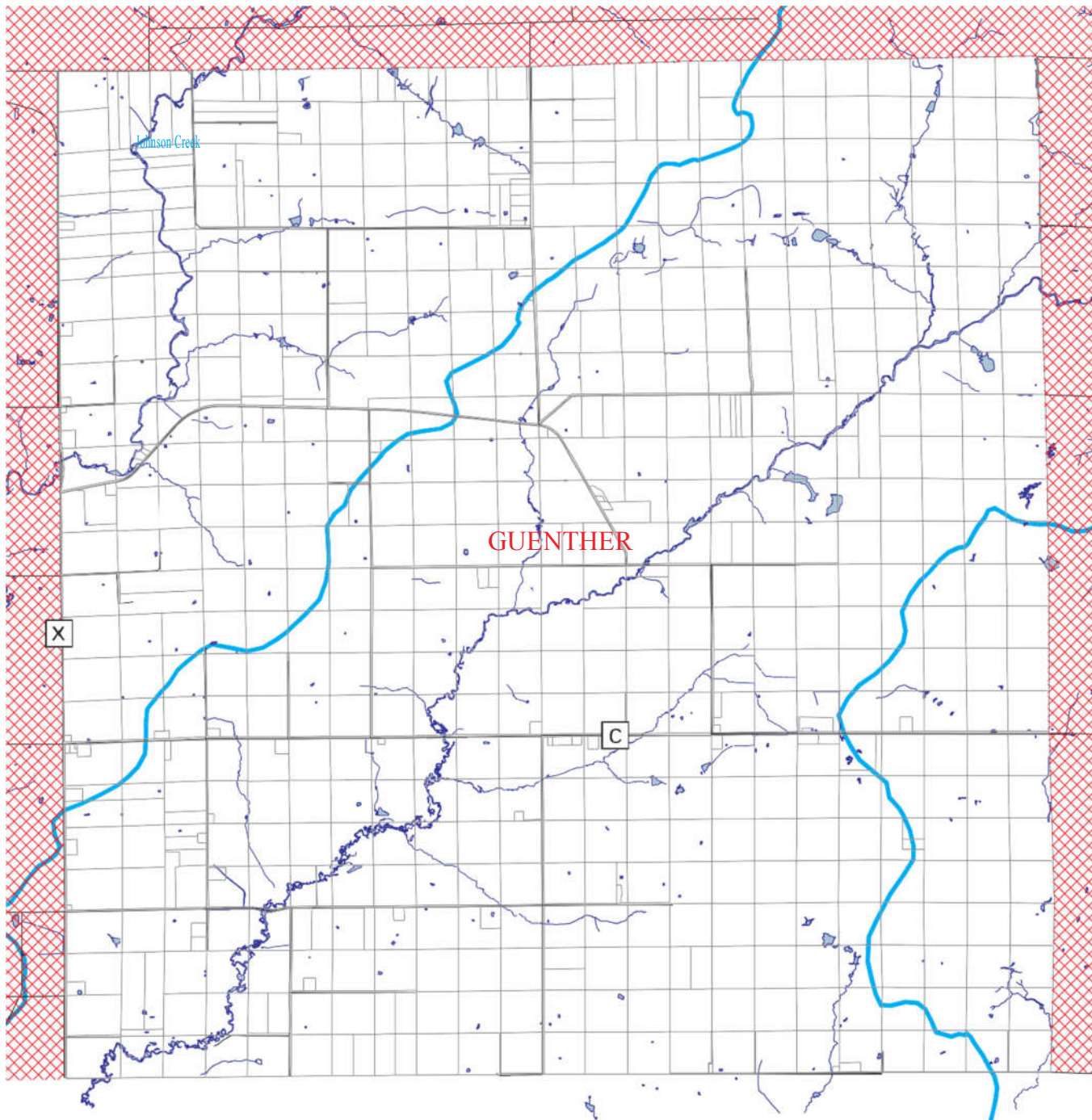


Soils suitable for septic systems w/soil absorption component

Indicates other Municipality  
 Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005



Figure 6-2  
 Suitable Soils-Septic Tank Absorption  
 GUENTHER



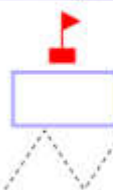
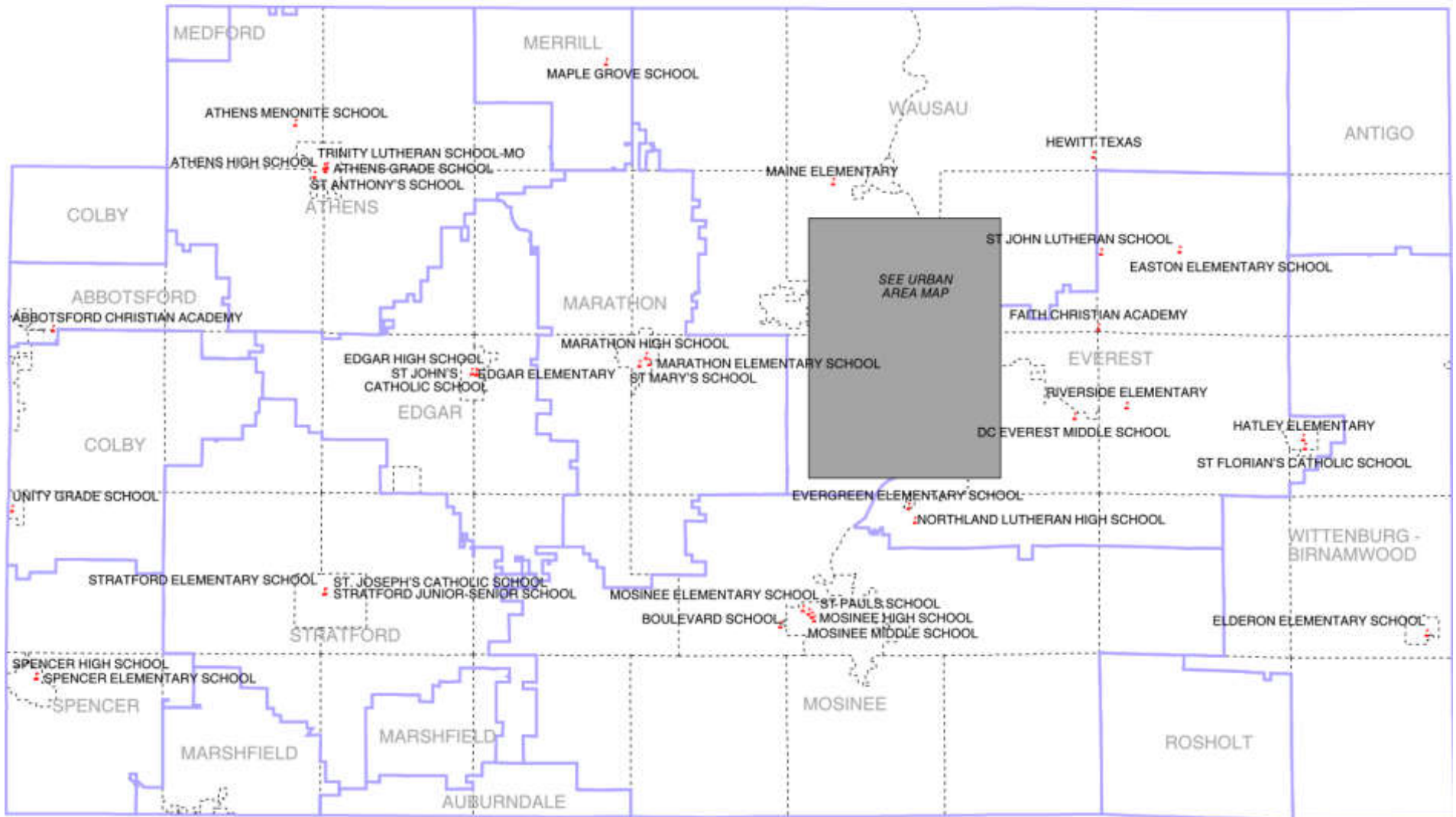
Priority Watersheds  
 as identified in the Marathon County  
 Land & Water Resource Management Plan

Little Eau Claire River  
 Watershed boundaries

Indicates other Municipality  
 Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

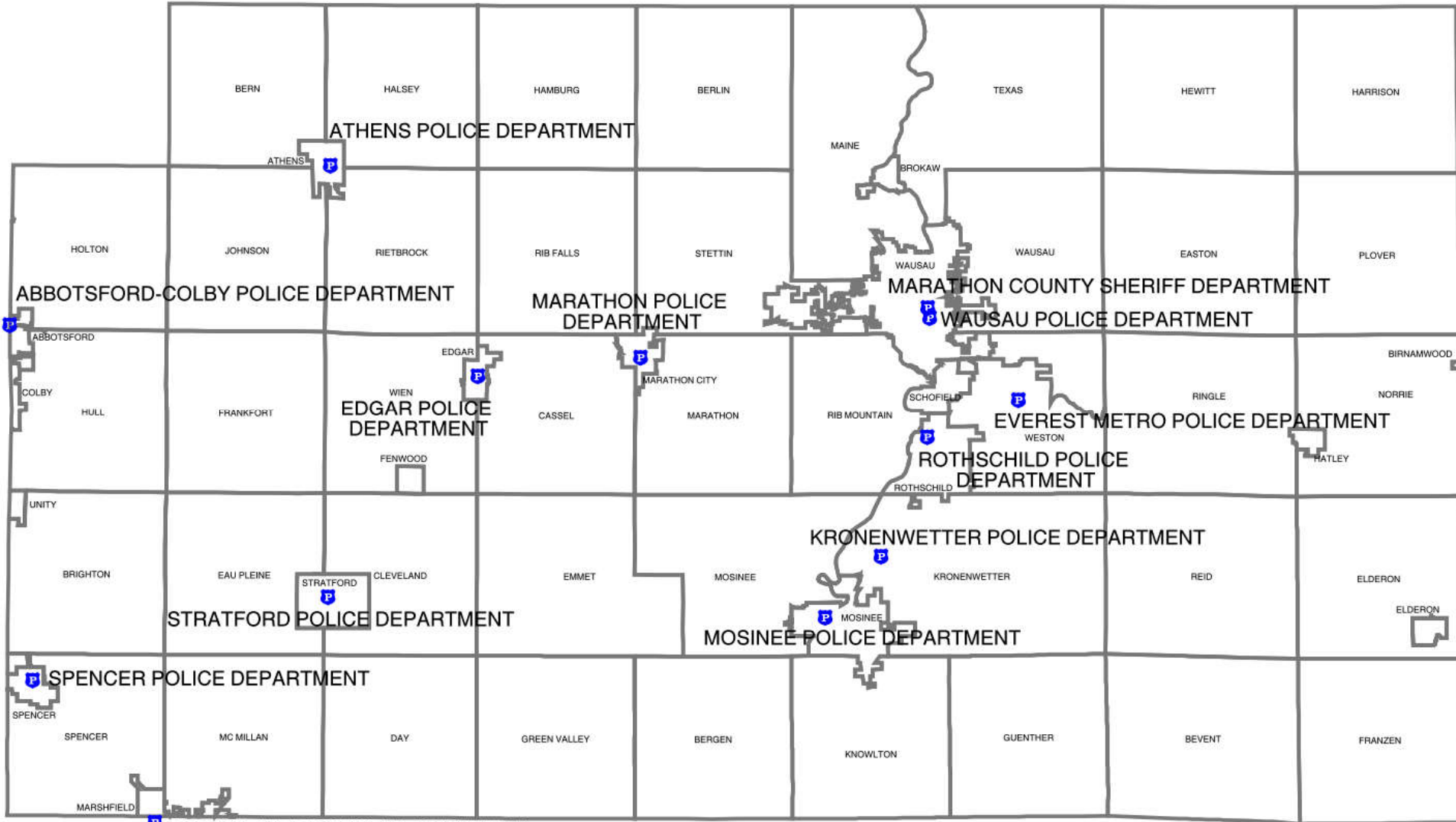
Figure 6-3  
**Major Watersheds**  
**GUENTHER**

# MARATHON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS RURAL AREA MAP



**School Locations**  
**School District Boundary**  
**Municipal Boundary**

# MARATHON COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT



 Police Department  
 Municipal Boundary





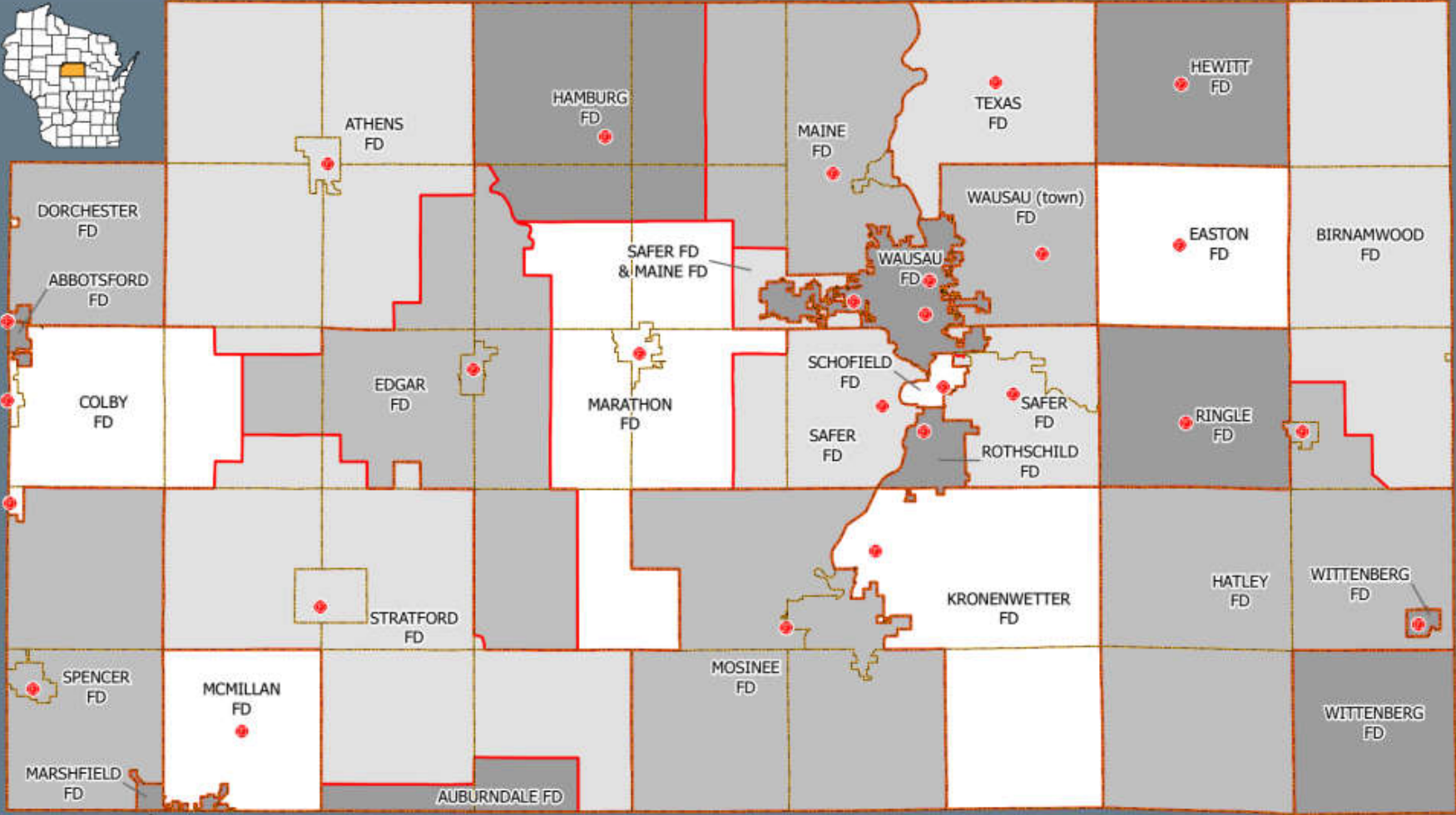
**Legend**

- Minor Civil Divisions
- Fire Service Boundaries
- Fire Station



# Fire Service Areas

Marathon County, Wisconsin



SOURCE: NCWRPC, NRCS,  
Marathon County Geo Services

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey of the actual boundary of any property depicted. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

Prepared By:  
North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
210 McClellan St., Wausau, WI 54403 - www.ncwrpc.org  
Date Printed: Monday, February 15, 2016

Figure 9-3



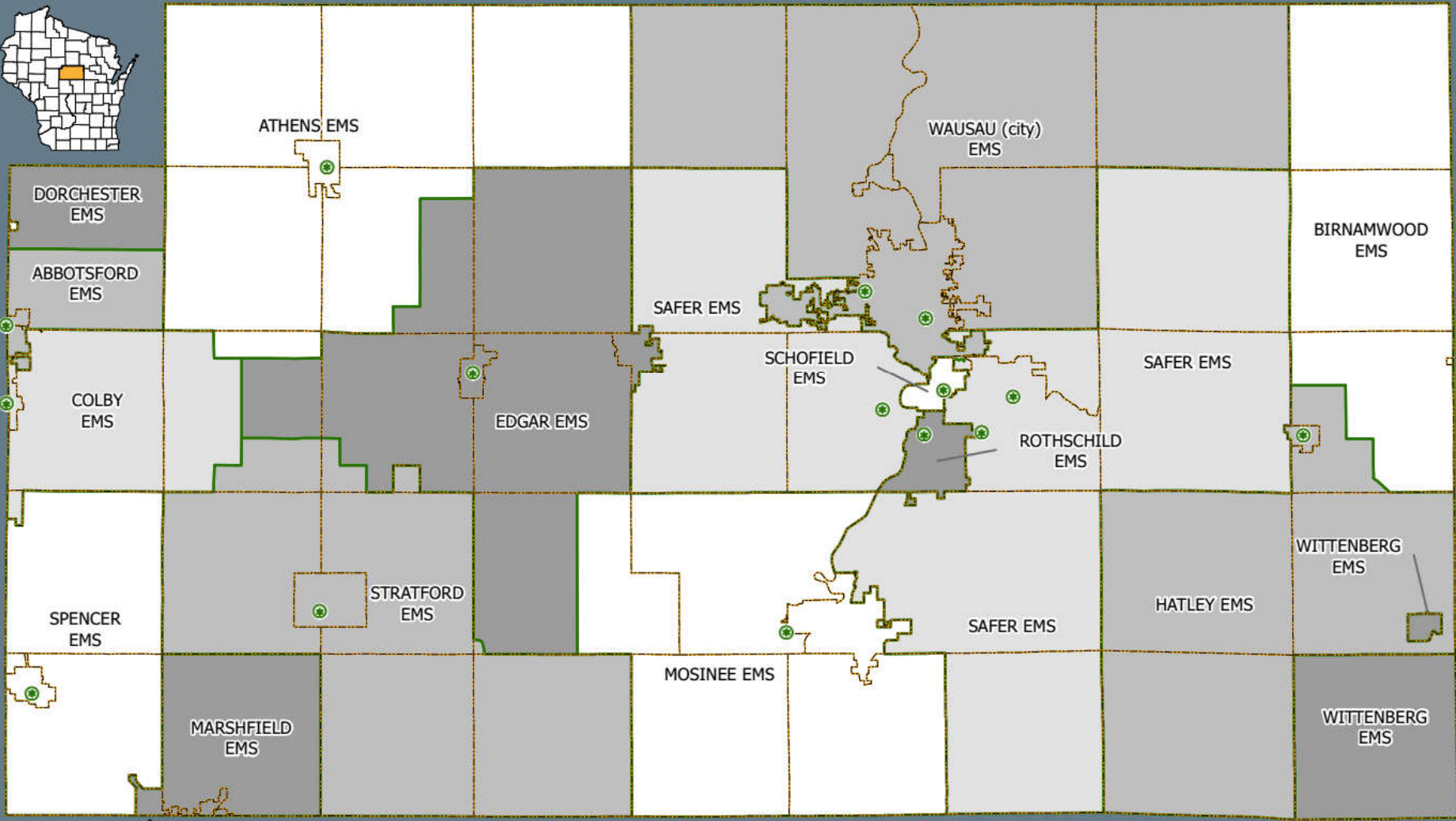
**Legend**

- Minor Civil Divisions
- EMS Boundary
- Ambulance Service



# Emergency Medical Service Areas

Marathon County, Wisconsin

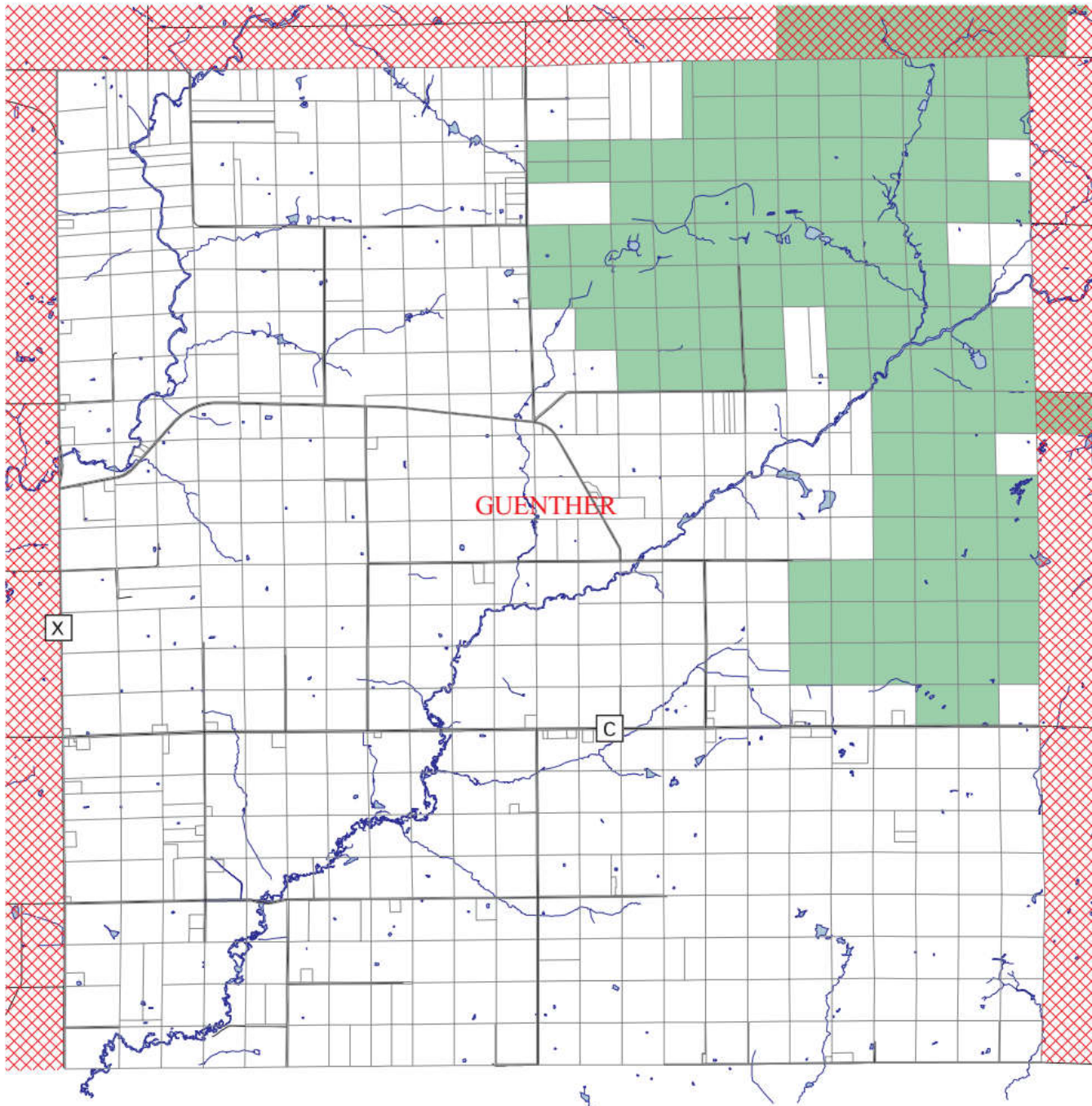





SOURCE: NCWRPC, NRCS, Marathon County Geo Services

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey of the actual boundary of any property depicted. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

Prepared By:  
North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
210 McClellan St. Wausau, WI 54403 - www.ncwrpc.org  
Date Printed: Monday, February 15, 2016

Figure 9-4



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

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

Figure 10-1  
 Recreation Facilities  
 GUENTHER

Blank Page

**Town of Guenther**

**Comprehensive Plan**

***Goals, Objectives, Policies & Implementation***

2018

## Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	2
2. Natural Resources Element.....	5
3. Land Use Element.....	8
4. Transportation Element .....	14
5. Utilities Element.....	16
6. Housing Element.....	17
7. Cultural Resources Element .....	19
8. Community Facilities Element .....	20
9. Parks Element.....	21
10. Economic Development Element .....	23
11. Intergovernmental Cooperation Element.....	24
12. Implementation Element .....	25

## Appendices

- A. State Comprehensive Planning Goals
- B. Marathon County Guiding Principles 2016
- C. Public Participation Plan
- D. LPC Meeting Minutes Recommending Adoption
- E. Ordinances and Resolutions for Adoption
- F. Bibliography of Comprehensive Plan 2004

## List of Tables

Table 3-1: Future Land Use, 2005.....	11
Table 3-2: Acreage Projections, 2000-2030 .....	11
Table 12-1: Criteria to Consider When Reviewing Plan Changes .....	28
Table 12-2: Implementation Plan Actions .....	30

## List of Figures

Figure 3-1: Future Land Use Map.....	12
--------------------------------------	----

# Introduction

This document represents the core of the Town of Guenther 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.

Planning efforts are being coordinated by the Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning Department. All local municipalities have been encouraged to review and update the comprehensive plan every 10 years.

Each local municipality has been encouraged to develop their own individual comprehensive planning program. By holding local planning meetings, surveying local residents, communities were encouraged to develop a plan which best meets the past, present and future needs of the current township residents. While consistency between neighboring communities is considered, individual plans meeting a specific township's needs are accepted.

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.

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. Many of the sub areas expressed the same concerns, however the following are specific to the township of Guenther.

## **General Concerns:**

### ***Local Development Control***

- Maintain local control of development regulation
- Private property rights

### ***Degree of Regulation***

- Prefer minimal development regulation, but some regulation may be considered to protect prime farmland, rural character, natural resources and water quality, however any changes must be approved by the Town of Guenther before implementation.
- Managed development preferred

## **Land Use and Development:**

### ***Preserve Rural Character***

- Rural settings (small farms dotting landscape)
- Population density controlled in 2017 by a minimum lot size of 2 ½ acres, or as determined by Guenther residents.
- Ample open space, woodlands, natural areas, etc.
- Small town living – familiar, friendly, safe
- Concentrate commercial and industrial development in areas where it can be supported by appropriate infrastructure.

### ***Potential Infrastructure Issues:***

- Increased demand (from new residents) for higher level of service, paved roads, etc.
- Traffic conflicts between passenger vehicles and large vehicles. Road paving and dust control – Costs? Benefits?
- Road damage from heavy equipment
- Increased complaints about odors, 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
- Planned development considered- 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)
- Encourage improved housing maintenance in some neighborhoods
- Land use conflicts – i.e. old industrial adjacent to residential

### **Preservation and Protection of Resources:**

#### ***Preserve/Protect Natural Resources***

- Encourage preservation of woodlands and protect wetlands and rivers based on current 2017 zoning ordinances applicable in the Town of Guenther.
- Encourage protection and maintenance of natural character and scenic quality
- Maintain access to natural areas on County owned property.

### **Fiscal/Economic:**

#### ***Strong and Diverse Tax Base***

- Loss of privately owned land due to County purchase, jobs and population due to annexation
- Loss of taxable land due to public purchase (e.g. County Forests)
- Redevelop under-utilized land
- Maintain/foster diverse mix of land uses

#### ***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***

- Maintain integrity of our current roads
- Future roads to be deeded to town to be built to town standards

#### ***Protect Water Supply***

- Depletion or degradation due to high volume users (mega farms, industry)

#### ***Sewer and Septic System Availability***

- Soil conditions may require more expansive, sophisticated treatment systems for on-site waste treatment in some areas
- “Comm83” opens more areas for on-site treatment systems



***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

# Goals, Objectives, Policies, Strategies & Actions

This section is intended to address issues and opportunities as identified by the Town of Guenther 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 are intended to 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.
- **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.

# Natural Resources Element

## Goal 1: Protect natural resources, including woodlands and wetlands, from intensive development.

- **Objective: To continue working with the WDNR and Marathon County to ensure appropriate preservation of wetlands.**
- **Objective: To the extent possible, limit uncontrolled runoff, overuse of fertilizers, and other contaminants to surface water.**
- **Objective: To provide leadership in disseminating information about wetland preservation and management to Town residents.**

## POLICIES

- The Town of Guenther encourages the protection of natural resources from intensive development.

## STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Identify and map wetlands, woodlands and other natural resources that should be preserved.
- Establish guidelines for development located near these resources, including type and use.
- Identify buffer zones around lakes and wetlands and prohibit development within those buffers using 2017 County Zoning regulations as our township requirement.

- Initiate discussions with the County and WDNR to evaluate current development practices and continue to identify sensitive resources.
- Coordinate with land trust organizations.
- Consider conservation easements.
- Investigate and disseminate information on the 590 Plan, which considers the best use of fertilizer, manure, and other applications.

## **Goal 2: Minimize fluctuation between woodland and cropland in Guenther.**

- **Objective: To encourage participation in programs such as Farmland Preservation Contracts to aid property owners in efficient land management.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther encourages the preservation of woodland and cropland.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Research where conservation or clustered subdivisions would be best suited.
- Distribute information to landowners about Farmland Preservation Contracts, the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, and other organizations and programs.
- Work with UW-Extension and Marathon County to address the maintenance of agricultural land and woodlands.
- Work with the County to identify and map prime woodlot areas.

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

- **Objective: To work with the WDNR and Marathon County to protect critical groundwater recharge areas as indicated under 2017 Marathon County zoning codes.**
- **Objective: To encourage residents to conduct regular well testing to ensure that water is safe.**

### **POLICIES**

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

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Identify and map critical groundwater recharge areas.
- Consult with the WDNR and the County to identify ways to protect recharge areas.
- Encourage regular well monitoring and reporting to the Town.

## **Goal 4: Encourage the protection and preservation of prime farmland for agricultural production.**

- **Objective: To encourage 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 Guenther recognizes the importance of prime farmland as an important agricultural resource, now and in the future.

## **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

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

## **Land Use Element**

### **Goal 1: Proactively plan for increased demand for rural residential land development.**

- **Objective: To encourage rural residential uses to locations that support sanitary systems and/or appropriate land and water use.**
- **Objective: To direct rural residential uses away from sensitive lands such as wetlands, creeks and rivers as 2017 Marathon County Zoning code requires.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther discourages developments from occurring around sensitive lands such as wetlands, creeks and rivers based on 2017 Marathon County zoning code requirements.
- The Town of Guenther encourages development in areas that can be served by available infrastructure.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Identify and map areas of the Town which are most suitable for different types of development, taking sensitive natural areas into consideration.
- Encourage higher density development toward areas which already have access to infrastructure. This may be reviewed and reclassified with any changes in available infrastructure.

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

**Objective: To encourage residential development in identified farming areas that environmentally support development as described in Marathon County zoning code for General Agriculture.**

**Objective: To review/approve on a case by case basis, the placement of non-farm commercial or industrial uses in identified prime farming areas according to the requirements of Marathon County zoning.**

### **POLICIES**

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

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Identify and map prime farmland areas.
- 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: Preserve the rural character settlement pattern in Guenther.**

- **Objective: The minimum lot size in Guenther is 2 ½ acres in 2017, which supports Guenther’s concept of rural character.**
- **Objective: To encourage development that clusters housing and preserves open space.**
- **Objective: To encourage development that supports rural character (i.e., horse riding stables, agricultural business).**
- **Objective: To consider proposed commercial and industrial developments on a case-by-case basis to ensure that they are appropriate for the Town.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther recognizes its rural character as an important and attractive asset.
- The Town of Guenther supports development that preserves and complements the rural character of the town.
- The Town of Guenther will carefully consider proposed commercial and industrial development.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Set and adopt guidelines for 2½ acre minimum lot size.
- If possible, guide higher density development to areas that would not greatly compromise rural character.
- Clearly identify and describe the areas suitable for higher density development, and those areas that should have

controlled growth due to restrictions currently in place in 2017 Marathon County Zoning Code.

- Research areas best suited to clustered subdivisions.
- Seek types of development that support rural character.

### **Goal 4: Consider development of regulations for specified uses in Guenther.**

- **Objective: To determine whether nuisance issues (dilapidated buildings, abandoned junk and refuse) should be regulated by ordinance.**
- **Objective: To limit industrial and heavy commercial uses to locations near state and county roads.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther encourages the review of regulations for nuisance issues.
- The Town of Guenther adopted a land division and subdivision ordinance no. 2011.01 on July 13, 2011.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Compile a list of the types of things that are currently issues in Guenther. Review the list and determine if specific ordinances are needed.
- Develop and adopt an ordinance on old buildings, abandoned junk, etc. (if deemed necessary).
- Identify and map areas near state and county roads that would be appropriate for industrial and heavy commercial development.

- Identify the Town’s definition of industrial and “heavy” commercial.

## **Goal 5: Review current levels of County land ownership in Guenther.**

- **Objective: To maintain the Guenther tax base by discouraging the County from purchasing additional land such as forest land.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther does not support the purchase of additional land within Guenther Township by Marathon County for the following reasons:
  1. Additional tax base to help support the infrastructure, that is to be addressed by future township planning.
  2. It is believed that this would create a more rural environment with less traffic.
  3. Preserve working agriculture

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Initiate discussions with the County about not purchasing additional land in Guenther.
- Actively seek private buyers for forest or other lands.

## **Accommodating Future Growth**

**Future Land Use** – The Town of Guenther Future Land Use map, shown in Figure 3-1 illustrates the anticipated future pattern of land uses. The map includes twelve 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 3-1. Figure 3-1 as of 2005 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., Farmland Preservation, Forest Crop Law). Areas where existing development precludes additional development are also shown. These areas will be reviewed for change or expansion as needed.

**Table 3-1: Future Land Use, 2005**

Land Cover Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
<b>Single Family Residential</b>	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes	289	1.30
<b>Commercial Services</b>	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	10	0.05
<b>Industrial</b>	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers	20	0.09
<b>Quarries/ Gravel Pits</b>	Mining operations	51	0.23
<b>Cropland</b>	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland	3341	15.03
<b>Other Agriculture</b>	Fallow, pasture and undetermined agriculture, power lines and towers, water towers, municipal wells	1881	8.46
<b>Public/ Quasi-Public</b>	Schools, churches, cemeteries, libraries, government buildings, National Guard, utility facilities.	1	0.01
<b>Park and Recreation</b>	Public and private parks, trails, ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, camp grounds, shooting ranges, etc.	4158	18.71
<b>Woodlands</b>	Privately-owned forested land, including nurseries, paper mill forests, etc.	11061	49.77
<b>Water and Wetlands</b>	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc.	145	0.65
<b>Transportation</b>	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	321	1.44
<b>Barren Land</b>	Unused open land in wooded areas, along streams, along roadsides	944	4.25
<b>Total Land Area</b>			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 Guenther 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.

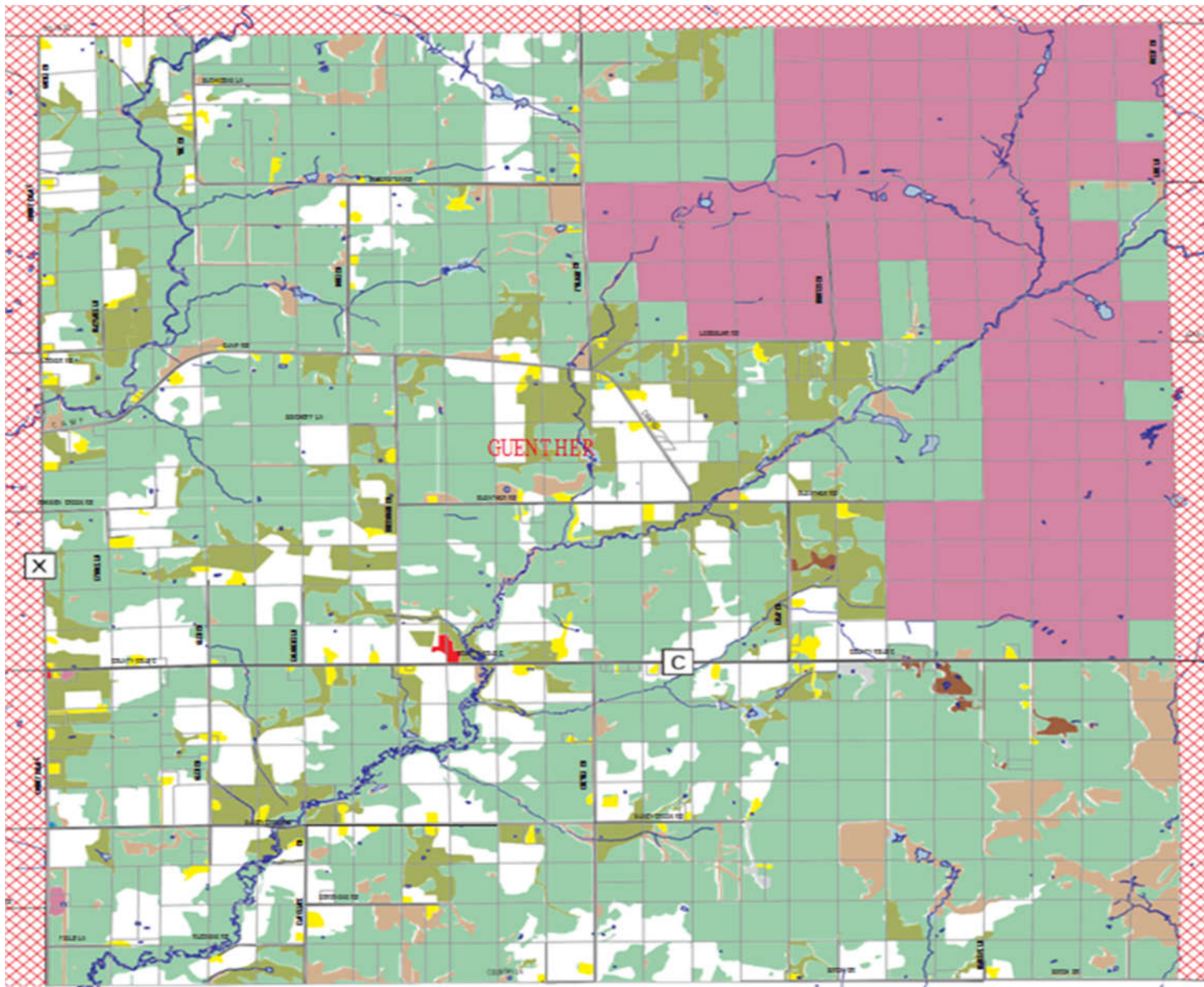
It is estimated over the next 20 years, 10 additional acres will be needed to accommodate future residential development and 2 acres are needed for future non-residential development. Sufficient acreage to meet estimated demand for new development has been provided [or not] in the appropriate land use categories on the future land use map

**Table 3-2: Acreage Projections, 2000-2030**

	Estimated Total Acreage Needed by Year						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>Agricultural</b>	15,648	15,646	15,644	15,642	15,640	15,638	15,636
<b>Residential</b>	281	282.66	284.32	285.98	287.64	289.3	291
<b>Commercial</b>	10	10.04	10.08	10.12	10.16	10.20	10.26
<b>Industrial</b>	69	69.29	69.58	69.87	70.16	70.45	70.74

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





- |                           |                   |                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Single Family Residential | Barren            | Public/Quasi-Public |
| Commercial                | Crop Land         | Recreational        |
| Industrial                | Other Agriculture | Transportation      |
| Quarry                    | Forest Land       | Water               |
- Indicates other Municipality
- Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-1  
 Future Land Use  
 GUENTHER

**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 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 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.

The Town of Guenther Comprehensive Plan is predicated on the 2017 use and interpretation of “General code of ordinances for Marathon County Chapter 17, zoning codes, dated February 16, 2016”. Any expansion, changes, additions or deletions of the

above Marathon County Zoning Codes would require a review and approval of the Guenther Town Board and its constituents to modify the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. With the absence of that approval the Township of Guenther may withdraw from the Marathon County Smart Growth plan, per addendum A {Letter of confirmation from Marathon County Board, Dated: March 18, 2004 and April 26, 2004} (See attached letters)

The vitality of the Town of Guenther Comprehensive Plan depends in large part on the ability of the Town and its residents to monitor the present and future content and any amendments to the Plan. To this end, we attach and incorporate to this plan the following letters:

Letter from Town officials to Marathon County Zoning Department dated March 10, 2004, together with responsive letter from Marathon County officials to Town officials dated March 15, 2004.

## **Transportation Element**

### **Goal 1: Maintain and improve Town roads.**

- **Objective: To continue the annual review of roads, bridges, culverts and other safety issues to determine annual repairs.**
- **Objective: To find adequate sources of revenue to fund needed road improvements.**
- **Objective: To establish criteria to determine when and roads should be paved, at such time as documentation is necessary for efficient planning.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther supports programs to help maintain and improve Town roads.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Meet annually to prioritize and program road repair and improvements.
- Initiate talks with the County and the State about sources of revenue to fund road improvements.
- Develop and document criteria to assist in the decision-making process of whether or not to pave a roadway.

### **Goal 2: Work with the County to manage the effects of Leather Camp Forest traffic on Town roads.**

- **Objective: Encourage the County to undertake a study of access to the Leather Camp Forest.**
- **Objective: To work with the County to fund maintenance of Town roads that provide access to the Leather Camp Forest.**
- **Objective: To gather information such as traffic counts to help determine the level of activity on highly used roads.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther supports a County study of the traffic and roadway effects of Leather Camp Forest.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Initiate discussions with the County about issues relative to Leather Camp Forest, including an access study, maintenance of Town roads, and obtaining traffic counts.
- Work out a cost-sharing agreement with the County for proposed services.
- Decide with the County who will be responsible for obtaining and funding traffic counts.
- Solicit/review bids for traffic outside services.

**Goal 3: Provide the most cost-efficient, effective services to residents in areas such as road maintenance, snowplowing, or other services.**

- **Objective: To continue to work with adjacent communities where there are potential cost savings in service delivery.**
- **Objective: To continue to coordinate timing of road maintenance with adjacent communities when services can be shared for potential cost savings.**

**POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther 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. Form a committee of representatives from each if needed/as needed.
- Initiate meetings with surrounding communities to discuss snow-plowing and other service activities.
- Develop a plan for any shared road maintenance, including detailed responsibilities and cost-sharing.

## Utilities Element

### Goal 1: Ensure a sufficient supply of potable water.

- **Objective: Encourage preliminary research to determine areas where water supplies are available prior to development.**
- **Objective: Use recommendations from the WDNR and Marathon County to protect critical groundwater recharge areas.**

#### POLICIES

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

#### STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Use existing information from the DNR and others to identify areas within the town that have limited water supply.
- Use existing information from the DNR and the County to identify and map critical groundwater recharge areas.
- Use our 2017 zoning codes to regulate areas that are within a critical groundwater recharge area.

### Goal 2: Plan for efficient on-site sanitary waste disposal systems.

- **Objective: Guenther has a minimum lot size of 2 ½ acres. Unless shown otherwise, this should be adequate for private waste disposal systems.**

- **Objective: To ensure that waste disposal systems will not have negative effects on wetlands, rivers, or streams in Guenther.**

#### POLICIES

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

#### STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Already have established 2 ½ acre minimum lot size.
- Develop guidelines for installing waste disposal systems within a certain distance from wetlands, rivers, or streams.

### Goal 3: Ensure that groundwater has not been polluted by agricultural run-off or other pollutants.

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

#### POLICIES

The Town of Guenther encourages actions to ensure that groundwater has not been polluted.

#### ACTIONS/STRATEGIES

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

## Housing Element

### **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: Maintain a minimum lot size that meets the desires of the Town of Guenther residents. The 2017 minimum lot size is 2 ½ acres.**
- **Objective: To encourage housing development in areas that can best be served with infrastructure including water capacity and road access.**
- **Objective: Encourage new residential units to locate in areas that will have minimal impact on farmland.**
- **Objective: To investigate the need for a Town building inspector to review all new residential and commercial construction.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther encourages development that preserves and complements the rural character of the town.
- The Town of Guenther encourages proactive planning for future development.

- The Town of Guenther, Marathon County, Wisconsin has a Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance; No 2011.01 adopted June 13, 2011. As of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 Ordinance No 2011.01 is subject to updating and revision. Contact the Town of Guenther Town Board for current and future requirements.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- The township has already adopted guidelines for minimum lot size of 2 ½ acres based on type of development.
- Clearly identify and describe the areas suitable for higher density development, and those areas that may remain low-density.
- Zone or place development regulations on areas that are within critical water areas per 2017 zoning regulations.
- Encourage higher density development toward areas which already have access to infrastructure.
- Evaluate the number of building permits and staff availability, and determine if a building inspector is needed.
- Employ a part-time or on-call building inspector (if deemed necessary). Note: Building inspector has been employed by the State of Wisconsin.
- Future requests for development in the Town will be reviewed by the planning commission or Town Board.

### **Goal 2: Provide information to residents on the variety of housing options in the county.**

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

## **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther 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.

## **Cultural Resources Element**

### **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 Guenther 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 in the Town 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.



## **Community Facilities Element**

### **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 Guenther 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: Contract for fire and emergency service.**

- **Objective: To maintain current contracts for fire and emergency service and review if community needs or response times change.**

#### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther recognizes the importance of adequate fire and emergency service provisions.
- The Town of Guenther implemented First Responders in 2012.

## **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Regularly record, review, and audit emergency response times and service calls.
- Meet annually to determine if existing service is adequate, and make changes/recommendations as needed.

## **Parks Element**

**Goal 1: Encourage the Marathon County park and forest system to develop a small park in currently owned county land in the township of Guenther.**

- **Objective: To encourage the County to appropriately fund maintenance and improvements of local Marathon County parks and forests. But only if properly funded so as not to place an unfair tax or operations costs on the Town of Guenther.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther believes the County park and forest systems could be an important asset to the community.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Initiate conversations with the County to learn of plans for improvements, maintenance, or local tax relief for county land currently used by the public

**Goal 2: Maintain a portion of the Leather Camp Forest as public-use, recreational land kept in a natural state.**

- **Objective: To encourage multiple uses of County forest land.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther supports the public use of Leather Camp Forest with appropriate county financial assistance.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Initiate conversations with the County to allow and continue multiple recreational uses in the forest.
- Work with the County to develop regulations on recreational uses (hours of operation, etc.)

**Goal 3: Work with the County to manage the effects of Leather Camp Forest traffic on Town roads.**

- **Objective: Encourage the County to undertake a study of access to the Leather Camp Forest.**
- **Objective: To work with the County to fund maintenance of Town roads that provide access to the Leather Camp Forest.**
- **Objective: Encourage Marathon County to gather information such as traffic counts to help determine the level of activity on highly used roads.**

## **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther supports a County study of the traffic and roadway effects of Leather Camp Forest.

## **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Initiate discussions with the County about issues relative to Leather Camp Forest, including an access study, maintenance of Town roads, and obtaining traffic counts.
- Work out a cost-sharing agreement with the County for proposed services.
- Decide with the County who will be responsible for obtaining and funding traffic counts.
- Solicit/review bids for traffic outside services.

## **Economic Development Element**

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

- **Objective: To discourage the purchase of taxable land by the county.**
- **Objective: To encourage development in areas away from large blocks of farmland.**
- **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 Guenther supports agriculture as a prime economic force in the Town.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Take an active role in regionally based agricultural forums and programs, and encourage local operators to participate.
- Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the NRCS to implement farmland conservation practices, including BMPs.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation Element**

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

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

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Guenther 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.
- Develop a plan for any shared road maintenance, including detailed responsibilities and cost-sharing.

**Goal 2: Encourage participation by Town officials and residents in all levels of government and encourage county officials to be more receptive to input from local town officials and residents.**

- **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 Guenther 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.
- Participate in meetings held by surrounding communities to which Guenther is invited.
- Develop a survey which can be mailed out to residents periodically, 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.

## 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. 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. As the Town of Guenther has County zoning, they should work with the County on these issues.

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.

Based on the prior commitment of the Marathon County Board, {See Addendum A, Dated: March 18, 2004 and Addendum B dated April 26, 2004 and letters of March 10, 2004 and March 15, 2004} The township of Guenther officials, constituents will review proposed future changes to the General code of ordinances or district land use maps. The township will notify the county of the acceptance or rejections of proposed ordinances, zoning codes, etc. which might alter the comprehensive land use plan accepted by the residents of the Township of Guenther.

- **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 Guenther 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 Guenther. 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 Guenther 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 Guenther 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 Guenther 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 staff allocation [if have staff]. 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 Guenther, 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**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<b>Natural Resources Actions</b>		
Evaluate natural, free flowing water quality levels on a periodic basis.	Town Board WDNR	Immediate
Report instances of possible groundwater contamination to the WDNR.	Town Board	Ongoing
Obtain educational materials from the Wisconsin Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater for local distribution.	Town Board	Immediate
Enhance monitoring efforts in areas thought to contain possible contamination hazards.	Town Board	Immediate
Communicate the desire for wetland protection to Marathon County and the WDNR.	Town Board	Immediate
Obtain a main contact person from each agency the Town communicates with at the County, and WDNR.	Town Board	Immediate
Discuss adopting local regulations that are at least as restrictive as current measures, but better suit area needs.	Town Board	Short-Term
Gather examples of local shore land restrictions used in other communities and adapt for possible local use.	Town Board	Short-Term
Send owners of private forestland information on preservation programs.	Town Board	Short-Term
Encourage developers to maintain as much forestland as possible	Plan Commission	Immediate
Work with Marathon County to identify restrictive ordinances, such as sign ordinances that limit square footage, for possible implementation.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Discourage the rebuilding/reuse of deteriorating signs, or signs that are not used	Town Board	Immediate
<b>Land Use Actions</b>		
Work with Marathon County to maintain residential and agricultural as the primary land uses with limited commercial development.	Town Board	Ongoing
Explore developing an ordinance that limits the dimensions of non-residential buildings.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Contact local agencies to acquire informational materials on agricultural preservation tools.	Town Board	Short-Term
Explore working with Marathon County, or local communities to host a workshop on agricultural preservation.	Town Board	Short-Term
Discuss adopting a resolution against the development of cellular towers.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Work with Marathon County to present arguments for or against proposed development projects.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Strengthen developing regulations that transfer the cost of all development to the developer.	Plan Commission	Immediate

<b>Transportation Actions</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Perform biennial roadway evaluation.	Town Board	Ongoing
Develop a plan that prioritizes transportation improvements over time and includes a budget schedule for upgrades.	Town Board	Short-Term
Hold public hearings to discuss roadway condition and determine in-need areas.	Town Board	Immediate
Work with WDOT to identify grant funding opportunities.	Town Board	Immediate
Communicate with Marathon County Highway Department on a periodic basis.	Town Board	Immediate
Determine local authority to levy fees against individual property owners for excessive roadway damage.	Town Board	Short-Term
Determine local standards for setbacks, distances from other driveways, and other key features of a driveway ordinance.	Town Board Plan Commission	Short-Term
Include access requirements for new subdivisions in the subdivision code.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Communicate with other communities with airports as neighbors to identify good policies for cooperation.	Town Board	Short-Term
<b>Utilities Actions</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Perform annual review of service provision costs.	Town Board	Ongoing
Communicate with surrounding communities the willingness to share costs.	Town Board	Immediate
Determine feasibility for updating or installing utilities.	Town Board	Short-Term
<b>Housing Actions</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Observe land use plan in siting new residential development.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Explore adopting a planned unit development (PUD) ordinance to control concentrated multi-use development.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Determine limits of service provision on a per-unit basis.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Determine the extent of growth desired by the community and explore exacting development fees, or incentives, to achieve desired outcomes.	Town Board	Short-Term
<b>Cultural Resources Actions</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Contact the Marathon County Historical Society for tips on how to inventory significant structures.	Town Board	Short-Term
Consider teaming with other local communities to form a local chapter of the Historic Society.	Town Board	Mid-Term
Help interested properties owners obtain information on their property if they feel it is historically significant.	Town Board	Immediate
Celebrate historic local sites with materials for dissemination.	Town Board	Long-Term

<b>Community Facilities Actions</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Participate in long-term facilities and equipment planning with service-providing entities.	Town Board	Immediate
Annually review contracts with service providers and evaluate delivery of services.	Town Board	Ongoing
Participate in recruitment efforts, especially concerning fire and emergency response, with providing agencies.	Town Board	Immediate
Start planning for increased service delivery, especially for police services, with other local communities.	Town Board	Short-Term
Obtain estimates on replacing furnace in Town Hall	Town Board	Immediate
<b>Parks and Recreation Actions</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Encourage development of a county park	Town Board	Mid-Term
Encourage proper maintenance and upkeep of the existing County park system.	Town Board	Ongoing
<b>Economic Development Actions</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Work with McDEVCO and other local economic development entities to discuss possible funding programs for the Town of Guenther.	Town Board	Short-Term
Discuss adopting a resolution regarding the development of industry.	Town Board	Short-Term
Work with Marathon County to maintain residential as the primary land use with limited commercial.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
Explore developing an ordinance that limits the dimensions of non-residential buildings.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
<b>Intergovernmental Cooperation Actions</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Establish regular meeting dates with decision-making bodies.	Town Board	Immediate
Provide all governing bodies with regular updates, or meeting minutes, from official Town meetings when needed.	Town Board	Immediate
Establish meeting dates with adjacent communities to discuss local development when needed.	Town Board	Immediate
Participate in public comment sessions for airport proposals	Town Board	Ongoing

# 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 2016

### Guiding Principles

The Marathon County Comprehensive Plan is based on principles that call for actions and outcomes that meet the overarching goal to ensure that Marathon County is the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous county in Wisconsin. The guiding principles serve as the foundation for shaping and navigating the future, and will ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains consistent with the vision of Marathon County as the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous county in Wisconsin.

#### Crossroads of Wisconsin

Encourage decisions that support options to allow safe and efficient movement of people and goods in and through Marathon County by a variety of modal means.

#### Education and Economic Development Epicenter

Encourage decisions that support lifelong education, workforce development, and diverse opportunities for economic growth.

#### Environmental Stewardship

Encourage decisions that enhance the ecology and natural resources of Marathon County, while preserving and protecting them from human impacts and development, for the benefit of current and future populations.

#### Health Focused

Encourage decisions that promote the physical, mental, and social health of the community through affordable access, health education, health care systems, and infrastructure to encourage healthy living at all stages of life.

#### Multi-Partners Cooperation

Encourage decisions that support cooperation and collaboration with local, county, state, and federal governments, public-private partnerships, nonprofits, and other organizations to improve communication and efficiency.

#### Recreation Hub

Encourage decisions that enhance the cultural, entertainment, and outdoor recreation amenities to ensure Marathon County's future as a year-round destination for residents and visitors.

#### Safe and Sound

Encourage decisions that support the promotion of public safety and a sense of personal security within the community.

#### Sense of Place

Encourage decisions that support and enhance local history, heritage, culture, values, social pride, and community character in Marathon County to foster growth and coordinated development and to establish a vibrant sense of place.

#### Sustainable Agriculture

Encourage decisions that support preservation of productive farmland, growth of agribusiness, and promote innovative farming practices to maintain a strong local agricultural economy which contributes to the local and global food system.

#### Embrace Innovation

Encourage decisions that support the utilization of new technologies and opportunities for innovation.



The Guiding Principles help protect the natural and agricultural resources of the County.

# Appendix C

## Town of Guenther 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 Guenther, the Town Board and Planning Commission are committed to providing on-going opportunities for public participation throughout the planning process. The Town of Guenther 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 Guenther Town Hall and Town Garage. 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 Guenther.

### Town Meetings

The Town of Guenther 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 Guenther 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 Guenther. This newsletter will be sent with property tax bills. The newsletter will include important news and updates about the comprehensive planning process.

### 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

# Appendix D

## Land Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Recommending Adoption

Town of Guenther Land Planning Commission Meeting

Date: 3/1/2018

Time: 6:30 pm

Attendees: Ellen Mansfield, Tom Wenman, Cedric Burroughs, Scott Danczyk

The purpose of this meeting was to review the comprehensive plan and vote to recommend the Town Board to adopt the updated Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Guenther 2018.

The meeting started sharply at 6:30pm. The Land Planning Commission held a vote on whether to recommend the adoption of the updated Comprehensive Plan to the Town Board. Four of the seven members were present with all four voting to recommend the updated Comprehensive Plan 2018 for adoption by the Town Board. A resolution for the adoption of the updated Comprehensive plan was signed by the Land Planning Commission members and sent via email to Joanie Whitt, the Town of Guenther Clerk.

### Action items:

- Add resolution into appendix at the end of the Comprehensive Plan outlined above – Scott Danczyk
- Provide the adopted updated Town of Guenther Comprehensive Plan to Marathon County in an electronic PDF format. – Scott to provide Cedric with a flash drive and necessary documents.
- Burn 3 CD's of the Town of Guenther Comprehensive Plan 2018 with both editable and PDF versions of the plan for future reference. –Scott Danczyk
- Burn 4 CD's of the Town of Guenther Comprehensive Plan 2018 with only PDF versions of the plan for adjoining towns / etc. –Scott Danczyk
- Provide Joanie Whitt, and Tom Wenman copies of the CD with the Comprehensive plan on it. –Scott Danczyk

Next meeting date TBD.

Scott Danczyk

Town of Guenther –Land Planning Commission Member

# Appendix E

## Ordinances and Resolutions for Adoption

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Town of Guenther,

Marathon County

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

*Adoption of the 2018 updated Town of Guenther Comprehensive Plan.*


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


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


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


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

Adopted this 1st day of March, 2018.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Wenman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cedric Burroughs

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ellen Mansfield

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Attest:  
Scott Danczyk  
Town of Guenther Plan Commission Clerk

Ordinance #1-2018

An Ordinance to Adopt the Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Guenther, Marathon County

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

Section 1. Pursuant to section [59.69(2) and (3)(for cities, villages, and towns exercising village powers under 60.22(3))] of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Guenther, Marathon County 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 of Guenther, 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.

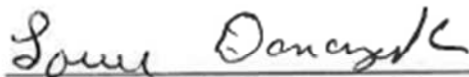
Section 3. Town of Guenther Land Use Planning Committee by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes on March 1, 2018, has adopted a resolution recommending to Guenther Town Board the adoption of the document entitled "Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Guenther containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 4. The Town of Guenther 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.

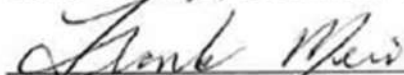
Section 5. The Guenther Town Board of the Town of Guenther, Marathon County, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Guenther, Marathon County pursuant to section 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

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

Adopted this 14<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2018



Louie Danczyk, Chairman, Town of Guenther



Frank Meis, Supervisor



Steve Cisewski, Supervisor

Attest:



Joanie Whitt, Clerk, Town of Guenther

# Appendix F

## Bibliography of Comprehensive Plan

Marathon County Zoning Dept.:  
210 River Drive  
Wausau, Wis. 54403  
Att: Ed Hammer:

March 10, 2004

RECEIVED  
MAR 11 2004  
MARATHON CO. CONSERVATION  
'PLANNING & ZONING DEPT.

Dear Ed:

As the group involved with the development of the Guenther comprehensive planning process, we wanted to thank you and Diane for your participation in our town meeting on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2004. We do appreciate your verbal commitment that each plan is to be the best visionary plan for the individual township and that it does not have to be consistent and reflect the views of other townships within the intergovernmental unit.

As you are aware, our group is attempting to weigh all of the information currently available on the countywide comprehensive planning process. In order for our group to best represent current and future residents of the township, we have attended meetings both in Marathon and Portage counties. We do believe the approach we are seeing in Marathon county lends itself to better intergovernmental cooperation and planning.

However in that vein, some understandings between the representatives of Marathon county and the township of Guenther need to be documented. Most of these relate to the subject of our visionary plan for Guenther and how future interpretations, regulations, policies and zoning laws could be administered by or through representatives of Marathon County.

As you indicated, this is our plan and we need to include the following understandings. We therefore need a written commitment from yourself and Mort McBain County Administrator, that the following items will be under the direct and permanent control of the township of Guenther's governmental body and their constituents.

1. The smart growth plan as developed by the township of Guenther, can only be modified by the township. These modifications could occur at any time in the future, without the authorization or approval of Marathon county representatives
2. Any future interpretation of the Guenther smart growth plan by Marathon county representatives through either administrative or zoning changes, could only be implemented by or through approval of the township of Guenther and their constituents.
3. Based upon any future disagreement between Marathon county planning, administration or zoning, the township of Guenther would

be able to drop from the Marathon County Smart Growth plan within a period of 90 days with written notice of intent.

4. As you indicated, the Township of Guenther could elect not to ratify a plan for inclusion in the county intergovernmental plan and become independently zoned. Any new zoning regulations adopted by the county would be made available to the township as a model for future town zoning.

As you're aware, this township has great concern about the past reaction of Marathon county administration to the townships needs. Particularly relief from a disproportionate tax burden that each property owner is carrying, due to a large block of county owned land in the township. This disproportionate tax burden was alluded to by Mr. Ken Schuck, {Section Chief of the Wis. Dept. of Revenue, Madison, Wis.} at a towns association meeting held at the Bevent Town hall on. Oct. 23, 2003.

Also the infrastructure of our roads continue to receive damage, due to the use of Marathon county land. The minimal amount of remuneration we receive does very little to fund the repairs. As a bonus, we have to clean up trash left over by a few inconsiderate users of the county property.

Should we suggest that some of the county owned property be used for a benefit to the township we find it is not well received. Some suggestions were to allow passage across it for power lines, telephone lines or, etc. Past information received is that county land is not allowed for this use, only personal property or road right of way can be used.

To date we are not aware of any plans for the study of or relief from these issues. However it appears that much of the future emphasis of smart growth will be placed on the infrastructure within municipalities.

It is important that a meeting be set up with the Guenther town board to find a solution to the inequities that the private property owners endure due to increased county land ownership in our township.

Our Guenther town board has asked for a recommendation from the planning committee as to what our continued participation should be with smart growth planning. Generally we believe that we should go forward with the process. However to assure town residents that we have represented their best interests, we need a written commitment from Marathon county representatives. There should be no doubt as to the foundation we agreed to move forward on. Any other verbalized agreements will have to be reduced to a written form for future participants to review and respect.

As a visionary group, we need to be certain that we allow the people of this township some ability to control changes in the township, without

signing away their future rights. They will also need the ability to effect change, some of which we can not envision at this time.

We will be awaiting your reply so we may move forward. Thank you

Sincerely:

Ellen Mansfield.	3161 Sandy Creek Road,	Mosinee, Wis.	54455.
Signature:	<u>Ellen Mansfield</u>	Date:	<u>3-10-04</u>
Cedric Burroughs.	2661 Camp Road,	Mosinee, Wis.	54455
Signature:	<u>Cedric Burroughs</u>	Date:	<u>3-10-04</u>
Joe Rucinski.	1610 S. Hwy. X.	Mosinee, Wis.	54455.
Signature:	<u>Joe Rucinski</u>	Date:	<u>3-10-04</u>
Edward Dziak.	900 Twilight Road.	Mosinee, Wis.	54455.
Signature:	<u>Edward Dziak</u>	Date:	<u>3-10-04</u>
Jeff Krukowski.	1080 Knapp Road.	Mosinee, Wis.	54455.
Signature:	<u>Jeff Krukowski</u>	Date:	<u>3-10-04</u>

Note: Smart Growth and Comprehensive planning are used interchangeably to describe the same process.

C.C. To Mr. Mort McBain.



# COUNTY OF MARATHON

COURTHOUSE

500 FOREST STREET

WAUSAU, WISCONSIN

54403-5568

## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

PHONE: (715) 261-1400

FAX: (715) 261-1133

administrator@mail.co.marathon.wi.us

March 15, 2004

Ellen Mansfield, Chair  
Town of Guenther Plan Commission  
3161 Sandy Creek Road  
Mosinee, WI 54455-8041

Jeff Krukowski  
Town of Guenther Plan Commission  
1680 Knapp Road  
Mosinee, WI 54455

Cedric Burroughs  
Town of Guenther Plan Commission  
2661 Camp Road  
Mosinee, WI 54455

Joe Rucinski  
Town of Guenther Plan Commission  
1610 S. County Road  
Mosinee, WI 54455

Eddie Dziak  
Town of Guenther Plan Commission  
900 Twilight Road  
Mosinee, WI 54455

### **PARTICIPATION IN THE MARATHON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS**

I would like to thank you for your diligent interest in the planning process and your commitment to be informed representatives of the residents of the Town of Guenther.

I assure you that the Town of Guenther's comprehensive plan will be in direct and permanent control of the Town of Guenther's governmental body and their constituents. We will continue to support your efforts to develop visions for Guenther's future. It is in both Guenther's and Marathon County's best interest that representatives from your town develop your individual comprehensive plan and maintain control of that plan. The representatives of Guenther have a better understanding of the dynamics of your town than County staff or the consultant, making it necessary for intergovernmental cooperation to assure a plan that satisfies the needs of the residents of Guenther.

Specifically, I would like to assure you of the following understandings:

1. The Comprehensive Plan developed by your community can only be modified by the Town of Guenther. These modifications could occur at any time in the future, without the authorization or approval of Marathon County representatives.



2. Any future interpretation of the Town of Guenther Comprehensive Plan by Marathon County representatives can only be implemented by or through the approval of the Town of Guenther and their constituents.
3. Marathon County continues to stand by the original Memorandum of Understanding between Marathon County and the Town of Guenther which states: "Either party may terminate this agreement for any reason at any time." This Memorandum of Understanding stipulates a 120 day waiting period.
4. The Town of Guenther may elect not to ratify a plan for inclusion in the County Development Plan. The zoning issue is not contingent upon plan adoption. You could adopt a plan and if a major zoning ordinance amendment is needed, you could act at that time to exercise your options. Upon completion of local comprehensive plans, Marathon County will review the Marathon County Zoning Ordinance for consistency with locally approved comprehensive plans. Should this process necessitate a comprehensive amendment to the Marathon County Zoning Ordinance, local municipalities may elect to adopt the amended ordinance, become independently zoned, or not adopt any zoning ordinance.

County zoning gives communities access to map maintenance, legal support, and technical support. All zoning changes in independently zoned communities must still be approved by the County Board.

Marathon County supports the comprehensive planning process to encourage healthy communities, effective economic development, and wise use of natural resources. This is best achieved through the development of local plans by locally elected officials and citizen volunteers.

We are aware of some of the issues the Town has over the County Forest Land within the Town. While we cannot guarantee all of those differences will be easily resolved, we can certainly continue to have an open and respectful dialogue about those issues.



Mort McBain  
County Administrator



Ed Hammer, Director  
Conservation, Planning and Zoning  
EH:DW:ljs