

TOWN OF SPENCER

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2005

Town of Spencer Town Board

Marathon County Conservation, Planning & Zoning
Department

URS, Inc.
MSA

September 2005

Town of Spencer Conditions and Issues

2005

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List of Acronyms

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

AADT—Annual Average Daily Traffic

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

ATC—American Transmission Company

BMPs—Best Management Practices

CCC—Civilian Conservation Corps (a 1930s construction and conservation program).

CCR&R—Child Care Resource and Referral Network

CDBG—Community Development Block Grant

CES—Cropland Evaluation System (Marathon County)

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

CRP—Conservation Reserve Program

CTH—County Trunk Highway

CWA—Central Wisconsin Airport

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

DWD—Department of Workforce Development

EMS—Emergency Medical Services

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

ETZ—Extra-Territorial Zoning

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

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

MFL—Managed Forest Law

MPO—Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

NCHC—North Central Health Care

NCWRPC—North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

NHI—Natural Heritage Inventory

NRHP—National Register of Historic Places

NTC—Northcentral Technical College

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

PASER—Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating

PMP—Pavement Management Plan

PSCW—Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

SHPO—State Historic Preservation Office

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

STH—State Trunk Highway

TIP—Transportation Improvement Program (Marathon County)

USDA—United States Department of Agriculture

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

WisDOT—Wisconsin Department of Transportation

WHEDA—Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority

WISLR—Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads

1. Introduction and Summary

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

- The Town of Spencer is located in the southwest corner of Marathon County, Wisconsin. It has seen rapid population increase (+38%) over the past 30 years. From 1990 – 2000, the Town's population increased 29%. Population growth is expected to continue into the future.
- The landscape of the Town is still relatively rural in nature. The Town of Spencer does not have a land use plan in place. Currently, Marathon County regulates zoning within the Town of Spencer.
- Town roads are generally in good repair. Residents are split on whether or not to continue to pave more Town roads. Growth in the Marshfield area has increased traffic on Town roads.
- Residents within the Town own and operate septic systems for on-site wastewater treatment. The nearest municipal

sewer and water systems are located in the City of Marshfield, located on the Town's southeastern border, and the Village of Spencer, in the northwest portion of the Town.

- Housing within the Town consists primarily of single family, detached residences. These homes are scattered throughout the Town.
- The Town's economy relies primarily upon agriculture. In the coming years, it is predicted that the agricultural economy will continue to decline in the Town, as well as the State as a whole. Most Town residents work outside of the Town in the Marshfield area.
- The Town of Spencer is concerned about annexation from the surrounding municipalities.

2. Demographics

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

Population and Households

Historical Trends

The total population for the Town of Spencer increased by 38 percent between 1970-2000. From 1990-2000, population increased by 29 percent. Total households increased by 41 percent during this same period.

The increase in total households over the past 30 years was substantially higher than the increase in population. This is likely due to a decrease in household size of 34%, which reflects the national trend toward more households comprised of singles, couples without children, and widows or widowers.

Table 2-1: Demographic Change, 1970-2000

	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1970 to 2000	% Change 1990 to 2000
Total Population						
Spencer	972	989	1036	1341	+38%	+29%
County	97,457	111,270	115,400	125,834	+29%	+9%
State	4417821	4705767	4891769	5363675	+21%	+10%
Total Households						
Spencer	257	303	337	475	+84%	+41%
County	29,771	37,865	41,534	47,402	+59%	+14%
State	1328804	1652261	1822118	2084544	+57%	+14%
Average Household Size						
Spencer	3.78	3.26	3.07	2.82	-34%	-8%
County	3.27	2.9	2.75	2.6	-20%	-5%
State	3.22	2.35	2.68	2.50	-22%	-7%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2000

The population of Marathon County grew from 115,400 in 1990 to 125,834 in 2000, an increase of 9% compared to an 10% increase in the State and 8.7% in the U.S. The most recent estimates (Wisconsin Department of Administration [WDOA], Demographic Services, 2002) show an annual growth rate of 0.7% in all three jurisdictions. Population growth in Marathon County has been concentrated in the urbanized area surrounding Wausau.

Table 2-2 shows the Median age for the Town is 34.6, which is slightly lower than the State overall, at 36.0 years and the County at 36.3 years.

Table 2-2: Population by Age Group, 2000

Age Group	Percent of Population		
	Spencer	County	State
Under 5 years	8.1	6.4	6.4
5 to 9 years	7.1	7.5	7.1
10 to 14 years	8.1	8.0	7.5
15 to 19 years	9.8	7.7	7.6
20 to 24 years	4.3	5.4	6.7
25 to 34 years	13.6	13.0	13.2
35 to 44 years	20.0	16.5	16.3
45 to 54 years	12.1	13.9	13.7
55 to 59 years	5.1	4.8	4.7
60 to 64 years	3.9	3.8	3.8
65 to 74 years	5.6	6.4	6.6
75 to 84 years	2.2	4.8	4.7
85 years and over	0.2	1.7	1.8
Median Age	34.6	36.3	36.0

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2000

Population Forecasts

The following projections for population were determined by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in 2003. The projections are based upon the percentage change (growth) in total population between 1980-2000 for each planning sub-area (NCWRPC used 5 planning sub-areas in Marathon County: Highway 51, Eastern Municipalities, North-Western, South-Central, and South-Western). Table 2-3 below illustrates population projections for the Town and the County using a moderate growth rate.

Looking at Table 2-3, the Town is expected to increase in total population by 201 persons by year 2030. This is a 15 percent increase. The County is expected to increase by 13 percent overall.

Table 2-3: Population Projections – 2000-2030

	Total Population by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
Spencer	1,341	1,375	1,408	1,441	1,475	1,508	1,542	15+
County	125,834	128,632	131,430	134,217	137,022	139,820	142,618	+13

Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 2003

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

	Total Population by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
Spencer	1,341	1,491	1,638	1,785	1,933	2,079	2,123	+58%
County	125,834	130,242	134,504	138,836	143,308	147,112	150,255	+19%

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

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

The NCWRPC projections provide a baseline to determine trends in the sub-area. They are useful in identifying future population beyond the borders of individual communities. The

WDOA projections are more useful at the local municipality level.

Household Forecasts

Like population, household projections were completed in 5-year increments between 2000 and 2030. The number of households was calculated by dividing the average persons per household into the total population for each 5-year increment.

Assuming a moderate rate of growth, the number of households is estimated to increase by 72, or 15 percent between 2000 and 2030. This is slightly higher than the County increase of 13 percent. As shown in Table 2-1, the average household size was estimated to be 2.82 persons in 2000.

Table 2-4: Household Projections – 2000-2030

	Total Households by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
Spencer	475	488	499	511	523	535	547	+15
County	48,585	49,665	50,745	51,821	52,904	53,985	55,065	+13

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

Like the population projection, the WDOA household projections are recognized as Wisconsin’s official population projections in accordance with Wisconsin Statue 16.96. and are based on the historical population trends of individual communities. Table 2-4b includes household projections completed by the WDOA.

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

	Total Households by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
Spencer	475	537	604	671	737	801	824	+73%
County	47,702	50,109	52,902	55,589	58,181	60,283	62,035	+30%

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

Education and Income Levels

According to 2000 Census data, 86.1 percent of Town residents have a high school education or higher. This compares to 83.8 percent for the County, and 85.1 percent for the State. In the Town, 11.7 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 at 18.3 percent, and lower than the State with 22.4 percent.

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

Educational Attainment	Spencer		County	State
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	65	7.5	8.2	5.4
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	56	6.4	8.0	9.6
High School Graduate	388	44.5	38.0	34.6
Some College, No Degree	188	21.6	18.3	20.6
Associates Degree	72	8.3	9.2	7.5
Bachelor's Degree	65	7.5	12.6	15.3
Graduate or Professional Degree	37	4.2	5.7	7.2
Percent high school graduate or higher		86.1	83.8	85.1
Percent bachelor's degree or higher		11.7	18.3	22.4

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2000

Median household income for Town residents was \$47,315 in 2000. This compares higher than Marathon County with a median of \$45,165, and higher than the State overall at \$43,791.

Table 2-6: Household Income Levels, 2000

Income Level	Spencer		County	State
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than \$10,000	9	1.9	5.9	7.1
\$10,000 - \$14,999	17	3.5	5.4	5.8
\$15,000 - \$24,999	53	11.0	12.3	12.7
\$25,000 - \$34,999	72	14.9	13.1	13.2
\$35,000 - \$49,999	121	25.0	19.4	18.1
\$50,000 - \$74,999	140	28.9	25.2	22.7
\$75,000 - \$99,999	51	10.5	10.5	10.9
\$100,000 - \$149,000	15	3.1	5.4	6.4
\$150,000 - \$199,999	3	0.6	1.3	1.5
\$200,000 or More	3	0.6	1.6	1.5
Total Households	484	100.0	100.0	100.0
Median Household Income		47,315	45,165	43,791

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2000

Employment Characteristics

Table 2-7 illustrates the breakdown of the employed population of the Town in 2000 by occupation. The “employed population” is defined as people living in the Town who are 16 years and older and had a job at the time of the Census. In 2000, the Town had an employed population of 762. Most residents were employed in management, professional and related with almost 38 percent. Production, transportation, and material moving was second, and sales and office third.

Table 2-7: Occupation by Sector, 2000

Sector	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	221	29.0
Service occupations	84	11.0
Sales and office occupations	163	21.4
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	19	2.5
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	92	12.1
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	183	24.0
Total Employed*	762	

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

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

An employment forecast completed by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in 2003 indicates a very slight increase in employment for the Town. By the year 2030, it is estimated that the Town will gain about 3 workers. This estimate is based on the rate of change in employment between 1990-2000 for non-farm employment. 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.

Table 2-8: Employment Projections – 2000-2030

	Total Employment by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
Spencer	395	396	396	396	397	397	398	+1
County	72,508	75,625	78,742	81,859	84,976	88,093	91,210	+26

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

Demographic Trends

- Town is experiencing substantial population growth.
- Growth is partially due to in-migration from Marshfield.
- The Town is issuing 20-30 building permits per year.
- 41% increase in households from 1990 to 2000.
- Median household income for Town residents was \$47,315 in 2000.
- In 2000, there were 395 people employed in the Town

Issues

- **Amish / Mennonite** - The population of Amish has declined and there are very few Mennonites in the area.

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.

Maps for the Natural Resources element include Figures: 3-1, Rivers and Floodplains; 3-2, Wetland Types; 3-3, Soil Associations; 3-4, Prime Farm Soils; 3-5, Slopes. All figures are located at the end of this section.

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 as resources to guide local policy and decision making regarding resource management and protection. In addition to the plans listed below, Marathon County and several local communities have adopted park and outdoor recreation plans that discuss natural resource based recreational facilities and protection strategies. These are described in more detail in the Parks section.

- **Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP)** - In 2001, Marathon County adopted a LWRMP in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). The primary intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County and outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources. Marathon County encompasses portions of 22 watersheds. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has ranked these watersheds according to water pollution impacts and designated five as “priority” watersheds to receive special planning and funding through the voluntary, State-funded Priority Watershed Program. The County’s Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (DCPZ) works with the WDNR to implement the program. Program funding is used to hire staff to assist in developing management plans for each watershed and to provide cost sharing to landowners for implementation of “best management practices” (BMPs) to achieve the program objectives.
- **Marathon County 2001 Groundwater Protection Guide** – This guide is an extension of the efforts established with adoption of the Marathon County Groundwater Plan in 1988. It is intended to guide local and County officials in setting policy. It also serves as a resource of information about groundwater and other natural resources and recommends strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection.

- **Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 1996-2005** – This plan includes recommendations to guide management of forest land in Marathon County in accordance with the County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department’s mission to manage and protect the County forest on a sustainable basis for ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future generations. It provides substantial information on existing forest resources and 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 are in need of 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 or ERW in the Town.

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. Impaired water resources in the Town of Spencer include:

- Upper Yellow River in the Town of Spencer
- Upper Big Eau Pleine in western Marathon County

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

Streams/Rivers – The Little Eau Pleine River runs through the northern third of the Town. Two tributaries of the Yellow River flow through the west and south part of the Town. STH

13 divides the Town into two watersheds; the area to the north and east is in the Little Eau Pleine River watershed and the area to the south and west in the Upper Yellow River Watershed, which is considered an Impaired Waters.

Floodplains - A significant area adjacent to the Little Eau Pleine River and a tributary are within the 100-year floodplain. 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.

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

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

- **Aquatic Bed** wetlands contain plants growing entirely on or in a water body no deeper than 6'. Plants may include pondweed, duckweed, lotus and water-lilies.

- **Marshes** are characterized by standing water and dominated by cattails, bulrushes, pickerel-weed, lake sedges and/or giant bur-reed
- **Sedge or "Wet" Meadows** wetlands may have saturated soils, rather than standing water, more often than not. Sedges, grasses and reeds are dominant, but look also for blue flag iris, marsh milkweed, sneeze-weed, mint and several species of goldenrod and aster.
- **Scrub/Shrub** wetlands include bogs and alder thickets and are characterized by woody shrubs and small trees such as tag alder, bog birch, willow and dogwood.
- **Forested** wetlands include bogs and forested floodplain complexes. They are characterized by trees 20 feet or more in height such as tamarack, white cedar, black spruce, elm, black ash, green ash and silver maple.

A large area of wetlands flanks the Little Eau Pleine River, extending into the McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Area, which covers a significant amount of the northeast portion of the Town. This wetland complex consists of a mix of forested, scrub/shrub and emergent/wet meadow type wetlands. Wetlands also exist adjacent to the other creeks and tributaries in the Town. The WDNR maintains a dike that controls the marsh. The City of Marshfield has two wells in the marsh.

Groundwater – Depth to groundwater varies from shallow to moderately deep. Water quantities are generally sufficient for domestic uses and scattered urban development. However, residents report poor water quality with high iron content.

Soil Resources

Soil Types – Most soils in the Town are in the Loyal-Withee-Marshfield. Soils in the Cathro-Seelyeville association are located along the Little Eau Pleine River, and in the McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Area. Susceptibility for soil erosion is similar to the average soil loss experienced by Marathon County as a whole and is not a major concern.

Prime Farm Soils – Figure 3-4 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 Department.

There are some small areas of Class 2 prime farmland soils scattered through the Town. There are a few small blocks of land under Farmland Preservation Contracts which provide certain tax incentives to encourage land to be kept in active farming. This is discussed in greater detail in the Land Use section.. While no land in the Town is zoned Exclusive Agriculture, land along the north and east border in the towns of Brighton, Eau Pleine and McMillan are zoned Exclusive Agriculture. 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.

Vegetation – Areas around the rivers, tributaries and McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Area are generally wooded or covered in scrub. Much of the rest of the Town is covered in cropland.

Wildlife Resources and Habitat – Wildlife resources include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that typically live in Marathon County. Common types of wildlife include deer, wild turkeys, 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, Cherokee Park, and Rib Mountain State Park.

Endangered Species -- There are some aquatic endangered, threatened, or special concern species within the Town. These include:

- Northern Wet Forest Community - These weakly minerotrophic conifer swamps, located in the North, are dominated by black spruce (*Picea mariana*) and tamarack (*Larix laricina*). Jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) may be a significant canopy component in certain parts of the range of this community complex. Understories are composed mostly of sphagnum (*Sphagnum* spp.) mosses and ericaceous shrubs such as leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), Labrador-tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), and small cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*) and sedges such as (*Carex trisperma* and *C paupercula*). The Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) has split out two entities, identified (but not strictly defined) by the two dominant species (see Black Spruce Swamp and Tamarack Swamp).
- Open Bog Community - These non-forested bogs are acidic, low nutrient, northern Wisconsin peatlands dominated by Sphagnum spp. mosses that occur in deep layers, often with pronounced hummocks and hollows. Also present are a few narrow-leaved sedge species such as (*Carex oligosperma* and *C. pauciflora*), cotton-grasses (*Eriophorum* spp.), and ericaceous shrubs, especially bog laurel (*Kalmia polifolia*), leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), and small cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccus*). Plant diversity is very low but includes characteristic and distinctive specialists. Trees are absent or achieve very low cover values as this community is closely related to and intergrades with Muskeg. When this community occurs in southern Wisconsin, it is often referred to as a Bog Relict.

Issues

- **Preservation of Rural Character** - Preservation of rural character was identified by Town residents as a significant concern.
- **Agricultural / Residential Conflicts** - There are some conflicts with agricultural and residential uses. These include transportation conflicts, noise, odor, and others.
- **Water Quality** - There are areas in the Town that have water quality concerns.

4. Land Use

The Town of Spencer is located in the southwest corner of Marathon County. It comprises the rural area between the Village of Spencer and the City of Marshfield.

Maps for the Land Use element include Figures: 4-1, Existing Land use/Land cover; 4-2, Existing Zoning; 4-3, Farm Preservation Contracts and Exclusive Agricultural Zoning. All figures are located at the end of this section.

Current Pattern of Land Use

The predominant land uses for the Town consist primarily of agricultural lands, woodlands, and scattered single-family homes including several smaller subdivisions. There are two areas of multi-family residential development. The McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Area covers much of the northeast quadrant of the Town. Several parcels with commercial uses line STH 13. There is also some limited industrial development and two inoperative quarries in the Town.

Existing Land Use - For purposes of this report, existing land cover was used to represent existing land use. Table 4-1 describes the various land use categories and Figure 4-1 illustrates the existing land use. Note, the acreage and percentage of land shown on Table 4-1 were determined from aerial photos and are not intended to be accurate to the parcel level.

Table 4-1: Land Use Cover Classification, 2000

Land Cover Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
Single Family Residential	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes	837	4
Multi-Family Residential	Multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments	9	--
Commercial Services	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	36	--
Industrial	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers	30	--
Quarries/Gravel Pits	Mining operations	0	--
Cropland	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland	8661	43
Specialty Crops	Ginseng, orchards, vineyards, nurseries, groves, cranberries, etc.	3	--
Other Agriculture	Fallow, pasture and undetermined agriculture, power lines and towers, water towers, municipal wells	1614	8
Public/Quasi-Public	Schools, churches, cemeteries, town halls, fire departments, National Guard	0	--
Recreation	Ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, parks, trails, camp grounds, shooting ranges	21	--
Woodlands	Forested land	1399	7
Water	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc.	438	2
Transportation	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	505	2
Barren Land	Unused open land in wooded areas, along streams, along roadsides	196	1
Total Land Area		20253	100%

Source: Marathon County Land Use Cover Database

Current Land Use Plans and Regulations

Land Use Plan(s) – The Town of Spencer does not have a land use plan.

Zoning – Marathon County regulates zoning within the Town of Spencer’s borders. Minimum rural residential lot size is 40,000 sq. ft. 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 landward 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 ag zoned (8 towns in Marathon County), or sign contract with the State. The program requires that a landowner by 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 with 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.

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

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

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

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.

The land use element in this plan contains information on land set aside under the FCL, as identified in County plat books. Information on MFL land is not readily available since landowners select various acreage amounts and may have both closed or open land. These acreages do not correspond with the parcel boundaries, and thus are not mapped.

Table 4-2 shows current estimates of land set aside under the FCL and MFL programs. It is noted that information on MFL land is not readily available since landowners select various acreage amounts and may have both closed or open land. These acreages do not correspond with the parcel boundaries, and thus are not mapped.

As shown in Table 4-2, there are zero acres of land estimated to be currently enrolled in the FCL program and about 82 acres enrolled in MFL programs in the Town.

Table 4-2: Land in Forest Preservation Programs (in acres), 1998 – 2002

Year	Forest Crop Law (FCL)	Managed Forest Law (MFL) open	Managed Forest Law (MFL) closed
1998	0	0	27
2002	0	0	82
Change	0	0	+55
% Change	0	0	+203.7

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

Development Trends

Land Supply – Development is somewhat limited by the enrollment of properties into tax incentive programs to maintain existing use/cover under the managed forest law, the forest crop law, and farmland preservation.

Estimates indicate the Town of Spencer has 11,873 acres of land available and 8,381 acres of land unavailable. This was calculated using North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) data. Available land was considered to be cropland, special cropland, woodlands, and barren / vacant lands. All other types were considered “unavailable”. It is noted that some of this “available” land may be in public ownership, as shown in Table 4-3, thus making it essentially “unavailable” for development.

Development is somewhat limited by the enrollment of properties into tax incentive programs to maintain existing use/cover under the managed forest law, the forest crop law, and farmland preservation.

Table 4-3: Public Owned Land (in acres), 1998-2002

Year	County Owned	State Owned	Federal Owned
1998	1,641.8	1,717.9	0
2002	1,641.8	1,717.9	0
Change	0	0	0
% Change	0	0	0

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

Affordable land is in short supply. The land that is available is sold in 5-10 acre lots and is not desirable for agricultural use.

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 Spencer, it is estimated that 622 acres of land will be needed to accommodate new residential development through 2030.

The NCWRPC estimated land demand for future non-residential development based on projected changes in local employment and estimated current average density of employees per acre. In the Town of Spencer, it is estimated that twelve acres will be needed to accommodate new non-residential development through 2030.

Land Values -- Table 4-4 indicates the change in assessed land values between 1998 and 2002 for various types of land use in the Town of Spencer. It also indicates percent change in acreage and land value for the Town compared to Marathon County. Between 1998 and 2002 the number of acres in residential land use increased by almost 302. At the same time, the amount of land in Agriculture decreased by over 1,778 acres and the amount of land classified as Swamp & Waste Land increased by almost 1,251 acres. This likely reflects the conversion of some farmland to rural residential uses and changes made in the classification of land from Agriculture to Swamp & Waste. Similarly, the acreage of land classified as Forest increased by 154, land value for Forest land also decreased by \$1. In Marathon County, land classified as Swamp & Waste Land had the highest percent increase in acreage of all categories (74.8%) and land classified as Forest had the highest percent increase in value per acre (almost 92%).

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

Year	Residential		Commercial		Manufacturing		Agriculture		Swamp & Waste Land		Forest	
	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only
1998	1,229	\$2,599	63	\$2,083	22	\$827	11,837	\$351	574	\$83	2,778	\$313
2002	1,531	\$2,601	63	\$2,155	27	\$1,296	10,059	\$132	1,825	\$194	2,932	\$312
Chg.	+302	\$2	0	\$72	+5	\$469	-1,778	\$-219	+1,251	\$111	+154	\$-1
Percent Change Comparison												
	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)
Town	+24.6	+0.1	+8.6	0	+3.5	-4.2	+22.7	+56.7	+206.2	-15.0	-62.4	+217.9
County	+21.2	+5.6	+6.4	+38.4	-4.0	-7.8	-0.5	+34.4	+31.4	-11.2	-47.6	+74.8

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

Major Opportunities and Constraints

- **Ample Developable Land**— Moderate to small lots are in short supply in the Town of Spencer. This drives up land prices for this type of lot.
- **Good Access** – STH 13 provides excellent access to nearby Marshfield and the Village of Spencer. The community has expressed interest in continued commercial development in the STH 13 corridor.
- **Subdivisions**— The Town requires that new subdivisions escrow money for the blacktopping of roads.

Issues

- **Floodplain** – There is a concern that increased development could impact floodplains. If impervious surfaces are increased, this could lead to increased flooding.
- **Wetlands** - Residents are concerned that wetlands are limiting where development can occur.

5. Transportation

A community's transportation system consists of a variety of roads; some are owned and maintained by local officials, others are part of the County or State road systems. In addition to roads, the transportation system includes facilities for pedestrians (e.g., sidewalks), bicyclists (e.g., trails), railroads, airports, and in more urban areas, public transit. This section describes the transportation system in the Town of Spencer and related improvements or issues affecting the system.

Background

STH 13 is a principal arterial that runs diagonally through the Town providing connections to the Village of Spencer to the north and the City of Marshfield to the south. CTH C is located in the northern portion of the Town and extends east and west. CTH V is located in the western part of the Town and provides access to a number of small residential subdivisions. CTH F provides access from STH 13 to areas located on the northern part of the Town.

Maps for the Transportation element include Figures: 5-1, Functional Classification; 5-2, Trails and Regional Transportation. All figures are located at the end of this section.

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 Wausau 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 presented 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 STH 29 corridor in the western part of Marathon County. The primary goal was to identify recommendations to allow local communities to protect STH 29 from impacts related to unplanned growth.
- **Marathon County Functional / Jurisdictional Highway Classification Study (1998)** – This plan identifies and groups classes of roadways that provide

similar levels of service. The plan recommended that the unit of government having the greatest basic interest in the roadway's function would carry out the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the classified roadways.

Road Network

Functional Classification of Roads/Jurisdiction

(Source: *WisDOT Facilities Development Manual*)

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

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

Principal Arterials serve corridor movements having trips length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban areas greater than 5,000 population 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 intracommunity continuity and service to 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 the arterials through the area to the local streets. The collectors also collect traffic from the 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 the higher order of systems. Local streets offer the lowest level of mobility, and serve the 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 describe above, identifies the road by the level of service it provides.

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

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

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 five percent, primarily in national parks, forests, and Indian reservations. Over 75 percent of the road system is locally controlled.

In some cases, local municipalities are responsible for conducting routine maintenance and minor repairs on State and Federal highways within their jurisdictional boundaries. In return, the State generally provides financing to those jurisdictions. However, major repairs and reconstruction are generally still the responsibility of the State Department of Transportation. Roadway jurisdictions (i.e. U.S., State, and County highways) are indicated in Figure 5-1.

Major Road Facilities

Following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in the Town. Functional classification, jurisdiction, and Annual Average Daily Traffic² (AADT), when available, are summarized for all major roads. WisDOT Traffic counts are adjusted for day of week and seasonal factors.

- **STH 13** is a principal arterial that runs diagonally through the Town providing connections to the Village of Spencer to the north and the City of Marshfield to the south. The 2001 AADT volume north of W. 26th Street was 8,800 in 1998 and 9,000 in 2001. STH 13 experiences a significant

amount of traffic. However, traffic appears to have remained stable between 1998 and 2001.

- **CTH C**, along the north Town border, is an east-west major collector connecting to STH 97 to the east and to the Village of Spencer and STH 13 to the west. West of CTH E the 1998 and 2001 AADT volumes were 1,100 and 1,700, respectively, an increase of 500 vehicles per day.
- **CTH V** is a north-south major collector originates from the Village of Spencer and connects to U.S. Highway (USH) 10 to the south in Wood County. The AADT volume south of the Village of Spencer was 1,200 in 2001.
- **CTH F** runs north and south and is classified as minor collector north of CTH C and a local road south of CTH C. The road connects to STH 13 to the south where it terminates. The 1998 and 2001 AADT volumes on CTH F north of CTH C was 650 and 680, respectively.

County road traffic volumes do not suggest capacity problems.

Road Maintenance – The Town has approximately 42.5 miles of roads and has recently started an aggressive rebuilding program. The Town has completed a Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) analysis that is used to evaluate roadway conditions. However, it is not used for budgeting purposes.

PASER – The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) requires all incorporated communities to prepare a Pavement Management Plan (PMP) using a pavement rating

² 1998 and 2001 Wisconsin Highway Traffic Data, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, May 1999 and 2002.

system for their local roads. These plans were to be submitted for review by December 2001. The data from these plans is intended to provide the foundation for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR), which is a computer resource that will enable communities and the State to begin to assess Wisconsin’s local roadway system.

The PASER system, which was designed by the Transportation Information Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the rating system used most by Wisconsin communities.

PASER rates road surfaces on a scale of 1 to 10. This scale is broken down as follows:

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

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

Table 5-3: Summary of Pavement Conditions

Surface Type Code (miles)						
Unimproved Road	Graded Earth Road	Gravel Road	Wearing Surface	Cold Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Cold Mix Resurfacing with < 7” Base	Cold Mix Resurfacing with > 7” Base

	0.13	41.29				
Cold Mix Asphalt Base < 7”	Cold Mix Asphalt Base > 7”	Hot Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Hot Mix Resurfacing	Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement	Concrete Pavement	Brick or Block Pavement
0.07	11.86			2.14		

Surface Condition Rating - WISLR Data						
No Data	Failed	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
1.59		1.33	4.02	26.43	15.35	6.77

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

Roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below “Fair” must be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary. The roads that display a surface rating of “Good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to promote safe travel conditions. Those roads without data should be examined to ensure safe travel conditions exist along these routes. The majority of the roads within the Town of Spencer will require preventative maintenance, however, roughly five miles of roadway will require some sort of reconstruction.

Land Use and Transportation

Land use and transportation have a reciprocal relationship. Land use affects the demand for transportation to and from a given geographic area. Likewise, improved transportation facilities can affect land use decisions.

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 WisDOT was given the authority to establish rules to review subdivision plats abutting or adjoining State trunk highways or connecting highways. Regulations enacted by WisDOT 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.

STH 29 Access – STH 13 provides direct access to STH 29, a four-lane east-west expressway connecting to the interstate system through the State.

Other Transportation Modes

Pedestrian – There are no sidewalks in the Town. Routes tied into Marshfield would be useful.

Bicycle – The *Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for the Non-Urbanized Area of Marathon County, Wisconsin, 1996* identified suggested bicycle routes in Marathon County. These routes were based on traffic counts and condition of pavement. Formal action has not occurred to adopt these as designated bicycle routes. The *Marathon County Bicycle and Pedestrian*

Plan identified CTH V, CTH C and CTH F north of CTH C as recommended bike routes within the Town of Spencer.

Transit – There is no public transit available in the Town. 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 – Two railroad lines run through Spencer, parallel to STH 13 from Marshfield. One line diverts at the Village of Spencer into Clark County and connects to Superior, Wisconsin, the other line runs through Abbotsford to Medford. At-grade railroad crossings have been identified as a safety concern along the STH 13 corridor.

Airports – There are two primary airports utilized by the residents of the Town.

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

Detroit and Milwaukee. There are also nine air freight and express flights daily.

Marshfield Municipal Airport (Roy Shwery Field) has three runways, a weather monitoring system, and a radio communications outlet. The airport also offers fuel sales, maintenance facilities, and car rentals.

Issues

- **Road Maintenance** – Identifying, prioritizing and funding road maintenance needs and road improvements, including blacktopping will be a priority in future Town budgets.
- **RR Crossing** – The railroad crossing/signalization along STH 13 is dangerous and should be upgraded.
- **STH 13 Corridor** – Continued development in the STH 13 corridor could create traffic flow problems on this arterial (i.e. potential need for frontage roads)
- **Bike Facilities** – There is a need for wider shoulders on the roads for bicyclists.
- **Paving Roads** – Some residents would like to see more paved roads. While this will improve the transportation system, it could also lead to increased development pressure and maintenance costs.

6. Utilities

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

Maps for the Utilities element include Figures: 6-1, Depth to Bedrock; 6-2; Suitable Soils for Septic Tank Absorption; 6-3, Depth to Groundwater; 6-4, Watersheds; 6-5, Proposed Weston-Arrowhead Powerline. All figures are located at the end of this section.

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 Spencer does not provide public sewer or water service. All development is on private wells and septic systems. The Town, which has County zoning, requires a minimum lot size of 40,000 sq.ft. for installation of individual septic systems and wells.

On-Site Waste Disposal Systems

Chapter 15 of the *General Code of Ordinances for Marathon County* requires private sewage 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 sewage systems, including:

- **Comm 83** – This refers to Chapter 83 in the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce. It sets standards for regulation of private sewage systems. This code was updated in 2000 now allows the use of new concepts and technologies through a system of individual component approval. Standards for effluent are based on a drinking water standard, although nitrates are generally exempted.

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

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

- **Conventional Systems** – these systems include an absorption field that is buried under the natural ground level. These systems cannot be built in areas where soils do not allow percolation due to high clay content or bedrock where groundwater is too near the surface, or where soils percolate too rapidly and thus pose problems for groundwater contamination.

- **Mound Systems** – these systems include an absorption field that is constructed above ground, creating a “mound”. This type of system is generally used where clay soils, groundwater, rapid permeability or bedrock prevent construction of conventional systems.
- **Mechanical Treatment Components** – these 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 reviews and issues permits for private sewage systems. Soil and site evaluations are required to determine if the proposed septic 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.

Water Supply

Water Wells: All development in Spencer 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. 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

The Town has very poor drainage. Most of the Town is flat and there is very little place for runoff to go.

Electrical Utilities

The Town of Spencer receives electric power from Marshfield Water and Electric. Xcel and Clark Electric are also providers to some residents.

Figure 6-5 shows the potential route of the proposed Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line. This line, proposed by American Transmission Company (ATC), would run 220-miles from Duluth, MN to Weston, WI. This is a controversial project. Supporters claim the line is necessary to prevent energy shortages that could have significant negative impacts on the area economy. Those opposed have concerns about electro-magnetic impacts on animals and humans, loss of rural and visual character, and the imposition of major structures on private land. The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) must approve this line. To date, Marathon County has opposed granting easements through county-wide land for the transmission line. However, if approved by the PSCW, the ATC can use eminent domain to place the line on private property.

Telecommunication Facilities and Services

- Television/Cable providers: none
- Cell towers: there is one cell tower in the Town

Solid Waste Management

Town residents contract their own waste disposal service. Municipal, commercial and industrial waste is accepted at the Marathon County Landfill. User fees collected at the landfill defray the cost of landfill operations.

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

Recycling

Recycling pick-up is provided by a private contractor on a bi-weekly basis. The Town provides a recycling station at the Town Hall.

Issues:

- **Soil Suitability for Septic Systems** - Soils are not suitable for conventional on-site sewerage systems. This impacts development costs in the Town.

Town of Spencer

- **Gas Main** - A high pressure gas main runs through the Town from Marshfield to the Village of Spencer.
- **Pipelines** - Cook Refinery has two pipelines that run through the Town.

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 Spencer.

Data contained in this section reflect two methodologies of data collection employed by the U.S. Census. Data in the first table, labeled as “2000 Census: STF [Summary Tape File]-1 Data” are collected through a household-by-household census and represents responses from every household within the country. To get more detailed information, the U.S. Census also randomly distributes a long-form questionnaire to 1 in 6 households throughout the nation. Tables utilizing this sample data are identified in the footnote below each table and are labeled “STF-3 Data”. Tables are labeled as either STF-1 or STF-3 data because numbers may differ for similar statistics between each method, due to survey limitations, non-response, or other attributes unique to each form of data collection.

Housing Inventory

Housing Type and Tenure

The 2000 Census shows the Town of Spencer has 475 occupied housing units. 431 (or 91%) of these units are owner-occupied. The Town has an average household size of 2.82 persons. 15% of all households are classified as being “1 person households”. 15% of Town households have a householder 65 years or older.

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

Area	Spencer	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Total Occupied Housing Units	475	47,702	2,084,544
Owner Occupied Units	431	36,091	1,426,361
Renter Occupied Units	44	11,611	658,183
Average Household Size	2.82	2.6	2.50
% Owner Occupied	90.7	75.7	68.4
% 1 Person Households	15.4	23.6	26.8
% With Householder 65 years or older	14.7	21.7	21.5

2000 Census: STF-1 Data

Changes in Housing Stock

Table 7-2 notes changes in the housing stock between 1990 and 2000 according to U.S. Census Data. Total housing units have increased by 151 and the number of occupied housing units rose by 137. Vacancy rose from 5 to 6%. The number of owner-occupied housing units increased by 124 or 41%. The census reports increases in the number of single-family, duplex and multi family units.

Table 7-2: Changes in Housing Stock

	1990	2000	# Change	% Change
Total Housing Units	361	512	151	42%
Occupied Housing Units (Households)	342	479	137	40%
Vacancy %	5%	6%	--	--
Owner Occupied Housing Units	305	429	124	41%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	37	50	13	35%
Owner Occupied Housing Units as percent of Total	89%	90%	--	--
Number of Homes for Seasonal/Rec Use	0	0	0	--
Number of Single Family Homes	283	389	106	37%
*Detached	283	389	106	37%
**Attached	0	0	0	--
Number of Duplexes	2	4	2	100%
Multi Family Units 3-9 units	0	22	22	--
Multi Family Units 10+	0	0	0	--

1990, 2000 Census: STF-3 Data

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

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

Housing Age

The age of a community’s housing stock typically reflects several important factors including size, offered amenities, and overall maintenance costs. Age of the home often also 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 home sizes have increased. For example, average homes 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: Age of Community Housing Stock

Total Units	Year Built								
	1999 to March 2000	1995 to 1998	1990 to 1994	1980 to 1989	1970 to 1979	1960 to 1969	1950 to 1959	1940 to 1949	1939 or earlier
512	25	63	89	79	75	40	29	26	86
100%	5%	12%	17%	15%	15%	8%	6%	5%	17%

2000 Census: STF-3 Data

The above table shows housing age for the community. In the Town of Spencer, data shows there had been relatively consistent housing growth over the past several decades. Recent housing growth from the 1990s makes up approximately 34% of the total housing stock. That is significantly higher than overall percentages for the County. The Census reports that homes built in the 1990s make up only 13% of the County’s overall housing stock.

Physical Housing Stock

The table below looks at several select measures of physical condition and compares them to figures for Marathon County and Wisconsin. The median home size in the Town of Spencer is similar in size compared to the overall figures for the County and State, as measured by number of rooms. Nearly 76% of the community’s housing stock is classified as being a “single family” home. That is similar than overall figures for the

County or State. At the time of the 2000 census, no homes within the Town were within structures with more than 10 units. Census data indicates that all homes in the Town have complete plumbing and kitchen facilities.

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
Spencer	5.9	75.98%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Marathon County	5.8	76.10%	4.50%	0.90%	0.90%
Wisconsin	5.4	69.30%	9.40%	1.40%	1.50%

2000 Census: STF-3 Data

Housing Values

Median Value

Table 7-5 shows home value statistics for the community, County and State. Specifically, the column to the right shows the median (or middle value) of select owner-occupied homes for each specified area. This value includes only single-family houses that are located on less than 10 acres. Additionally, this statistic only considers homes without a business or medical office on the property. Census data indicates that the Town of Spencer has a median home value slightly above that of the County.

Table 7-5: Median Housing Value

	Median Value (dollars)
Spencer	\$98,600
Marathon County	\$95,800
Wisconsin	\$112,200

2000 Census: STF-3 Data

Range of Values

The following table shows the range of housing values that exist in the community. Compared to overall percentages for Marathon County, the Town of Spencer has a similar range of housing values.

Table 7-6: Range of Housing Values

Number of Houses per Housing Value Category	Spencer	Marathon County
< \$49,999	11	1,459
%	6%	5%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	90	13,405
%	45%	49%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	73	8,220
%	37%	30%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	19	2,368
%	10%	9%
\$200,000 or more	6	1,714
%	3%	6%

2000 Census: STF-3 Data

Housing Affordability

Several factors impact the varied levels of housing affordability in Marathon County. These factors include rent and mortgage payments, maintenance expenses, lot size, and required or desired amenities for the 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 Spencer that pay more than 35% of their income on housing costs is similar to that of the County and State among owner-occupied households.

Table 7-7: Housing Affordability

	Owner Occupied			Renter Occupied		
	Median selected monthly owner costs ¹			Median Selected monthly renter costs ¹		
	With mortgage	No Mortgage	% ²	Median Contract rent	Median gross rent	% ²
Spencer	\$913	\$265	7%	\$363	\$459	11%
Marathon County	\$916	\$295	10%	\$423	\$484	20%
Wisconsin	\$1,024	\$333	9%	\$473	\$540	25%

¹In dollars

²Percent paying over 35% of household income on housing
2000 Census, STF-3 Data

Additionally, the above table shows that select Town median owner-occupied costs, both with and without a mortgage, are similar to median figures for Marathon County. Median renter costs also appear to be consistent between the Town and County. Technical documentation from the Census states that contract rent is the monthly rent agreed to or contracted for, regardless of any furnishings, utilities, fees, meals, or services that may be included. For vacant units, it is the monthly rent asked for the rental unit at the time of enumeration. Gross rent

is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid by or for the renter. (*U.S. Census STF 3 Technical Documentation Guide*)

Special Housing

Senior 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 an increased need for these types of housing options. This trend will be seen throughout Marathon County, the State of Wisconsin, and the Nation.

The southwestern portion of Marathon County is served primarily by housing options in the Villages of Stratford and Spencer, and the City of Marshfield. Secondary senior housing options are in the Cities of Abbottsford, Colby, and Wausau. The Village of Stratford is home to the Donald Sykes Villa, the Northside Elder Estate, the Northside Apartments, and the Weber Avenue Apartments. The Ponderosa Apartments (I-III) are located in the Village of Spencer, and currently have a waiting list for entry. The waiting list at the Ponderosa, as well as other regional locations, may indicate a need for more of this type of development to serve the existing population.

Assistance Programs

There are a variety of State and Federal housing programs geared at addressing a variety of 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.
- **Senior Housing** – There is an increased need for senior housing opportunities in the region.

Trends

- The 2000 Census shows the Town of Spencer has 475 occupied housing units. 431 (or 91%) of these units are owner-occupied.
- Between 1990-2000, total housing units have increased by 151 and the number of occupied housing units rose by 137. Vacancy rose from 5 to 6%.
- Recent housing growth from the 1990s makes up approximately 34% of the total housing stock. That is significantly higher than overall percentages for the County.
- Census data indicates that the Town of Spencer has a median home value slightly above that of the County.

Housing Issues

- **Rural Residential Development** – The Town will most likely see continued rural residential development.

8. Cultural Resources

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

Brief History of the Town of Spencer

The Town of Spencer was formed in 1876. Prior to this, it was part of the Town of Brighton. When it was originally formed, the Town was nearly twice its current size, taking in most of the current Town of McMillan, until 1888. The first election in the Town of Spencer was held in 1877 at the House of William Waters.

Spencer began as one of several towns that grew as a result of the Wisconsin Central Railroad construction in the 1870s. The Town was developed by Civil War veterans who helped build the railroad and decided to stay. Spencer was located in the white pine belt, and James Robinson's first sawmill opened in the Village of Spencer on what is now Mill Street in 1874. Like other early logging communities, Spencer transitioned into a dairy economy.

One of the earliest settlers to this area was John Gardiner, who made homestead entry in 1871. John K. Hayward, the first Town Chairman, was also the Town's first postmaster. The first post office was located in his home

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

There are no properties in Spencer 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. There are no historic properties in Spencer that have been previously surveyed and included in the AHI.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has identified no archaeological sites or historic cemeteries in the Town of Spencer.

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. There are no known cemeteries in the Town of Spencer.

Major Cultural Resources 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 County to have current information about cultural resources in order to maximize planning and make the best use of historic properties.
- **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 section describes the schools, libraries, and other community facilities for the Town of Spencer.

Maps for the Community Facilities element include Figures: 9-1, School Facilities; 9-2 Police; 9-3 Fire; 9-4, Hospitals and Clinics. All figures are located at the end of this section.

Schools

Primary and Secondary Schools

The Town of Spencer is served by the Spencer School District. The Spencer School District has a combined elementary, junior, and senior high school at 300 School Street in the Village of Spencer. The student population in the Spencer district is in gradual decline, and current facilities meet future needs.

Table 9-1: Spencer School District Enrollment

Year	Enrollment PreK-12
1996-1997	895
1997-1998	895
1998-1999	876
1999-2000	898
2000-2001	900
2001-2002	865

Source: State of Wisconsin, Department of Public Instruction

Table 9-2: Private Schools

Name	Location	Level
St. John's Catholic	Marshfield	
Marshfield Christian	Marshfield	
Immanuel Lutheran	Marshfield	
Sacred Heart Catholic	Marshfield	
Our Lady of Peace	Marshfield	
Columbus High School	Marshfield	High
Holy Family Middle	Marshfield	Middle
St. John's Catholic	Marshfield	

All Catholic Schools listed fall under the Marshfield Area Catholic School District and offer PreK-12 programming.

Post-Secondary Educational Facilities

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

University of Wisconsin – Marshfield/Wood County - The University of Wisconsin-Marshfield/Wood County campus is one of the 13 campuses statewide that comprise the UW Colleges - the freshman-sophomore campuses of the University of Wisconsin System.

Northcentral Technical College (NTC) - NTC, located in Wausau, offers 40 one- and two-year programs and certificates

in business, technical, health and industrial fields. Approximately 2,300 full- and part-time students attend classes, although more than 16,000 people take at least one class annually. There are also many satellite campuses including one in the Village of Spencer.

Libraries

The Town of Spencer is served by the Marathon County Public Library system. The Spencer Branch Library is located on Park Street in the Village of Spencer. This new Spencer Branch Library has 2,072 square feet of space holding over 16,400 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. Many residents also utilize the Marshfield Public Library for a fee.

Police

Police protection and law enforcement are provided by the Marathon County Sheriff's Department.

Fire

The Town is part of a joint fire district including the Village of Spencer, the Town of Brighton, the Town of Sherman [Clark County], and the Town of Unity.

Emergency Response

The Town is part of a formal emergency response agreement with the Village of Spencer, the Town of Brighton, the Town of Sherman [Clark County], and the Town of Unity.

E-911 Dispatch Service

The Marathon County Sheriff's Department Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies in Marathon County. The Communications Division services 85 user agencies and also provides alert paging support for the Emergency Management Office, District Attorney, and Medical Examiners Office.

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

Hospitals

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. Most Town residents use this facility due to the close proximity.

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.

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 shown on Table 9-3.

Table 9-3: Area Child Care Providers

Counties	Agency	Contact Information
Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Taylor	Child Care Connection	http://www.childcareconnectionrr.org/ (800) 848-5229
Wood	Child Care Resource & Referral of Central WI	800-628-8534

10. Parks

Existing Parks, Trails and Open Space

Maps for the Parks element include Figure: 10-1, Recreation Facilities. All figures are located at the end of this section.

Local Parks, Trails and Open Space

The Town of Spencer owns 5 acres in section 11, surrounded by the McMillan Marsh Wildlife Area. This area is used as a shooting range. School Forest is also highly utilized.

County or State Parks, Forest and Trails

There are no Marathon County parks in the Town of Spencer, however and the *Marathon County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 1999-2004* (p. 8-3) identifies the area between Spencer and Marshfield as an area where a service deficiency exists. The closest Marathon County parks to the Town are Big Eau Pleine Park and Big Rapids Park. Cherokee Park is also within close proximity.

Big Eau Pleine is the County's largest park, at 1,450 acres located on a peninsula on the north shore of the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir. Half of this park is in the Town of Green Valley and the other half in Bergen. Active recreation areas are concentrated in two main sites on the shores of the reservoir. Park facilities include: campgrounds, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)-era shelters,

drinking fountains, boat launches, swimming beaches, play equipment. The extensive trail system allows for cross-country skiing, hiking, and nature walks. Fishing is a popular activity.

Big Rapids Park is a 33-acre park located on the Big Eau Pleine River in the Town of Eau Pleine. The river is impounded in the park to create a swimming area and fishing opportunities. Facilities include picnic tables, grills, restrooms, changing rooms, a shelter, play equipment, and hiking trails.

There are several State wildlife and recreation areas in the vicinity. These include:

The McMillan Marsh is a 4,172 acre State Wildlife Management Area, which straddles the Town line between McMillan and Spencer. A bicycle and hiking trail provides access to the McMillan Marsh on an abandoned railroad right of way. The area is used for hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and biking.

The George W. Mead Wildlife Area is a very large Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) conservation and recreation area in the southeast portion of the Town of Day, extending across Green Valley and into the Town of Bergen, creating a conservation area of approximately 20,000 acres. Much of the area is wetland surrounding a series of lakes and flowages connected by the Little Eau Pleine River. Portions of the Mead Wildlife Area are open for hiking, hunting, and fishing.

Nine-Mile Forest Unit, located in Rib Mountain and the Town of Mosinee, is known as a recreation area with many

miles of hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country ski trails. Skiing is promoted with a ski chalet and over 25 kilometers of one-way loops. The forest is open to hunting and snowmobiling. Nine Mile has 4755 acres of mixed uplands, marshes, and water impoundments. The Burma Road Forest Unit is located in the towns of Mosinee and Emmet. The 1,473-acre forest is a mix of aspen and northern hardwood, with recreational opportunities including an ATV trail, hunting, snowmobiling, and camping.

Rib Mountain State Park is located within the Town of Rib Mountain. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1924 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.

Cherokee Park is located in Colby. Facilities include an enclosed shelter: kitchen, 5 tables, electricity, water pump, and fireplace. Covered wing: grills attached & fireplace, 6 tables. Outside: vault toilets, open field, swimming area, playground equipment, gazebo, scattered grills & tables, horseshoe pits, dumpster, walking trails/paved path, small open shelter.

Park System Needs

- **Bike Plan** – The Town would like to see the implementation of the Marathon County Bike/Pedestrian trail plan for the Town of Spencer.
- **Trail** – The Town would like to investigate a possible bike/pedestrian trail to Marshfield.

- **Campground** - Many residents feel there should be a campground in the area, similar to Monster Hall in the Town of Brighton.

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. Also included is a more specific description of employment trends, major local employers or industries, and where most residents of the Town of Spencer 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 now 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 western Marathon County, the economic health and vitality of the Town of Spencer 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 has increased, and the percentage of farm equity associated with real estate values have increased significantly. The average cost for agricultural land being divert 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% (1565 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%.
- 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.
- The immigrant work force associated with industrial farms, impacts public services such as schools, social services and law enforcement.
- 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. Though many farmers are working to correct this.
- 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; 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: Top 10 Industry Groups Based on Number of Employees, Marathon County (March 2001)

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

*data suppressed to maintain confidentiality

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

Local Economic Environment

The population of Marathon County grew from 115,400 in 1990 to 125,834 in 2000, an increase of 10.3% compared to an 8.5% increase in the State and 8.7% in the U.S. The most recent estimates show an annual growth rate of 0.7% in all

three jurisdictions. (Wisconsin Department of Administration [WDOA], Demographic Services, 2002) Population growth has been concentrated in the urbanized area surrounding Wausau.

In 2000, there were 395 people employed in the Town of Spencer. A breakdown of employment by industry is shown below. Data show that most people were employed in the self employed/farm sector, with 268 employees. “Other” is the second largest employment sector with 48 workers. Residents note there are only 12 remaining dairy farms in the Town.

Table 11-2: Population and Employment by Sector, 2000

POPULATION	1,341
EMPLOYMENT:	
Commercial	40
Manufacturing	32
Service	7
Other	48
Self-Employed/Farm	268
TOTAL	395

Source: North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission 6/10/03

Employment Projections

Information on employment in Marathon County is gathered separately for non-farm and farm employment. The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (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 North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) computed employment projections, based on the assumption that the historical growth rates described above would continue through 2030. These 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
Spencer	395	396	396	396	397	397	398
County	72,508	75,625	78,742	81,859	84,976	88,093	91,210

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

The employment forecast in Table 11-3 indicates increased employment for the Town of Spencer. By the year 2030, it is estimated that the Town will provide employment to 398 workers. This represents an employment increase of approximately 1% and assumes a moderate growth rate based on the rate of change in employment between 1990-2000 for non-farm employment. The estimates suggest an overall decrease in employment by 2030 of -1% if a lower than expected growth rate occurs and an increase of +18% if a higher growth rate occurs.

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

	Percent Change in Employment by Growth Rate		
	Low Growth	Moderate Growth	High Growth
Spencer	-1 (391 workers)	+1 (399 workers)	+18 (466 workers)
Marathon County	+21	+26	+34

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

Major Local Employers

Proximity to the City of Marshfield increased new housing developments for residents who work in the City in the commercial and manufacturing sectors.

Issues

- **STH 13 Commercial Corridor** – The Town expects continued commercial corridor development along STH 13 between the Village of Spencer and the City of Marshfield.
- **Industrial Location** - The Town would like larger, more intensive uses to be located in an industrial park near a larger community such as Marshfield.
- **Home Occupations** - There is a desire to have some protection, provisions for home occupations located in the Town.

12. Intergovernmental Cooperation

This analysis presents an inventory of existing mechanisms that the Town of Spencer 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 Spencer 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.

Local and Regional Level Cooperation

Shared Services

Fire and Emergency Response- The Town is part of a joint fire district including the Village of Spencer, the Town of Brighton, the Town of Sherman [Clark County], and the Town of Unity.

Cooperative Practices

Surrounding Towns – The Town has good relations with the surrounding Towns, the City of Marshfield, and the Village of Spencer

School District- The Town of Spencer has good relations with the surrounding school districts.

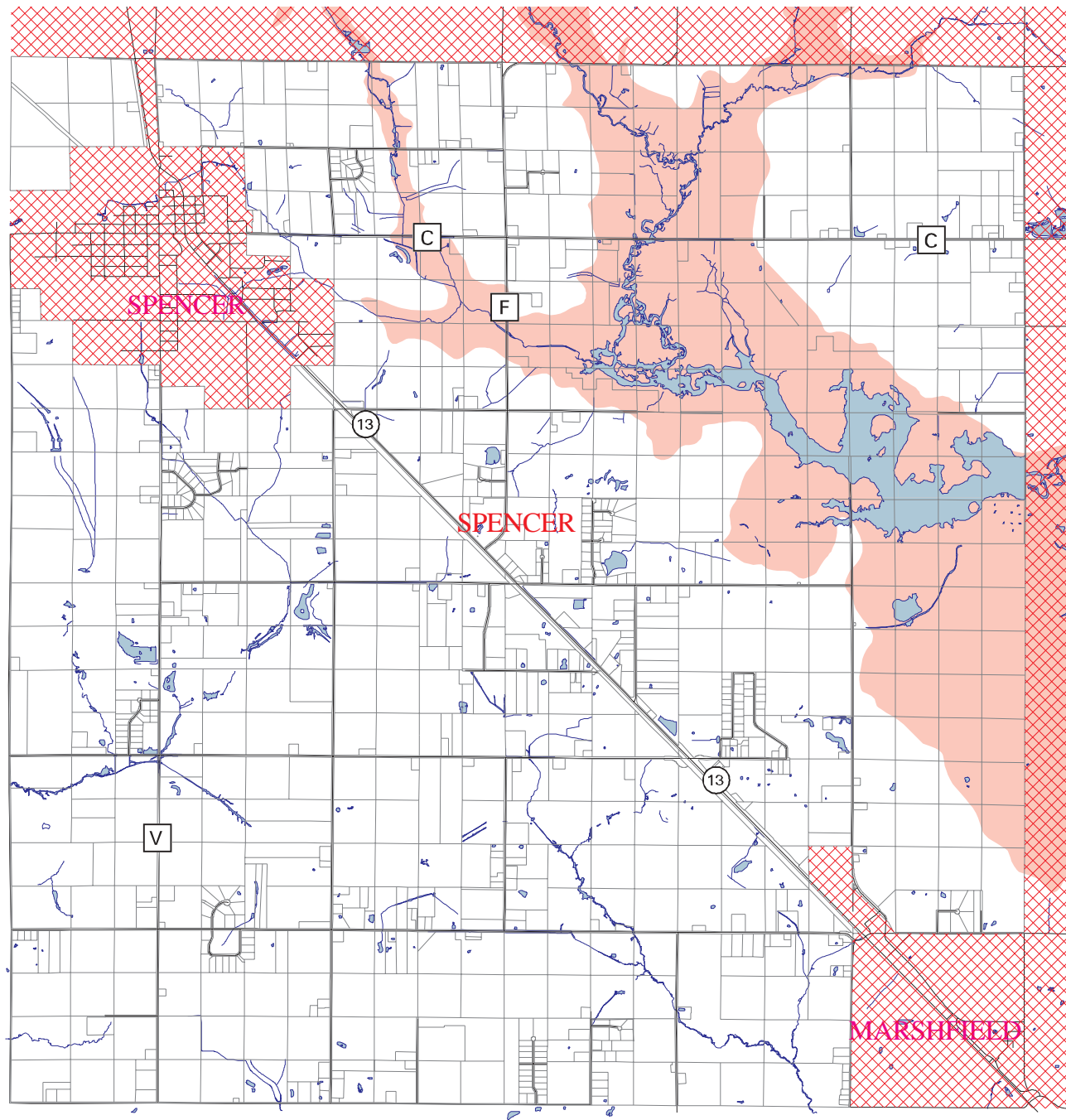
Marathon County- The County provides several services to the Town including: law enforcement through the Sheriff’s Department, 911 dispatch service, access permits, maintenance and improvement of County Highways, planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation,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

Regional Agencies – The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) provides planning and mapping assistance. The Town has not utilized these services.

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. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) owns property in the Town of Spencer.

Issues

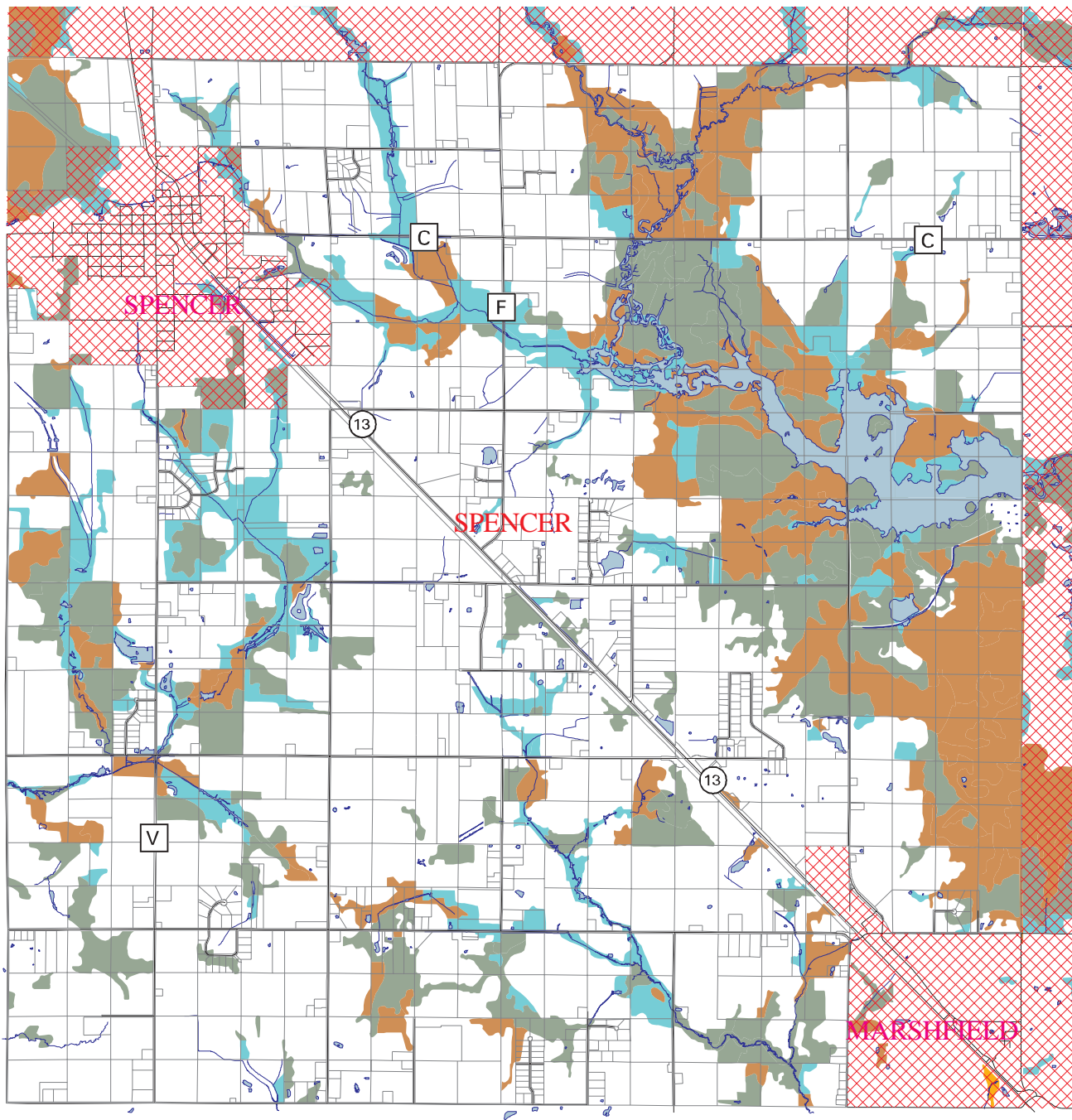
- **Nutrition Site** - The County nutrition site in the Village of Spencer was closed. This has made it more difficult for residents to obtain the assistance they need.
- **Response Time** - Response time for law enforcement is slow, due to the Town's remote location in the County.



■ FEMA Floodplain

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

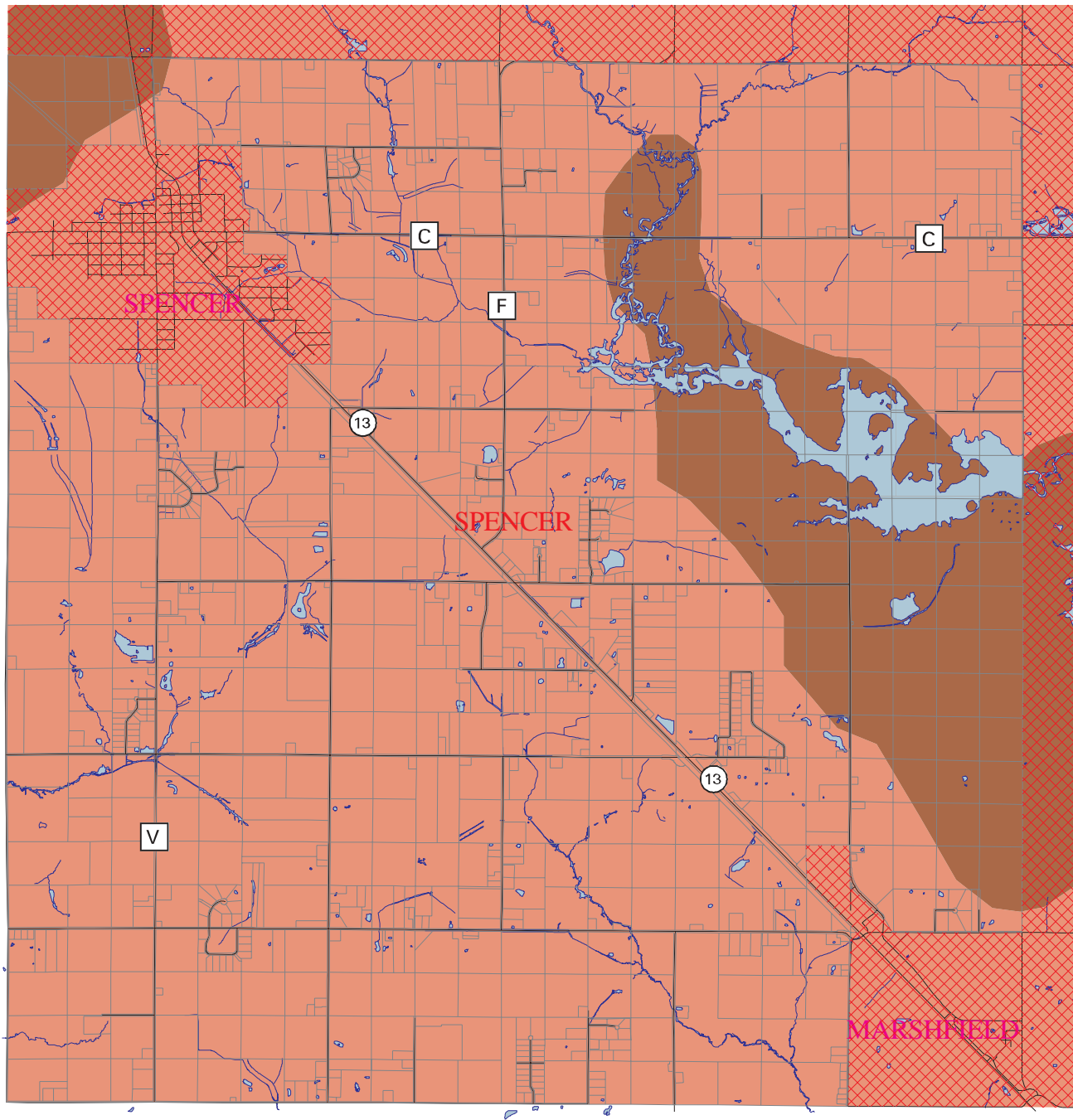
Figure 3-1
 100 Year Floodplain
 T-SPENCER



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

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

Figure 3-2
Wetland Types
T-SPENCER



Magnor-Cable

Marathon-Mylrea-Moberg

Mahtomedi-Fordum-Sturgeon

Cathro-Seelyville

Loyal-Withee-Marshfield

Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozellville

Chetek-Rosholt-Oesterle

Kennan-Hatley

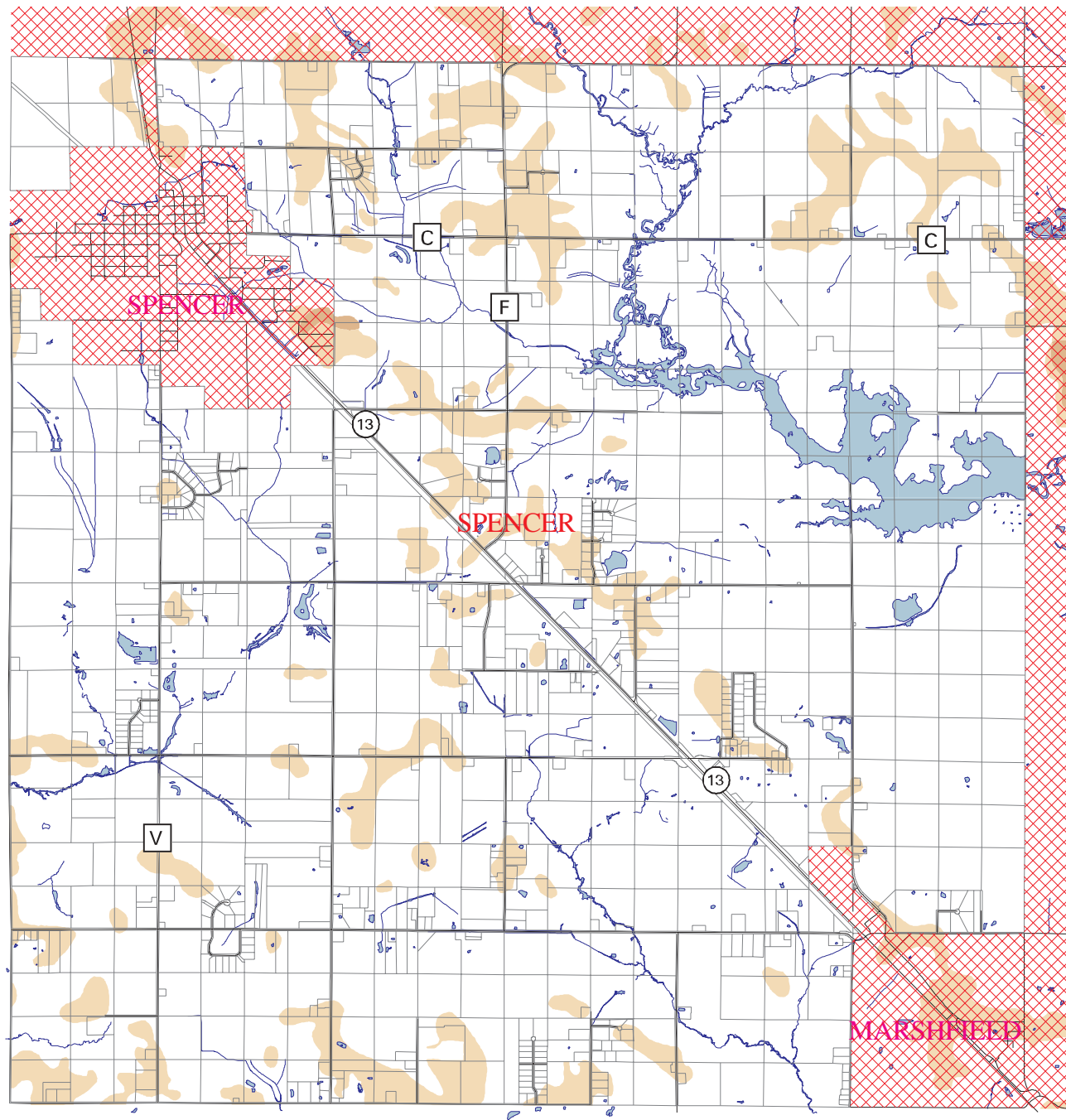
Mosinee-Meadland-Dancy

Mahtomedi-Graycalm-Meehan

Indicates other Municipality

Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-3
Soil Associations
T-SPENCER



■ 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.

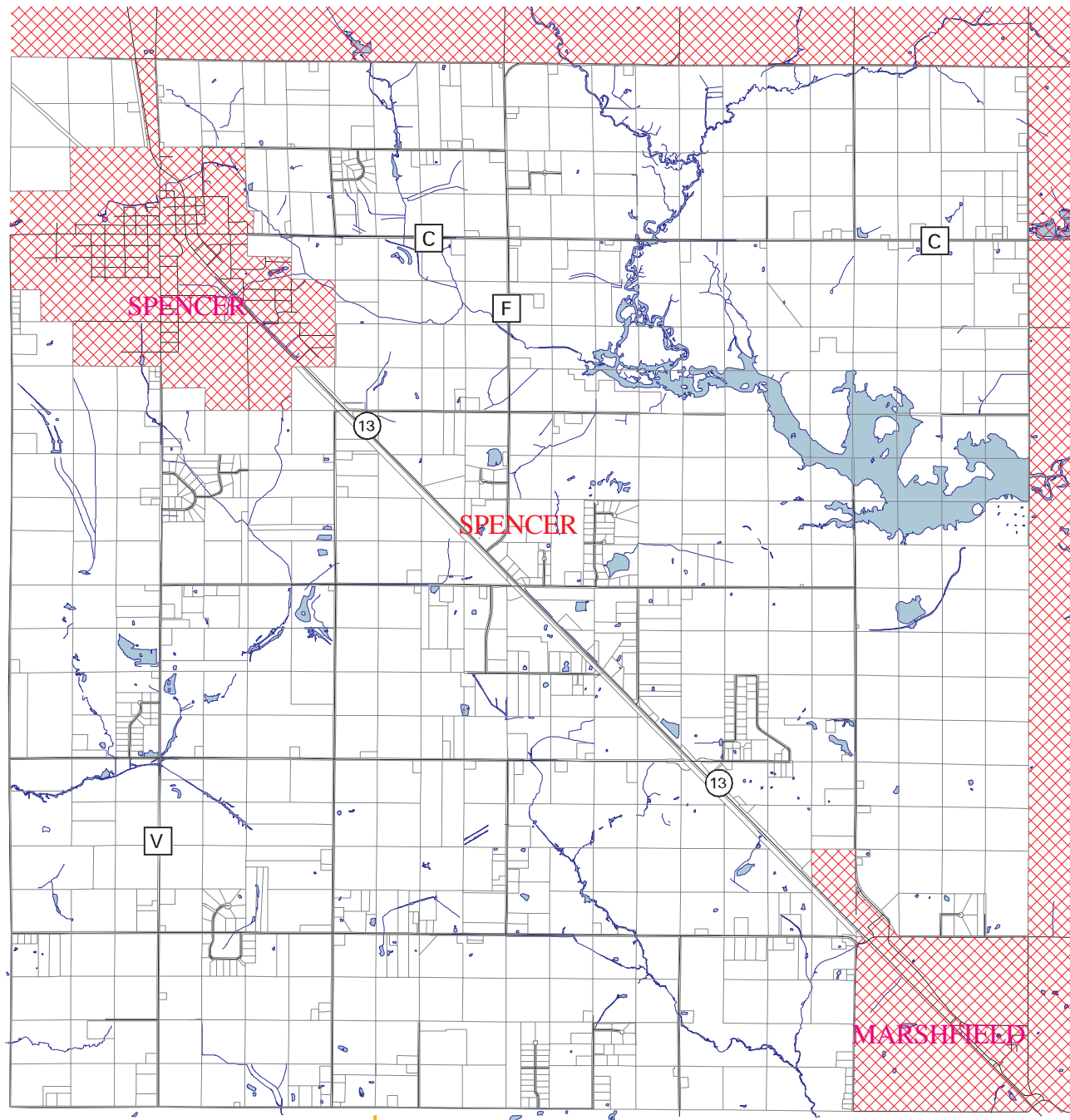
■ Group 2: The soils in this group are very good agricultural soils. They also are designated as prime farmland Class 2. These soils differ by having restricted drainage. In wet years they are more difficult to work and crops needing well drained condition (alfalfa, ginseng) do very poorly.



Indicates other Municipality

Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

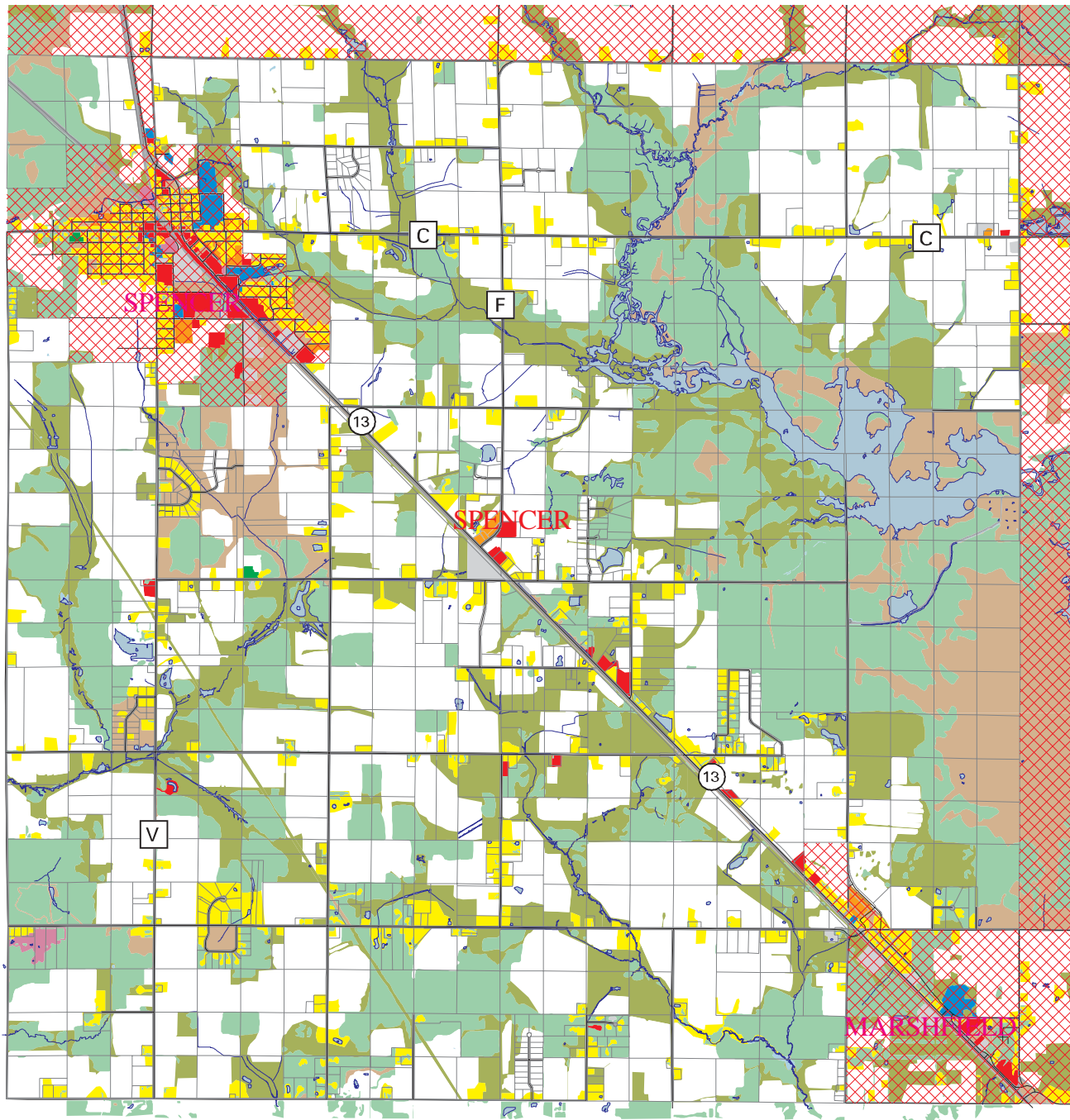
Figure 3-4
Prime Farm Land
T-SPENCER



- D - generally 12-20% slopes
- E - generally greater than 15% slopes.


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

Figure 3-5
Slopes
T-SPENCER

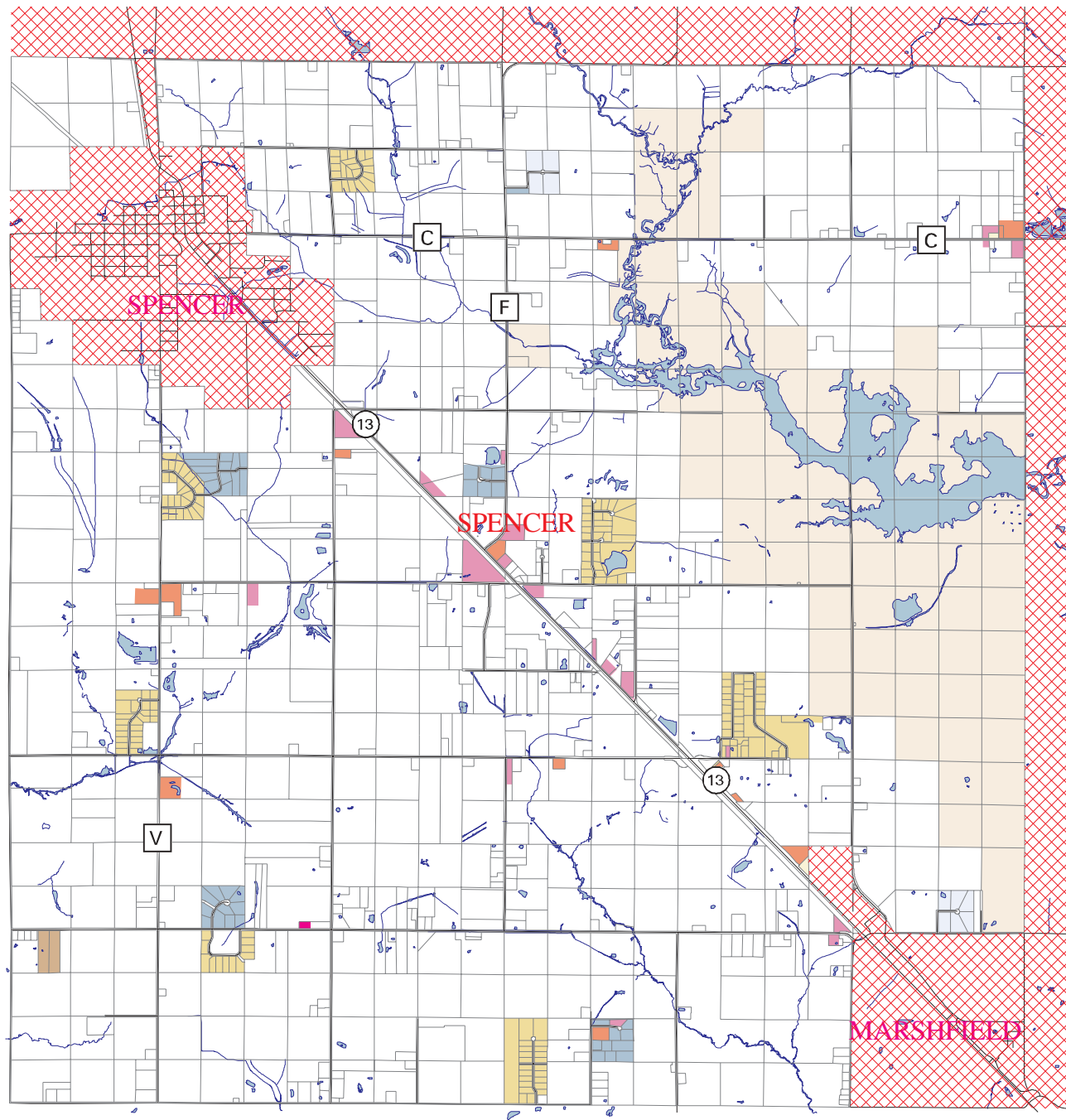


- | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Single Family Residential | Industrial | Specialty Crops | Recreation | Transportation |
| Multi-Family Residential | Quarries/Gravel Pits | Other Agriculture | Woodlands | Vacant/Barren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

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



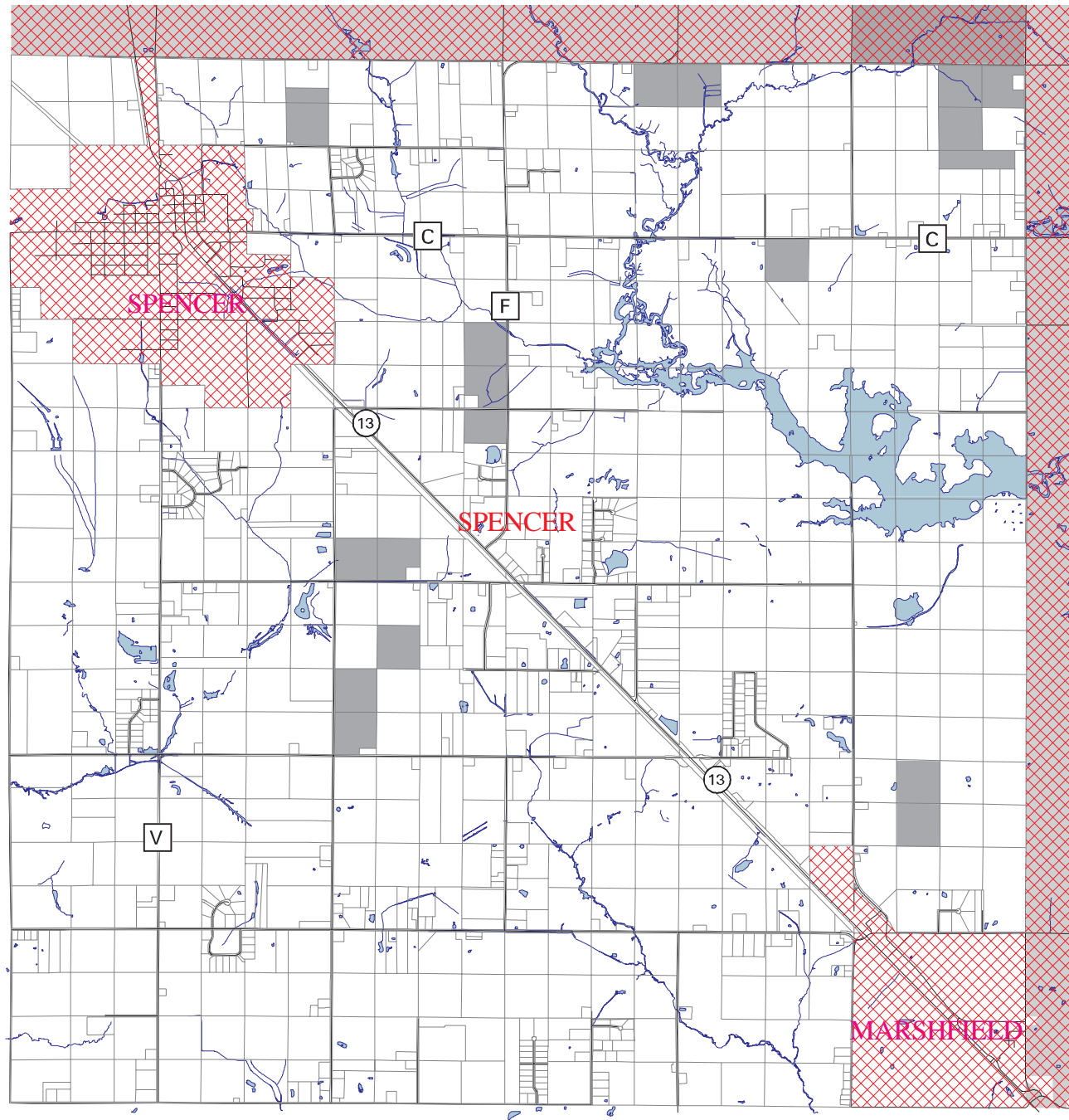
Figure 4-1
 2000 Landuse/Landcover
 T-SPENCER



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


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

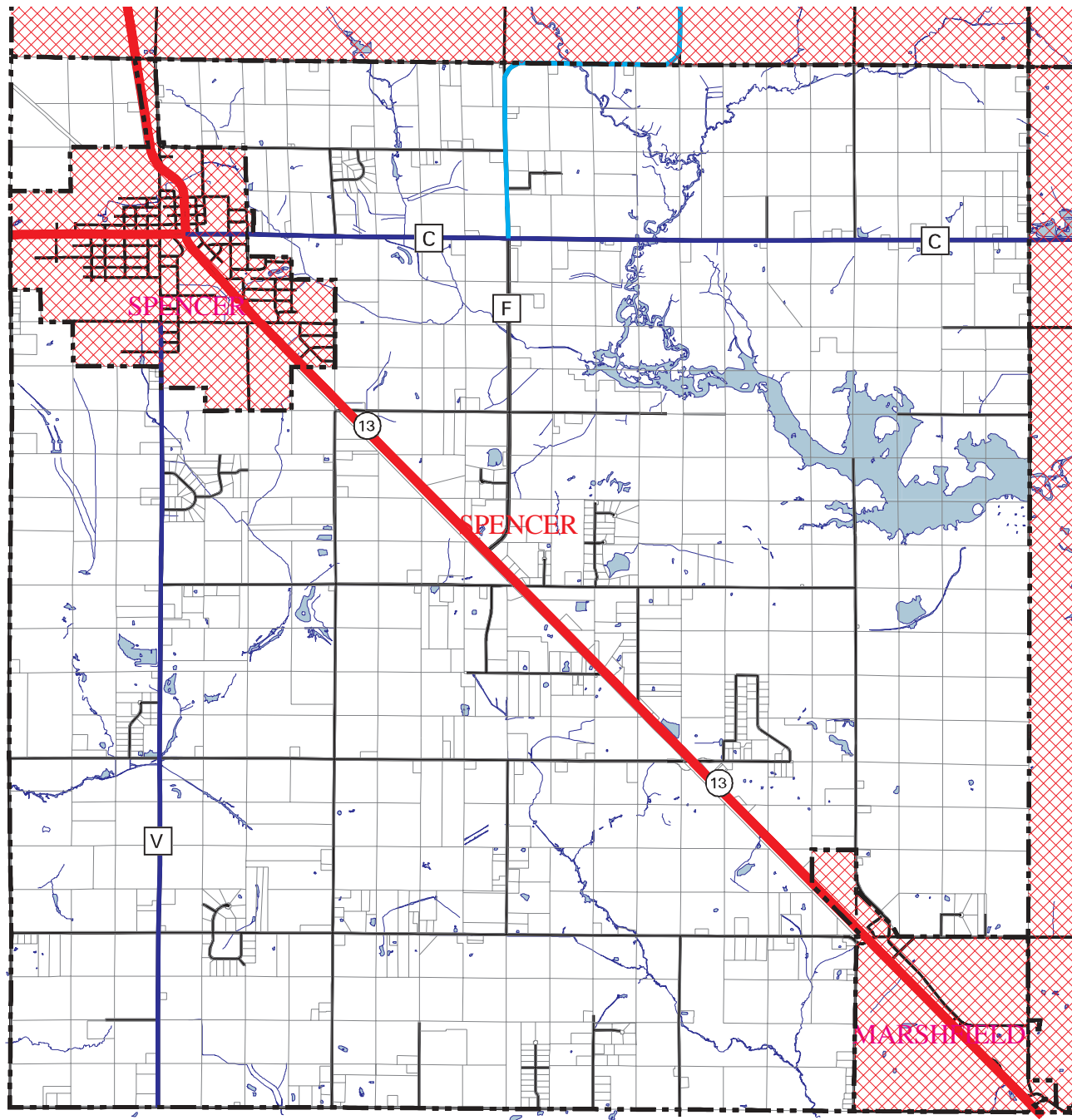
Figure 4-2
County Zoning
T-SPENCER



- Exclusive ag zoning
- Farmland pres contracts

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

Figure 4-3
Exclusive Ag & Farmland Preservation
T-SPENCER

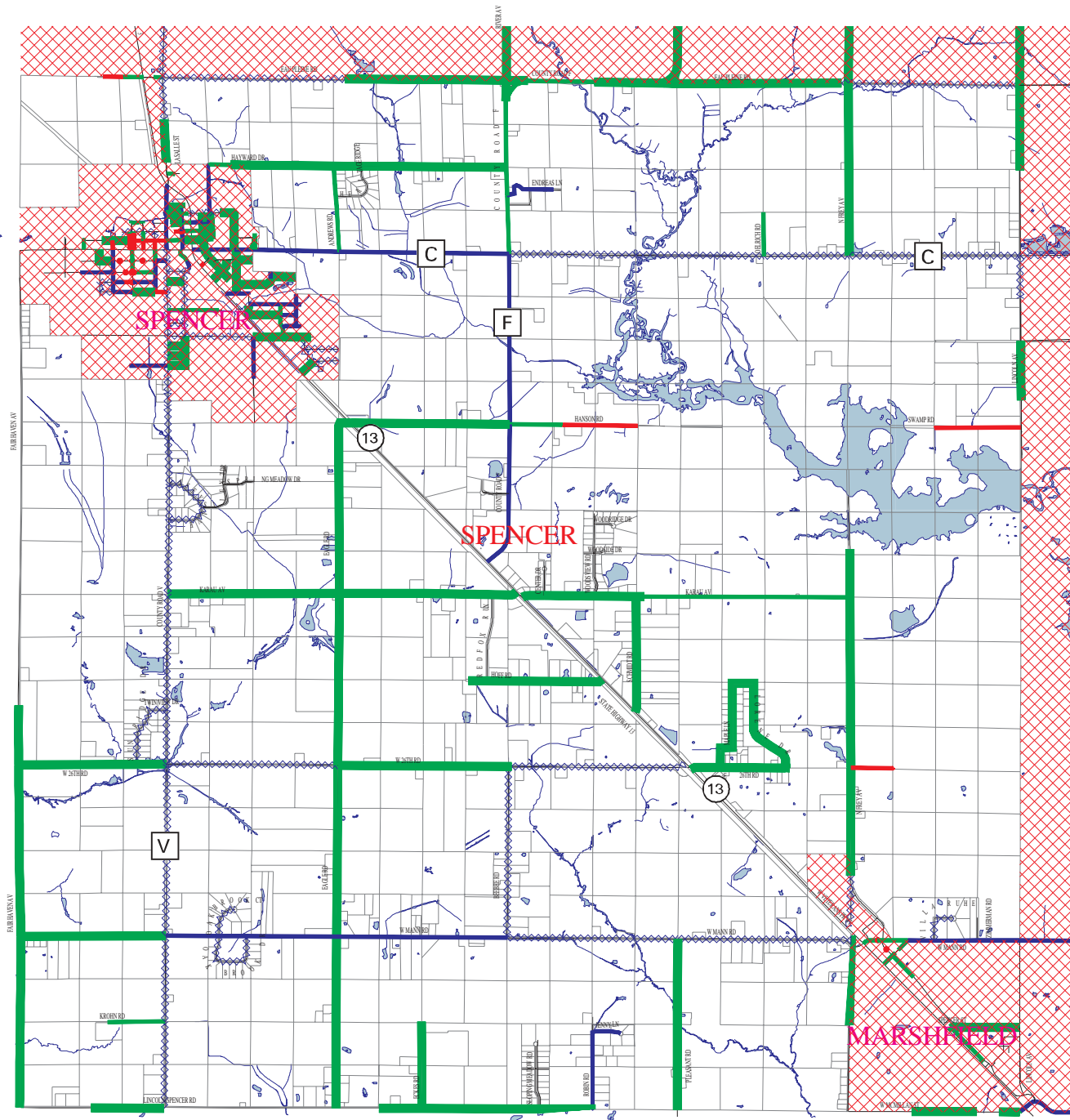


- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

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

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

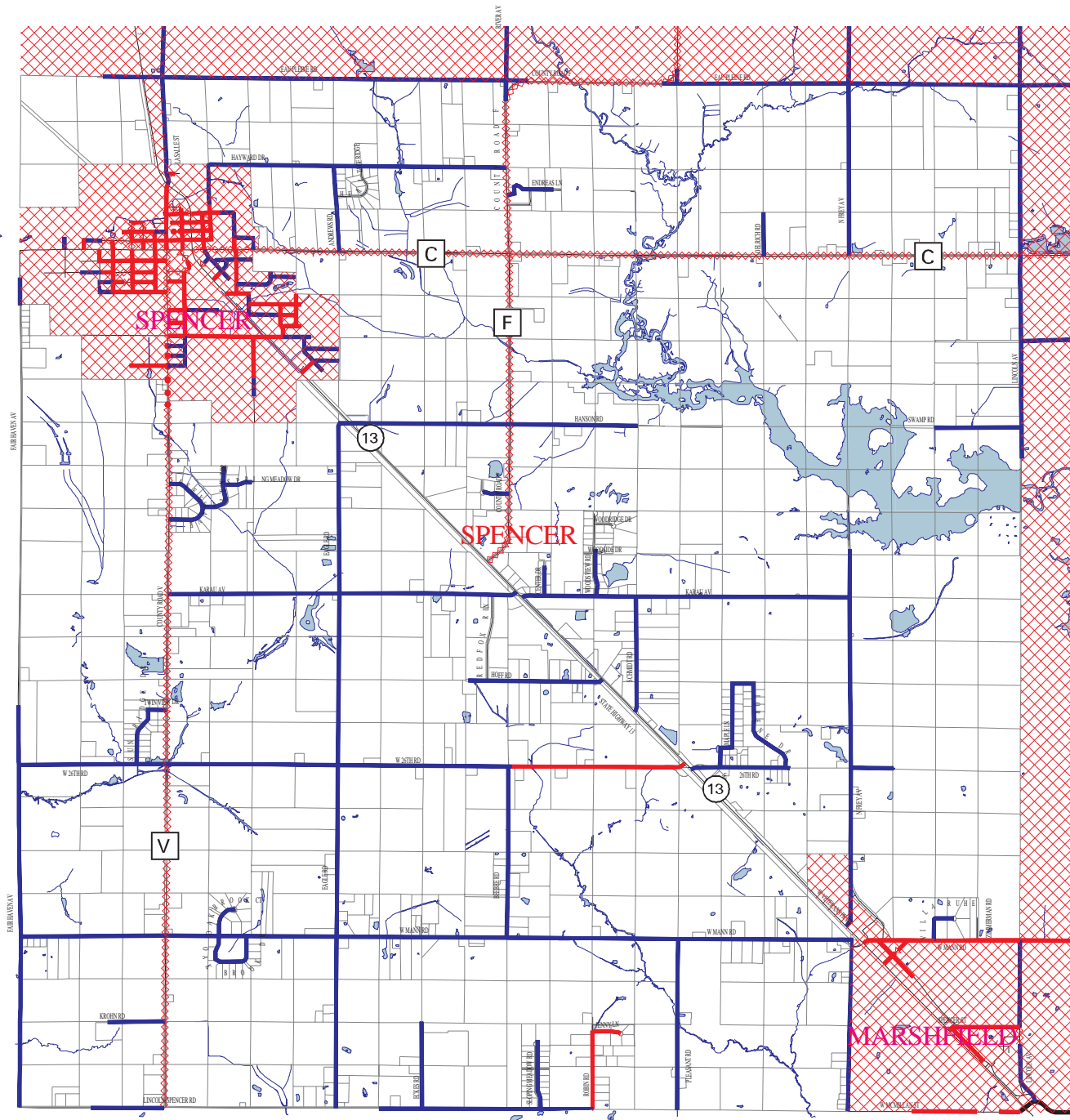
Figure 5-1
Functional Classification of Roads
T-SPENCER



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


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

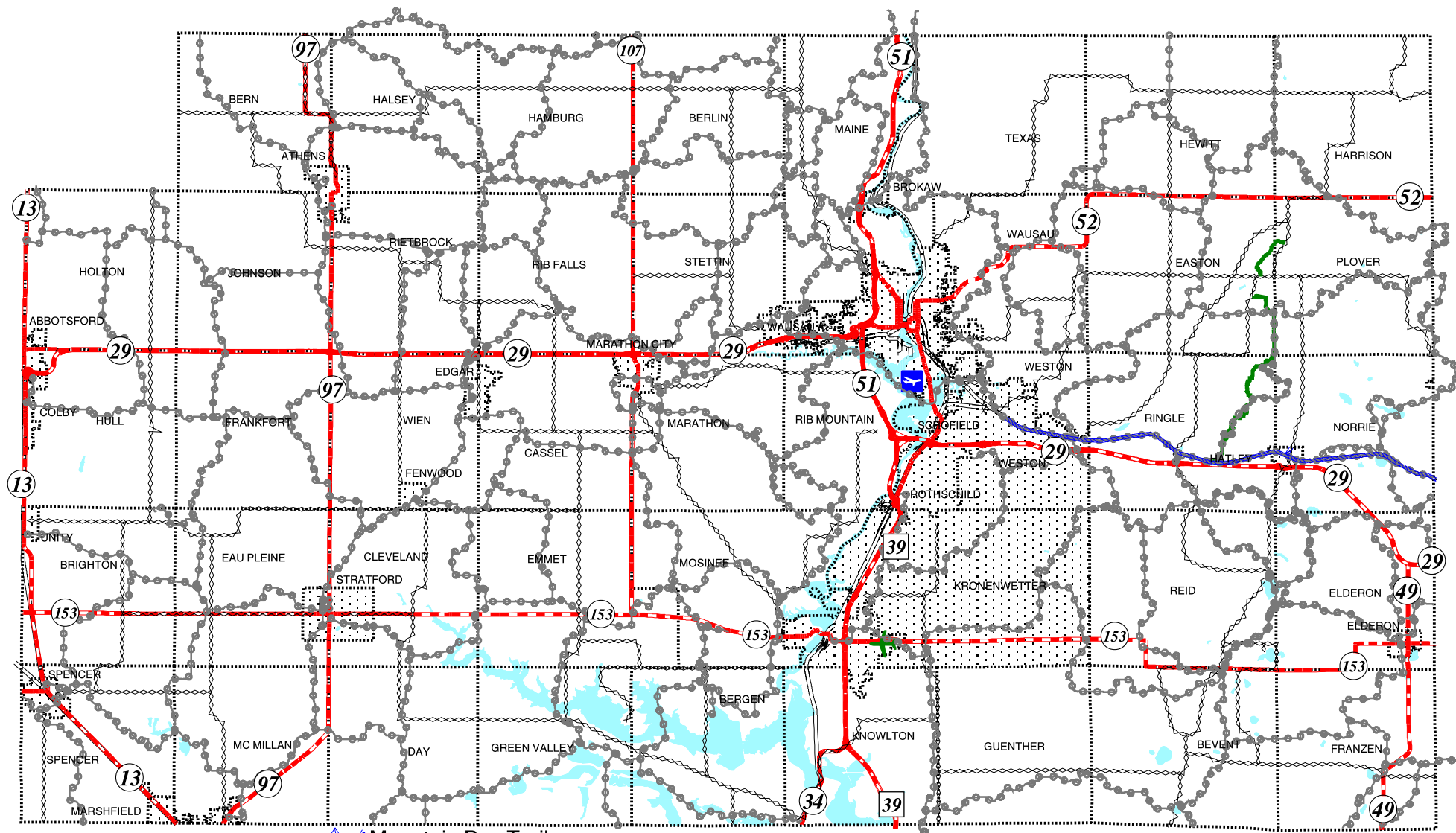
Figure 5-2
Road Surface Rating
T-SPENCER



- No Data
 - Concrete Pavement
 - <1" Wearing Surface
 - Asphalt Pavement
 - Asphalt Pavement on Concrete
 - Asphalt Pavement with Base >7"
 - Asphalt Pavement With Base <7"
 - Unimproved Road
 - Brick or Block Pavement
 - Indicates other Municipality
- Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 5-3
Road Surface Types
T-SPENCER

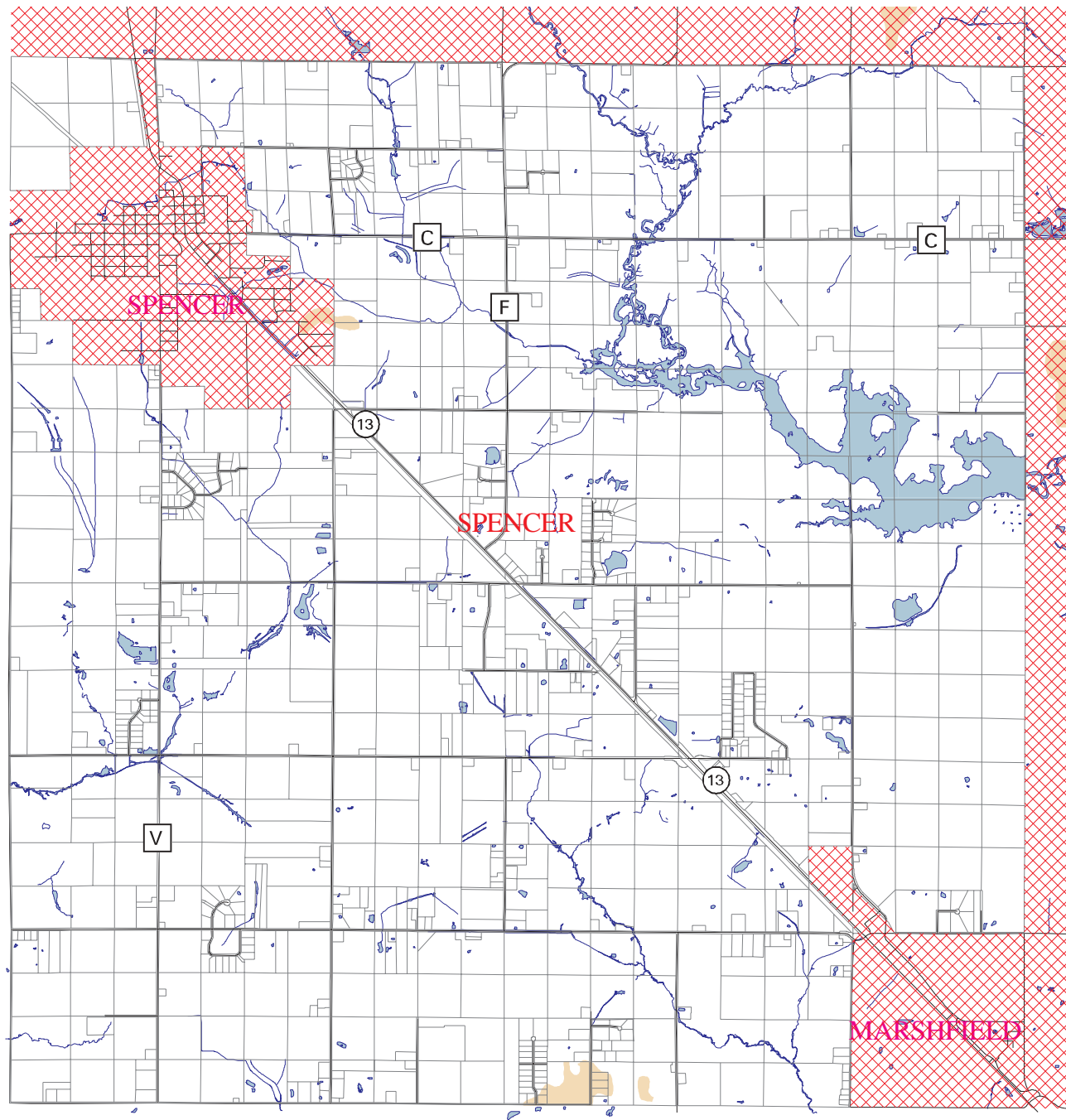
MARATHON COUNTY REGIONAL TRAILS & TRANSPORTATION



- Mountain Bay Trail
- 2001 Snowmobile Trails
- Ice Age Trail
- Suggested Bike Routes
- Wausau City Airport
- Central Wisconsin Airport (Mosinee)

- State & Us Highways
- Railroads (Active)
- Municipal Boundary
- Water Features
- Incorporated Municipality

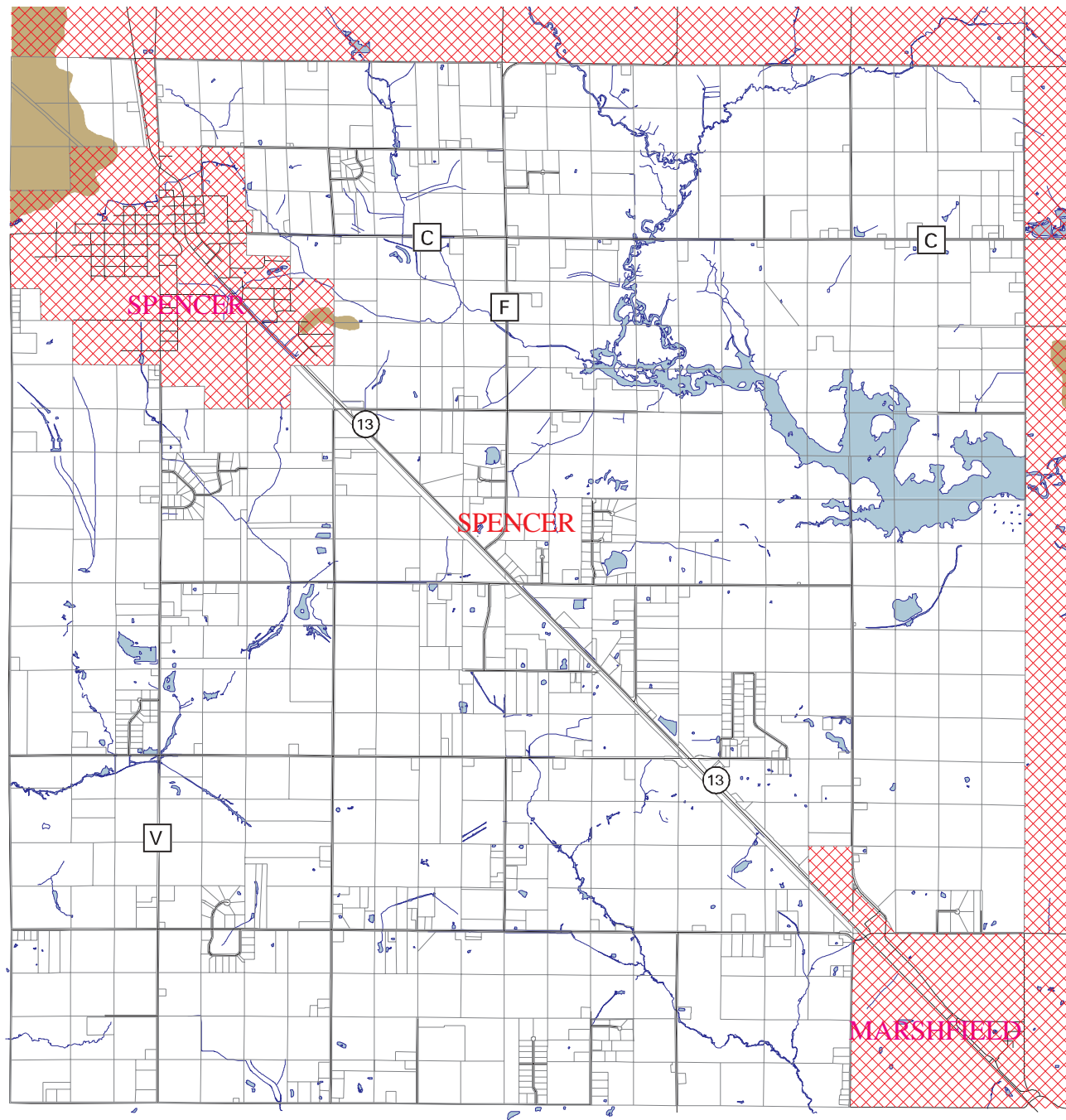
Figure 5-4



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


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

Figure 6-1
Depth To Bedrock
T-SPENCER

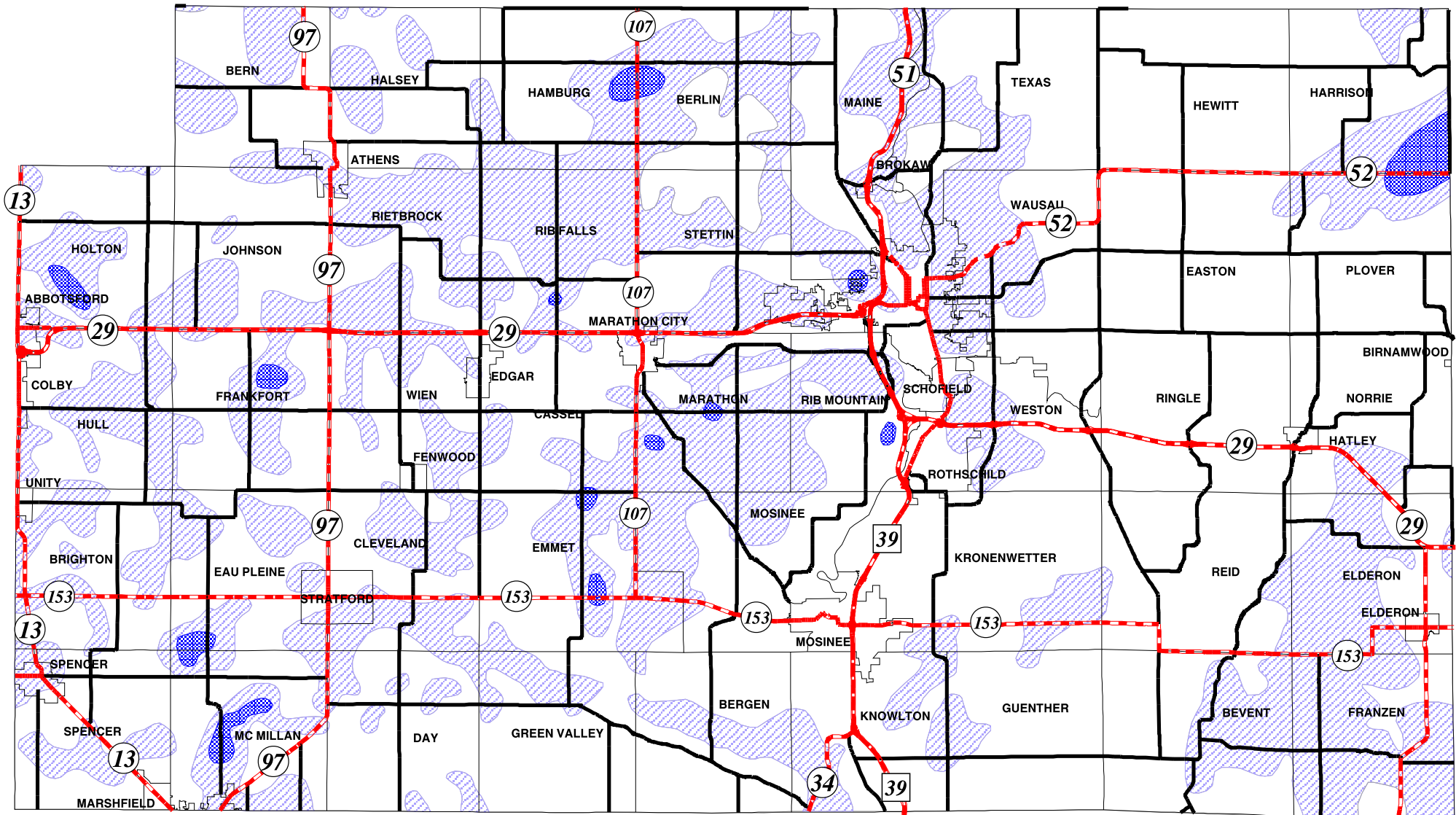



■ Soils suitable for septic systems w/soil absorption component

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

Figure 6-2
Suitable Soils-Septic Tank Absorption
T-SPENCER

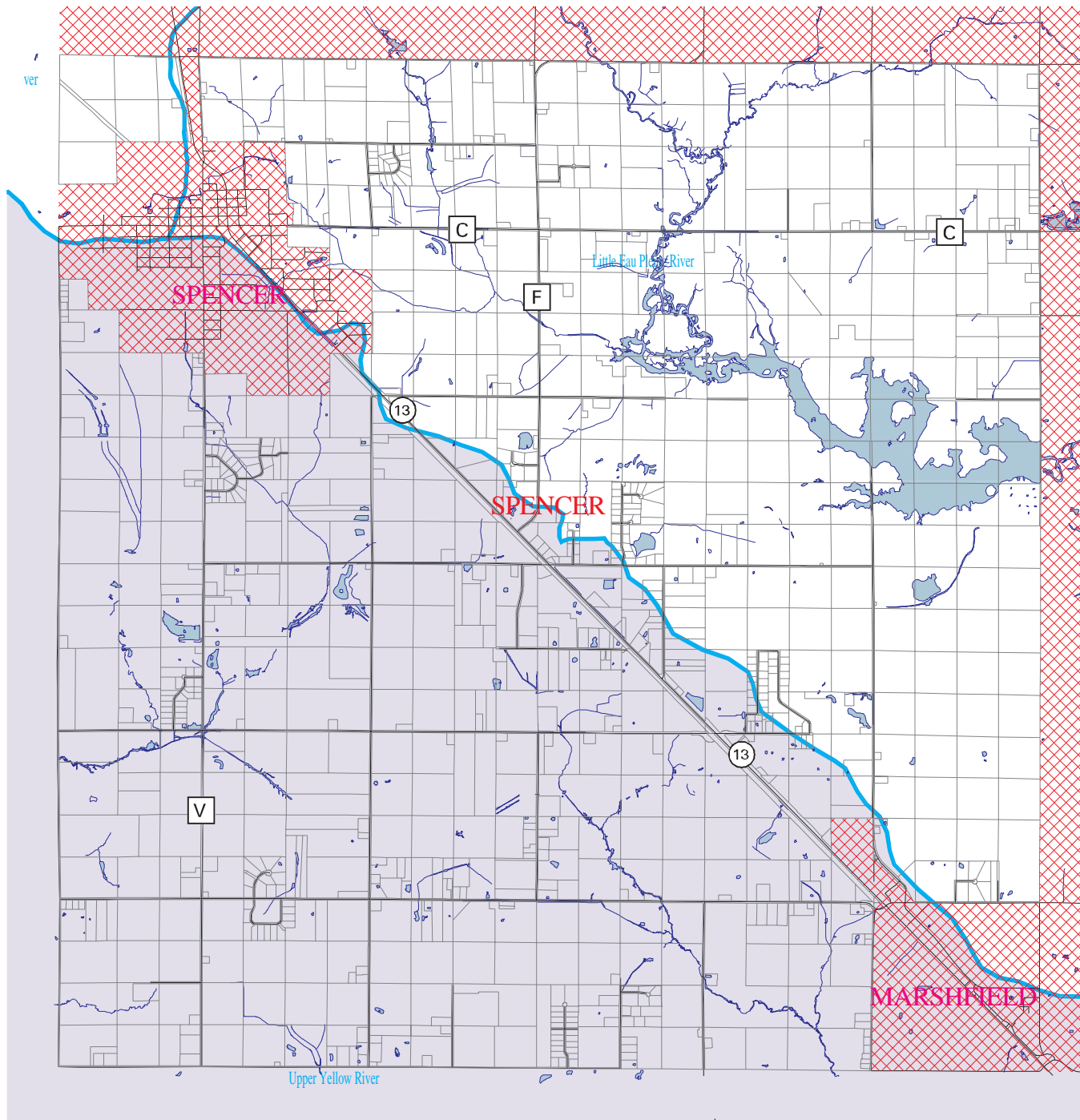
MARATHON COUNTY DEPTH TO GROUND WATER



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



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



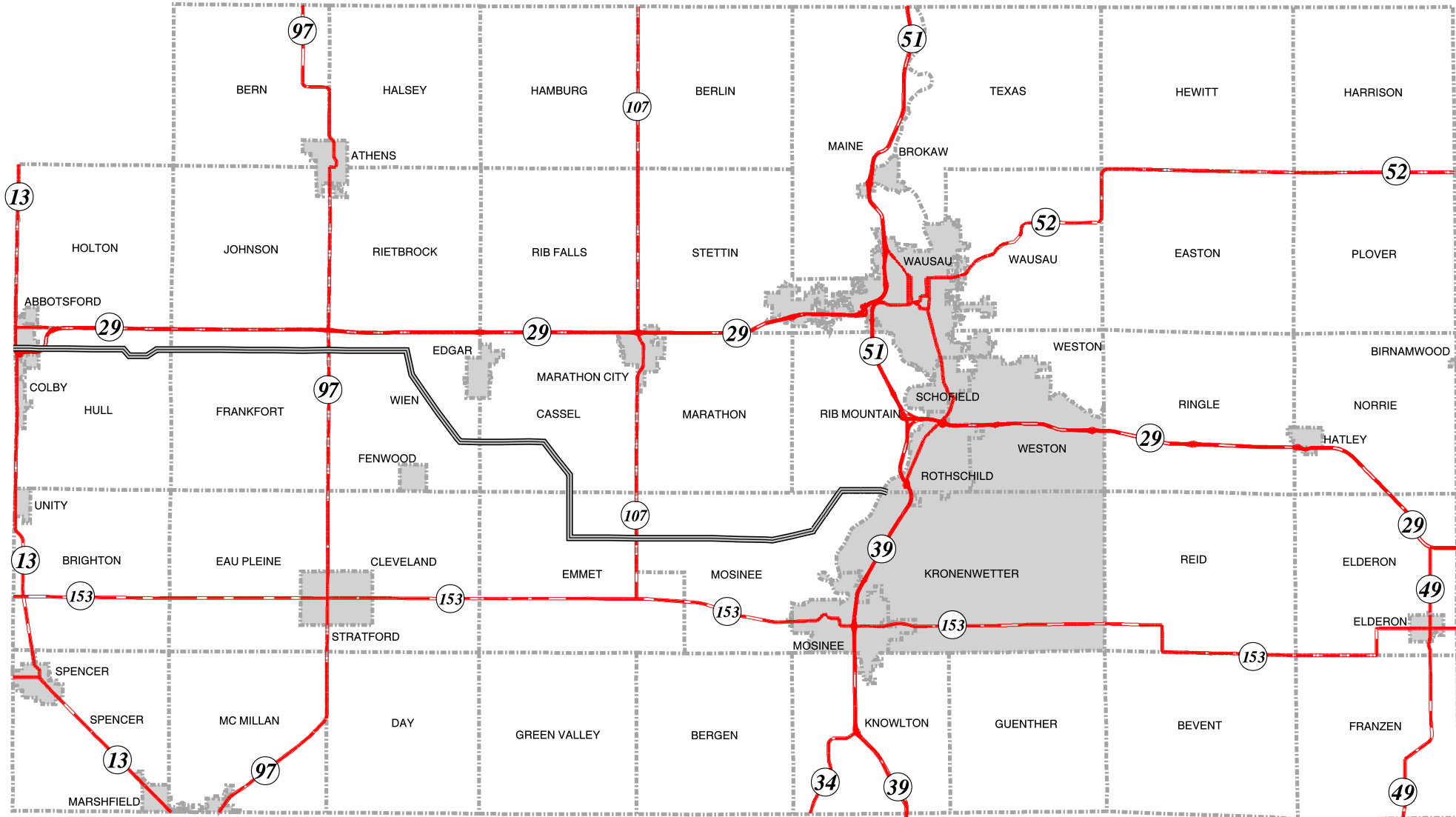
Priority Watersheds
as identified in the Marathon County
Land & Water Resource Management Plan

Watershed boundaries

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

Figure 6-4
Major Watersheds
T-SPENCER

MARATHON COUNTY PROPOSED WESTON - ARROWHEAD LINE




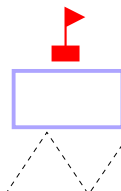
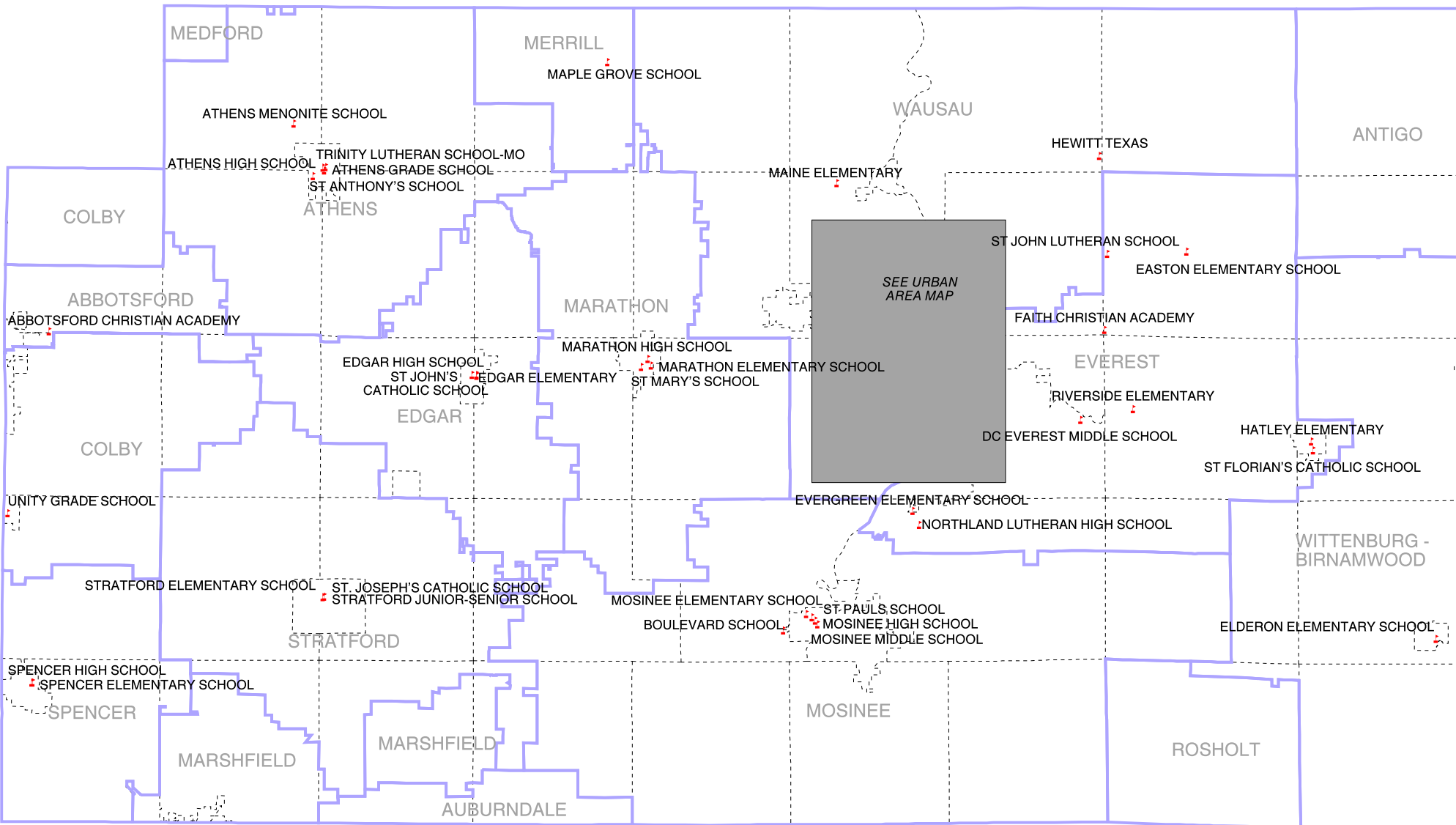

 Proposed Power Line
 State & Us Highways
 Municipal Boundary
 Incorporated Municipality

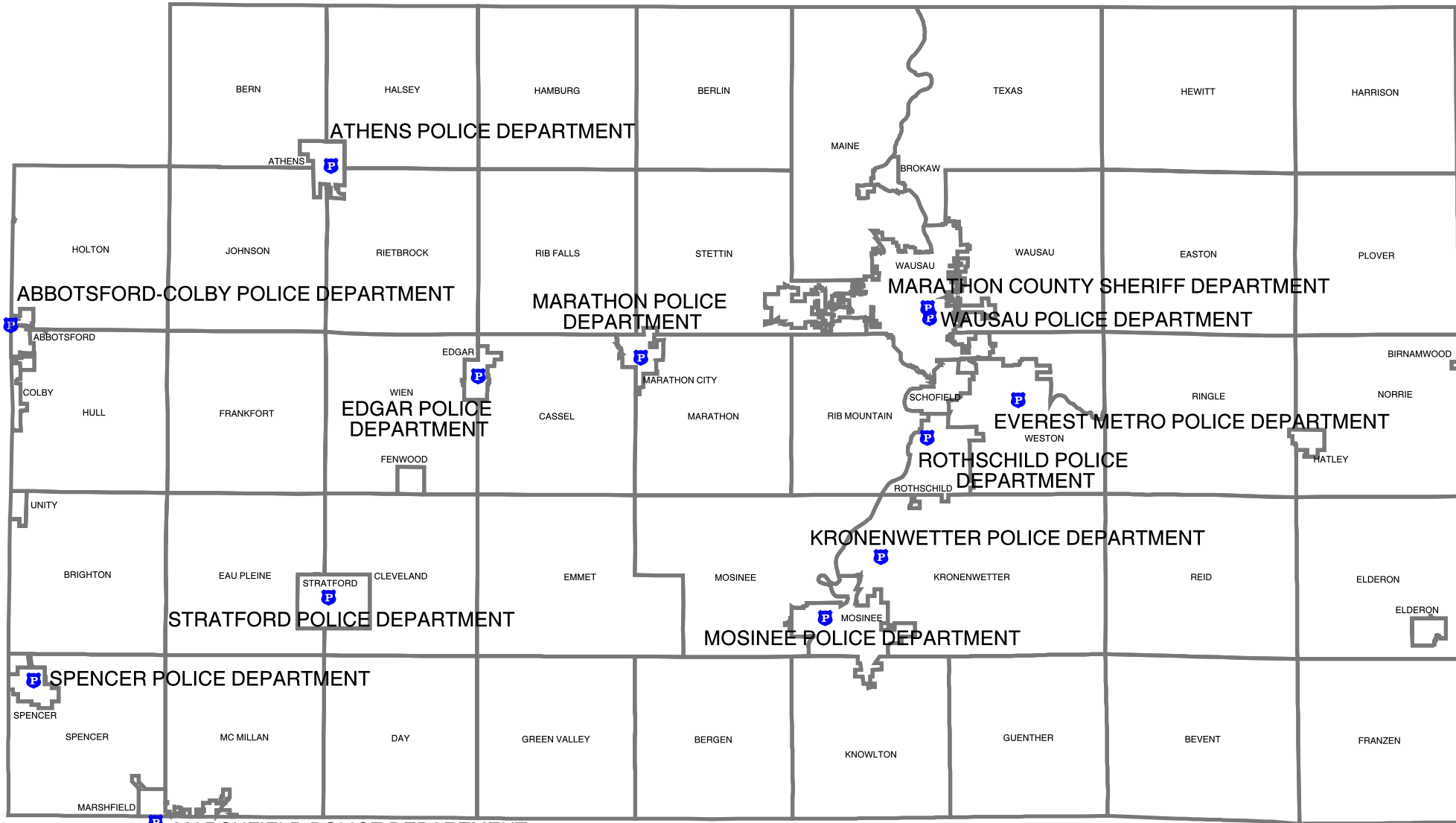
Figure 6-5

MARATHON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS RURAL AREA MAP



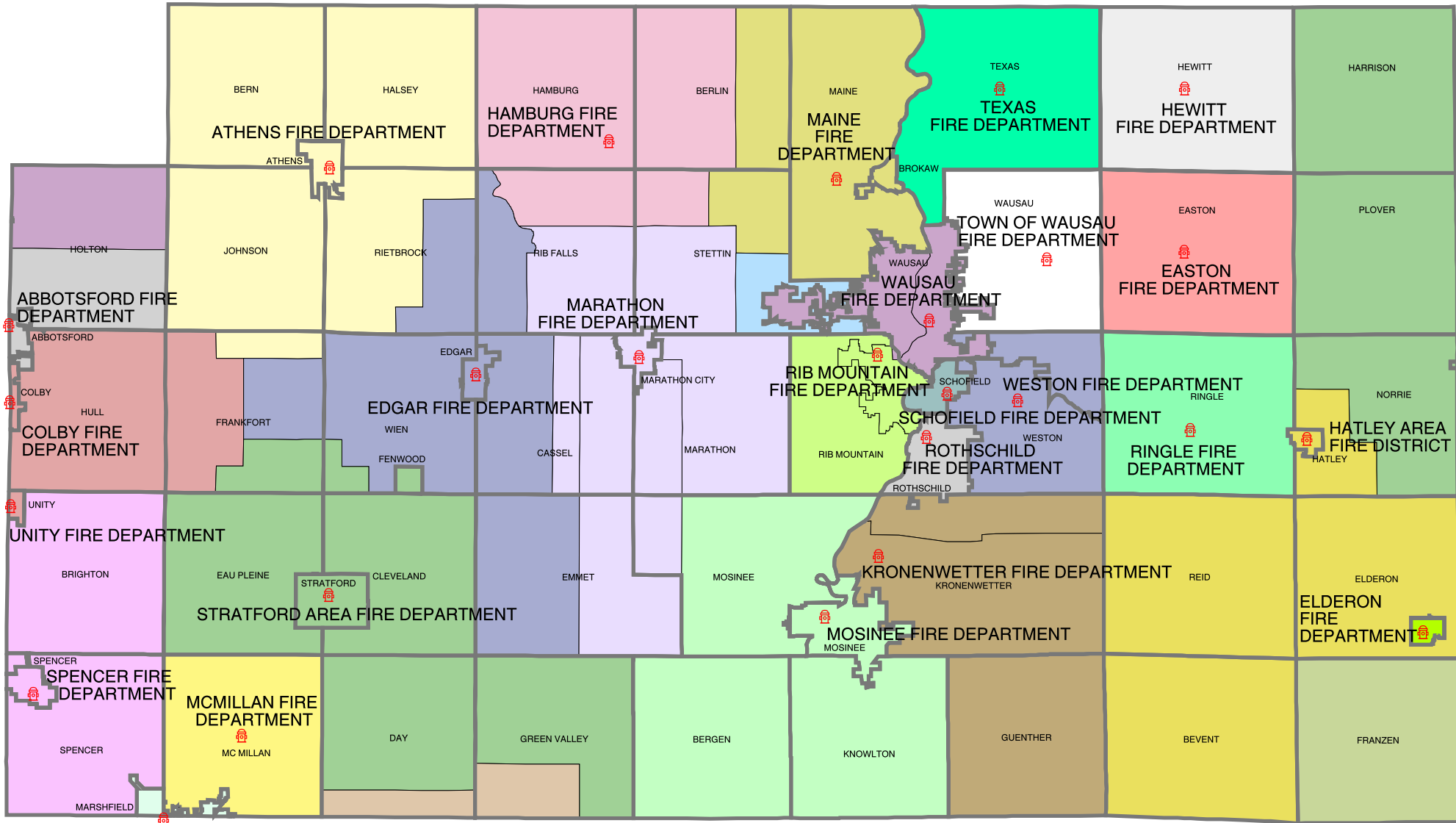
School Locations
School District Boundary
Municipal Boundary



MARATHON COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT

















 Police Department
 Municipal Boundary

FIRE DEPARTMENTS & SERVICE AREAS



 Fire Department
 Municipal Boundary

Fire Service Districts

	ABBOTSFORD		MARATHON
	ATHENS		MARSHFIELD
	AUBURNDALE		MOSINEE
	BIRNAMWOOD		MOSINEE (town)
	COLBY		MOSINEE (village)
	DORCHESTER		RIB MOUNTAIN
	EASTON		RINGLE
	ELDERON		ROTHSCHILD
	FAMILY		SCHOFIELD
	HAMBURG		SPENCER
	HEWITT		STRATFORD
	KRONENWETTER		WAUSAU
	MAINE		WAUSAU (town)
	MAINE/RIB MTN		WESTON
			WITTENBERG

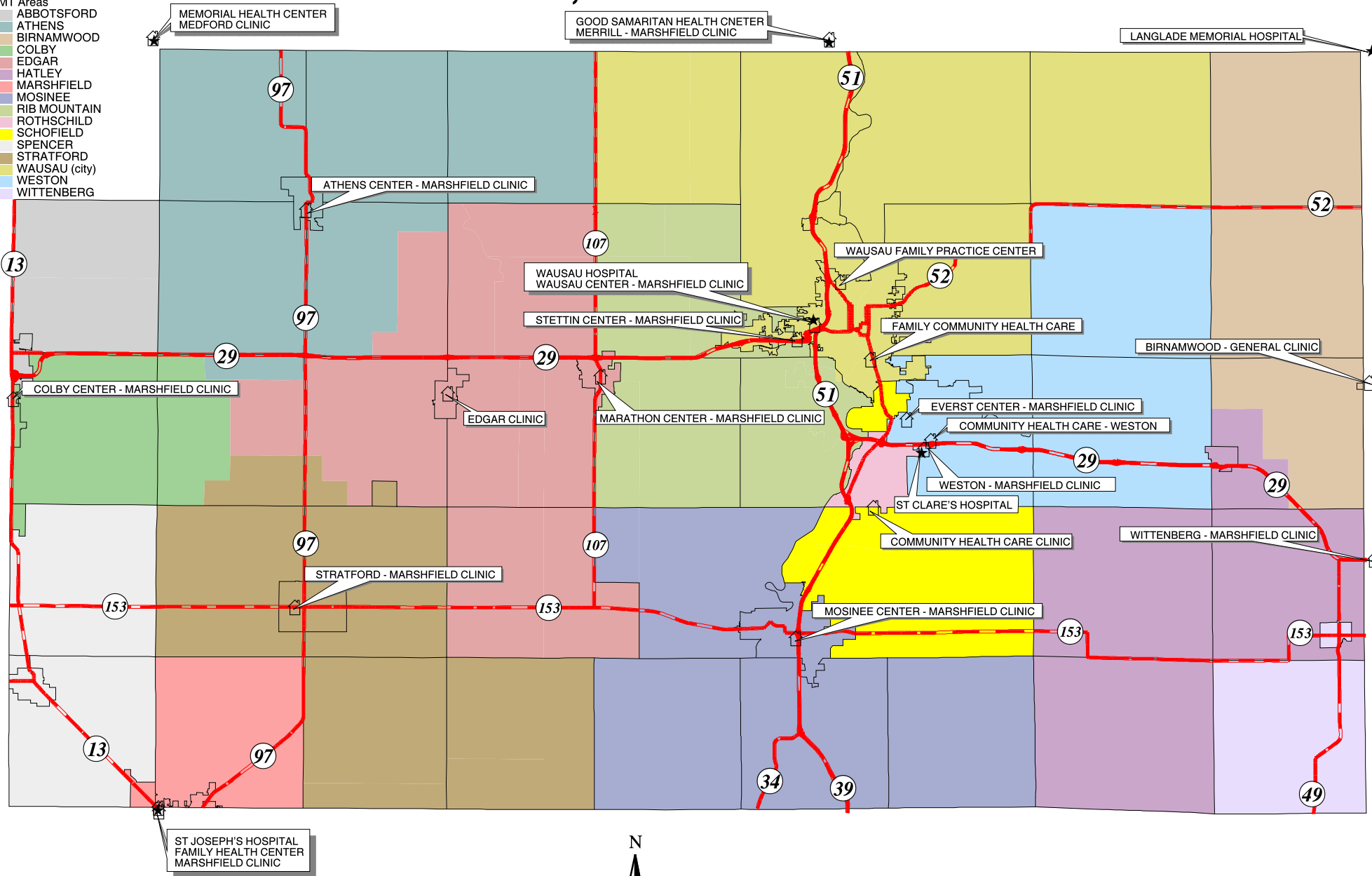


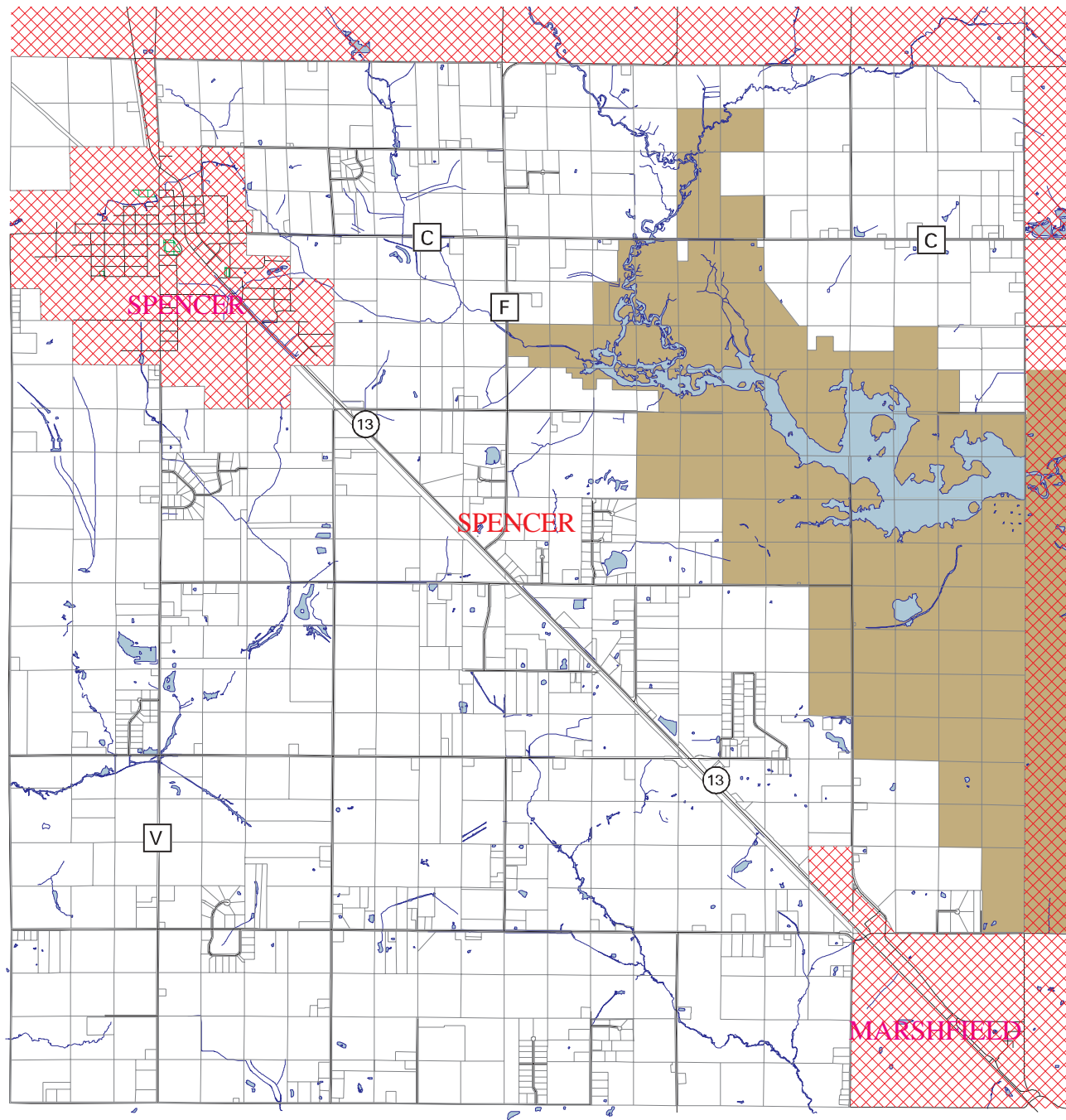
Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 9-3

MARATHON COUNTY AREA HOSPITALS, CLINICS & EMS ZONES

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





- 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
T-SPENCER

Town of Spencer

Comprehensive Plan

Goals, Objectives, Policies & Implementation

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

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- Figure 4-2: WISLR Ratings
- Figure 4-3: WISLR Road Surface Type

List of Acronyms

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

AADT—Annual Average Daily Traffic

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

BMPs—Best Management Practices

CCR&R—Child Care Resource and Referral Network

CDBG—Community Development Block Grant

CES—Cropland Evaluation System (Marathon County)

CIP—Capital Improvement Program

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

CRP—Conservation Reserve Program

CTH—County Trunk Highway

CWA—Central Wisconsin Airport

DWD—Department of Workforce Development

EMS—Emergency Medical Services

EMT—Emergency Medical Technician

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

FEMA—Federal Emergency Management Agency

FIRM—Flood Insurance Rate Maps

HOME—Home Investment Partnerships Program

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

LHOG—Local Housing Organization Grant

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

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

MPO—Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

NCHC—North Central Health Care

NCWRPC—North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

NRHP—National Register of Historic Places

NTC—Northcentral Technical College

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

Town of Spencer

PASER—Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating

PMP—Pavement Management Plan

SHPO—State Historic Preservation Office

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

STH—State Trunk Highway

TDP—Transit Development Plan (Wausau Area Transit System)

TIP—Transportation Improvement Program (Marathon County)

USDA—United States Department of Agriculture

USH—U.S. Highway

UW-MC—University of Wisconsin—Marathon County

WATS—Wausau Area Transit System

WDA—Wisconsin Department of Agriculture

WDNR—Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

WDOA—Wisconsin Department of Administration

WDOT—Wisconsin Department of Transportation

WHEDA—Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority

WISLR—Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads

WPD—Wetland Protection District

WPS—Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

1. Introduction

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

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

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

Sub-Area Concerns

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

General Concerns:

Local Development Control

- Maintain local control of development regulation
- Private property rights

Degree of Regulation

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

Land Use and Development:

Preserve Rural Character

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

Farm/Non-farm Conflicts

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

Urban Fringe Development

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

Identity and Appearance

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

Preservation and Protection of Resources:

Preserve/Protect Natural Resources

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

Fiscal/Economic:

Strong and Diverse Tax Base

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

Farmland Preservation (primarily economic issue)

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

Infrastructure:

Traffic and Transportation System

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

Protect Water Supply

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

Sewer and Septic System Availability

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

Cost Efficient Community Services

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

20-Year Community Vision Statement

The Town of Spencer will protect the rural character and natural resources of the town while recognizing the economic needs and ownership rights of property owners. Spencer will accommodate moderately priced homes, and observe moderate growth (about 25 units/year) while restricting commercial development to major arterials.

Goals, Objectives, Policies, Strategies & Actions

This document describes a variety of goals, objectives, policies, strategies and actions the Town has identified to help it respond to issues and opportunities identified in the *Issues and Conditions* report. Definitions are provided below to clarify the purpose and intent of each category.

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.

2. Natural Resources Element

Goal 1: Maintain and enhance water quality throughout the Town.

- **Objective: Identify critical zones, such as groundwater recharge areas, and update applicable Town ordinances**
- **Objective: Work with Marathon County, UW-Extension, and other applicable agencies to address fertilizer runoff in the Town.**
- **Objective: Keep up to date on new private on site wastewater treatment systems.**
- **Objective: Investigate supporting waste treatment plants in surrounding areas.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer discourages development in areas critical to the maintenance of the Town's groundwater supply.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Review Town ordinances and update as appropriate to ensure that critical groundwater locations in the Town are protected.

- Work with UW-Extension and Marathon County to address uncontrolled runoff from overuse of fertilizers and other chemicals.
- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify critical zones for the maintenance of the Town's groundwater supply.
- Coordinate with Marathon County, the WDNR, and UW-Extension to ensure that Town residents and officials are up to date on new on site wastewater treatment systems.
- Meet with surrounding communities (Spencer and Marshfield) to discuss supporting their wastewater treatment plants.
- Utilize wetland maps to guide Town decision making processes.

Goal 2: Protection of wetland and floodplain areas.

- **Objective: Identify and utilize existing WDNR guidelines for development located near wetland areas including type and use.**
- **Objective: Identify and utilize existing WDNR perimeters around wetland areas where development is discouraged.**
- **Objective: Require that all future developments maintain the same level of storm water runoff**

before, during, and after development, unless there is a proven benefit to the Town or neighborhood in modifying storm water levels.

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer discourages development from occurring in or around wetland areas where it may negatively impact the Town's groundwater resources.
- The Town of Spencer will require all future developments to limit post development storm water runoff to pre-development levels.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Review and update Town ordinances to ensure that they meet the needs of the Town's citizens and long-term goals.
- Identify existing WDNR guidelines and buffers around existing wetland areas, and actively enforce these regulations within the Town.

3. Land Use Element

Goal 1: Preserve the rural character of the Town of Spencer.

- **Objective: Explore programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Program, that seek to maintain prime soils and cropland.**
- **Objective: Develop design / aesthetic controls, design standards, and guidelines for commercial and industrial development.**
- **Objective: To determine an appropriate lot size that will support the Town of Spencer's concept of rural character.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer supports property owner's participation in programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Program, which seek to maintain prime soils and cropland.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Develop design / aesthetic controls, design standards, and guidelines for commercial and industrial development in the Town. These could include reviews of traffic, light, and noise pollution, storm water runoff, and site plan review.

- Determine an appropriate lot size for future developments in the Town of Spencer.

Goal 2: Encourage coexistence of farm and residential development.

- **Objective: Work with Marathon County and UW-Extension to raise awareness of the connection between the rural landscape and the role of active agriculture in maintaining the landscape.**
- **Objective: Actively mitigate existing conflict areas.**
- **Objective: Work with appropriate entities, such as UW-Extension and Marathon County to develop a public information campaign about the daily activities of agricultural enterprises.**
- **Objective: Promote active communication between agricultural entities and their neighbors.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer encourages the mitigation of existing conflicts between farm and non-farm uses.
- The Town of Spencer will discourage development that could create or exacerbate farm / non-farm conflicts.

- The Town of Spencer requires future residential lots to be a minimum of 40,000 square feet in a subdivision, or one acre if they are a stand-alone development.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with Marathon County and UW-Extension to raise awareness of the connection between the rural landscape and the role that agriculture plays in maintaining this landscape.
- Work with UW-Extension and Marathon County to develop an education process / protocol to inform new residents about the realities of rural living, and how they are connected with the overall quality of life.
- Promote active communication between agricultural operators and their neighbors.
- Invite local waste haulers and communities to meet to discuss long-term waste hauling and spreading / injection policies.

Goal 3: Identify where a commercial district should be located.

- **Objective: To direct commercial development to appropriate areas along the local highway system.**
- **Objective: To zone contiguous land as commercial.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer will direct future commercial development to the STH 13 corridor, and CTH's F, C, and V.
- The Town of Spencer encourages future development to occur adjacent to existing commercial developments.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Zone contiguous land for commercial uses.
- Review and update Town ordinances to ensure that they direct growth to the areas that the Town wishes to see developed.

Goal 4: Ensure an adequate supply of developable land.

- **Objective: To implement zoning measures, such as a conservation subdivision language, which preserve natural and agricultural areas.**
- **Objective: Identify areas where rural residential development is most appropriate and direct growth to that area by zoning it.**
- **Objective: Coordinate the location of rural residential development to minimize the impact**

on prime farmland and the possibility of residential / agricultural use conflicts.

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer discourages future residential developments from occurring near or adjacent to existing farm operations to minimize the potential for conflicts between these two uses.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Direct future residential growth away from existing farm operations.

Goal 5: Protect Town lands from future flood events.

- **Objective: Require that all future developments maintain the same level of storm water runoff before, during, and after development.**
- **Objective: Actively protect the Town’s wetland areas.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer requires that all future developments maintain the same level of storm water runoff before, during, and after development.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Review and update Town ordinances, as appropriate, to ensure that storm water provisions and requirements are addressed in the Town’s development requirements.
- Identify areas, such as wetlands, that should not be developed.

Goal 6: Discourage scattered rural residential development.

- **Objective: Direct new residential growth to appropriate areas.**
- **Objective: Zone contiguous land as residential.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer will direct future residential growth to areas contiguous with existing developed parcels.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Update Town ordinances to direct growth to appropriate areas.

Future Land Use – The Town of Spencer Future Land Use map, shown in Figure 3-1 illustrates the anticipated future pattern of land uses. The map includes fourteen land use categories to guide where new residential and non-residential development

Town of Spencer

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 3-3 shows areas with development constraints due to environmental conditions such as wetlands and floodplains, or policy constraints such as restrictive zoning or other programs (i.e., Exclusive Agriculture, Forest Crop Law). Areas where existing development precludes additional development are also shown.

Table 3-1: Future Land Use, 2005

Land Cover Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
Single Family Residential	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes	1624	8%
Commercial Services	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	1004	5%
Industrial	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers	39	<1%
Cropland	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland	7257	36%
Other Agriculture	Fallow, pasture and undetermined agriculture, power lines and towers, water towers, municipal wells	2367	12%
Public/Quasi-Public	Schools, churches, cemeteries, libraries, government buildings, National Guard, utility facilities.	105	<1%
Quarry	Non-metallic mining operations	28	<1%
Woodlands	Privately-owned forested land, including nurseries, paper mill forests, etc.	2922	15%
Park and Recreation	Public and private parks and forests, trails, ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, camp grounds, shooting ranges, etc.	3302	17%

Water and Wetlands	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc.	49	<1%
Transportation	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	499	2%
Barren Land	Unused open land in wooded areas, along streams, along roadsides	781	4%
Total Land Area		19,977	100%

Source: Future Land Use map

As indicated in the table, a majority of the land is projected to be used for cropland (36%) or park and recreational (17%). The considerable amount of park and recreational land includes wetland areas adjacent to and including the McMillan Marsh. Single-family residential is projected to consume 8% of the total land area (1624 acres). Potential locations for these land uses are identified on the Future Land Use Map.

Land Needs – Projections of future population and employment growth in Spencer 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, 622 acres will be needed to accommodate future residential development and 12 acres are needed for future non-residential development. Potential locations for these land uses are identified on the Future Land Use Map.

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Table 3-2: Acreage Projections, 2000-2030

	Estimated Total Acreage Needed by Year						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Agricultural	11873	11767	11663	11557	11451	11345	11249
Residential	846	905	1052	1156	1260	1364	1468
Industrial	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Commercial	63	65	67	69	71	73	75

Source: determined from NCWRPC and Marathon County projections

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.

4. Transportation Element

Goal 1: Maintain the Town's transportation system.

- **Objective: Utilize the Town's PASER analysis to schedule and prioritize road maintenance through the CIP.**
- **Objective: Develop a policy to address whether or not to blacktop existing roads.**
- **Objective: Continue to require new developments to escrow money for blacktopping roads.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer will continue to utilize the PASER and CIP to schedule and prioritize maintenance of the Town transportation system.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Develop a policy to address whether or not to blacktop new roads.
- Continue to require that new developments escrow money to cover the costs of blacktopping roads.

Goal 2: Improve the crossing and signalization at existing dangerous railroad crossings.

- **Objective: Identify those railroad crossings that are dangerous.**
- **Objective: Work with Marathon County, WDOT, the railroad, and other applicable entities to schedule and budget for the upgrade of existing railroad crossings along STH 13.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer encourages the upgrade of existing railroad crossings to improve safety.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with Marathon County, WDOT, the railroad, and other applicable entities to schedule and budget for the upgrade of existing crossings along STH 13.

Goal 3: Develop a long-range plan for the future of STH 13.

- **Objective: Work with WDOT, the Village of Spencer, the City of Marshfield, Marathon County, Wood County, and other appropriate agencies to develop a long-range plan for STH 13.**

- **Objective: Identify areas where future frontage roads may be needed along STH 13.**
- **Objective: Develop and adopt an official map to reserve areas where future frontage roads may be needed.**
- **Objective: To maintain Town access to STH 13.**
- **Objective: To keep 26th Road and Hoff Road open.**
- **Objective: To encourage the State to improve STH 13 to a four-lane road between Spencer and Marshfield.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer supports the improvement of STH 13 to a four-lane road from Marshfield to the Village of Spencer.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with WDOT, the Village of Spencer, the City of Marshfield, Marathon County, Wood County, and other appropriate agencies to develop a long-range plan for STH 13.
- Identify areas where future frontage roads may be needed along STH 13.

- Develop and adopt an official map to reserve areas where future frontage roads may be needed.
- Work with the WDOT to ensure that Town access to STH 13 is maintained, once a four-lane road is completed.
- Work with WDOT to ensure that 26th Road and Hoff Road remain open.

Road Improvements

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

The PASER system, which was designed by the Transportation Information Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the rating system used most by Wisconsin communities.

PASER rates road surfaces on a scale of 1 to 10. This scale is broken down as follows:

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

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

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

Table 4-1: Summary of Pavement Conditions

Surface Type Code (miles)						
Unimproved Road	Graded Earth Road	Gravel Road	Wearing Surface	Cold Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Cold Mix Resurfacing with < 7" Base	Cold Mix Resurfacing with > 7" Base
	0.13	41.29				
Cold Mix Asphalt Base < 7"	Cold Mix Asphalt Base > 7"	Hot Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Hot Mix Resurfacing	Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement	Concrete Pavement	Brick or Block Pavement
0.07	11.86			2.14		

Surface Condition Rating - WISLR Data						
No Data	Failed	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
1.59		1.33	4.02	26.43	15.35	6.77

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

Roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below “Fair” must be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary. The roads that display a surface rating of “Good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to promote safe travel conditions. Those roads without data should be examined to ensure safe travel conditions exist along these routes. The majority of the roads within the Town of Spencer will require preventative maintenance, however, roughly five miles of roadway will require some sort of reconstruction.

5. Utilities Element

Goal 1: Maintain current provision of services.

- **Objective: To perform annual budget allocations which fund public services.**
- **Objective: Continue to find methods of cost sharing, such as equipment sharing, with surrounding municipalities to increase the efficiency by which services are provided.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer will continue to perform its annual budgeting process to maintain the current provision of services.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Meet with other communities to identify methods of equipment and cost sharing to increase efficiency.

Goal 2: To explore the possibility of extending natural gas and cable TV to subdivisions.

- **Objective: To work with public utilities to investigate the feasibility of extending these services to Town residents.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer supports the extension of natural gas and cable services to existing subdivisions.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with utility companies to ensure that their needs are met as they analyze the possibility of extending natural gas and cable to Town residents.

6. Housing Element

Goal 1: Improve access to senior housing.

- **Objective: Coordinate with Marathon County, Wood County, the City of Marshfield, and the Villages of Spencer and Stratford to promote the development of additional senior housing units.**
- **Objective: Direct new residential growth to appropriate areas.**
- **Objective: Zone contiguous land as residential.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer supports the development of additional senior housing in the region.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Direct senior housing to the Village of Spencer and the City of Marshfield.
- Encourage residential developments to locate adjacent to existing developments.

Goal 2: Maintain existing zoning regulatory relationships.

- **Objective: To require all new subdivisions to have covenants.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer will require all future subdivisions to have their own individual covenants.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Update the Town's ordinances to require all future subdivisions to have their own individual covenants.

7. Cultural Resources Element

Goal 1: Maintain historically significant structures and places in the community.

- **Objective: To identify historically significant buildings and sites that are unique in the town.**
- **Objective: To identify historic grounds such as cemeteries.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer encourages the preservation of historic sites and structures.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with the State and County historical societies to identify and preserve existing historic sites and structures in the Town.

Goal 2: To encourage and support cultural resources in surrounding communities.

- **Objective: To work with the Village of Spencer and the City of Marshfield to support local cultural resources.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer supports the ongoing development of local cultural resources in the Village of Spencer and the City of Marshfield.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- As needed, work with local communities and organizations to assist in the development of cultural resources.

8. Community Facilities Element

Goal 1: Provide effective public safety services.

- **Objective: Work with the Marathon County Sheriffs Department and the surrounding towns (Sherman, Unity and Brighton) to continue to provide effective police, fire and EMS services.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer will work with surrounding communities and Marathon County to enhance existing services to ensure police, fire, and EMS services.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Meet with the Village of Spencer, the City of Marshfield, and the Marathon County Sheriff's Department to enhance police protection for Town residents.
- Continue the ongoing services from the fire and EMS services.

Goal 2: Support and maintain existing community facilities.

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

- **Objective: To continue to rent out the Town Hall for community activities.**
- **Objective: To set aside money for future building improvements for the Town.**
- **Objective: To continue to support the local branch of NTC.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer will continue to maintain the Town Hall as a seat of local government and meeting space.
- The Town of Spencer supports the continued operation of the local NTC branch.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Budget for future improvements to the Town Hall, as needed.
- Continue to support the local NTC branch.
- Continue to rent out the Town Hall for community activities.

9. Parks Element

Goal 1: Development of bicycle and pedestrian routes in the Town of Spencer.

- **Objective: Work with Marathon County to identify a timeline for the implementation of the Suggested Bike Routes within Marathon County Bike / Pedestrian Plan.**
- **Objective: Coordinate and plan with the City of Marshfield, Marathon County, and the Village of Spencer to identify and develop a bicycle pedestrian route through the Town of Spencer and into the City of Marshfield.**
- **Objective: Identify additional funding sources to assist with the development of bicycle and pedestrian routes in the Town.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer supports the creation of bike and pedestrian routes through the Town to area points of interest.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with Marathon and Wood Counties, the Village of Spencer, the City of Marshfield, and WDOT to identify

and develop a timeline for implementing the bike and pedestrian plan.

- Work with the Village of Spencer and the City of Marshfield to develop a bicycle and pedestrian route between to connect these two communities and the Town of Spencer.
- Work with participating communities to identify and secure funds for the construction and maintenance of a bicycle and pedestrian route through the Town.

Goal 2: Continue to support local campgrounds.

- **Objective: Encourage use of existing campground facilities in the area.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer supports the use of existing campground facilities in the area.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with the existing campground in the area to encourage the use of its facilities.

Goal 3: Continue to support neighboring parks and campgrounds.

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- **Objective: To support the school forest and school playgrounds.**
- **Objective: Continue to work with the WDNR to support the McMillan Wildlife Area.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer supports the preservation of the McMillan Wildlife Area.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with the school district to continue to support the school forest and playgrounds.
- Invite stakeholders to attend Town meetings to discuss the preservation of the McMillan Marsh.

10. Economic Development Element

Goal 1: Identify where a commercial / industrial district should be located.

- **Objective: To direct commercial development to areas that contain appropriate infrastructure, such as the STH 13 corridor and CTH's F, C, and V.**
- **Objective: To zone contiguous land as commercial.**
- **Objective: Direct industrial development to appropriate areas, such as industrial parks in the City of Marshfield of the Village of Spencer.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer will direct future commercial development to the STH 13 corridor, and CTH F, C, and V.
- The Town of Spencer will direct future industrial development to the Village of Spencer and the City of Marshfield.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Zone land appropriately to enact the Town's land use plan.

- Utilize zoning to direct future commercial and industrial uses to appropriate areas.
- Coordinate with the City of Marshfield and the Village of Spencer to direct commercial and industrial growth to appropriate areas.

Goal 2: Protect and encourage home occupations in the Town.

- **Objective: Update and improve regulations relating to home occupations.**
- **Objective: Identify those home occupations that the Town wishes to specifically protect.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer encourages the development of appropriate home occupations.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Identify those home occupations that the Town would like to protect.
- Review and update Town ordinances to allow desired home occupations to occur in the Town.

Goal 3: Strengthen the viability of the local agricultural economy.

- **Objective: To explore the development of niche markets for agricultural products (e.g. organic/hydroponic).**
- **Objective: To encourage secondary business development, such as outdoor markets or canneries, around the agricultural economy.**
- **Objective: To work with Marathon County and other agencies such as the UW-Extension, to explore regional approaches to aiding the agricultural economy, such as regional manure digesters, grants, low interest loans, and other incentives.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer recognizes the importance of the agricultural economy and its contribution to the community.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Take an active role in regionally based agricultural forums and programs.

- Encourage agricultural operators in the Town to participate in regional programs aimed at improving the agricultural economy.

Marathon County Strengths and Weaknesses for Economic Development

Strengths

- Many acres of land zone Exclusive Agriculture, which strengthens the retention of the agricultural industry.
- Ample open space, woodlands, and natural areas, which adds to the small town living environment sought after by existing/future businesses and their employees.
- A strong base economy made up of a variety of businesses including leaders in papermaking, lumber, insurance, and dairy products.
- Strong support for economic development from the community and economic development organizations

Weaknesses

- The agricultural economy is declining, and exclusive agricultural zoning prevents other industry development in the community.
- Access limitations along highways and frontage roads.

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- Lack of design/aesthetics control for commercial and industrial development.
- Competition for industrial development – particularly between urban and fringe areas.

11. Intergovernmental Cooperation Element

Goal 1: Ensure residents have access to necessary services.

- **Objective: Work with Marathon County and Wood County to meet the nutrition needs of residents in the Town.**
- **Objective: Meet with the City of Marshfield, Marathon County, Clark County, and Wood County, and other surrounding municipalities to discuss the joint provision of services.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer supports the re-opening of the County nutrition site in the Village of Spencer.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with Marathon and Wood County to re-open the nutrition center in the Village of Spencer.
- Meet with surrounding communities to identify areas where services could be provided jointly to enhance efficiency and service levels.

Goal 2: Provide effective public safety services.

- **Objective: Work with the Marathon County Sheriffs Department, the Village of Spencer, and the City of Marshfield to provide effective police service.**
- **Objective: Explore a joint service agreement with the City of Marshfield or the Village of Spencer for police protection.**

POLICIES

- The Town of Spencer will work to enhance public safety services in the Town.

STRATEGIES / ACTIONS

- Work with the City of Marshfield or the Village of Spencer to develop a joint service agreement for police protection.

12. Implementation Element

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

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

Implementation Tools

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Plan Adoption, Monitoring, and Amendments

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

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

Plan Use, Monitoring and Evaluation: The adopted plan should be used as a tool by Spencer 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 Spencer. 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 Spencer 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 Spencer 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 Spencer 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. Appendix E provides a bibliography of other plans and studies relevant to comprehensive planning.

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 project assignment. 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 Spencer, committees, 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

Town of Spencer

Table 12-2: Implementation Plan Actions

Action	Who is responsible?	Priority
Natural Resources Actions		
Update ordinances to ensure that critical groundwater locations in the Town are protected.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Work with agencies to address uncontrolled runoff from overuse of fertilizers and other chemicals.	Town Board	Short-Term
Identify critical zones for the maintenance of the Town's groundwater supply.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Meet with surrounding communities (Spencer and Marshfield) to discuss supporting their wastewater treatment plants.	Town Board	Mid-Term
Utilize wetland maps to guide Town decision-making processes.	Town Board	Immediate
Land Use Actions		
Develop design / aesthetic controls, design standards, and guidelines for commercial and industrial development in the Town.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Determine an appropriate lot size for future developments in the Town of Spencer.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Promote active communication between agricultural operators and their neighbors.	Town Board	Immediate
Invite local waste haulers and communities to meet to discuss long-term waste hauling and spreading / injection policies.	Town Board	Short-Term
Zone contiguous land for commercial uses.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Direct future residential growth away from existing farm operations.	Plan Commission	Immediate

Identify areas, such as wetlands, that should not be developed.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Transportation Actions		
Develop a policy to address whether or not to blacktop new roads.	Town Board	Short-Term
Continue to require that new developments cover the costs of blacktopping roads.	Town Board	Ongoing
Work with WDOT, the Village of Spencer, the City of Marshfield, Marathon County, Wood County, and other appropriate agencies to develop a long-range plan for STH 13.	Town Board	Short-Term
Utilities Actions		
Meet with other communities to identify methods of equipment and cost sharing to increase efficiency.	Town Board	Ongoing
Work with utility companies to ensure that their needs are met as they analyze the possibility of extending natural gas and cable to Town residents.	Town Board	Immediate
Housing Actions		
Direct senior housing to the Village of Spencer and the City of Marshfield.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Encourage residential developments to locate adjacent to existing developments.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
Update the Town's ordinances to require all future subdivisions to have their own individual covenants.	Plan Commission	Short-Term

Town of Spencer

Cultural Resources Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Work with the State and County historical societies to identify and preserve existing historic sites and structures in the Town.	Town Board	Short-Term
As needed, work with local communities and organizations to assist in the development of cultural resources.	Town Board	Ongoing
Community Facilities Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Enhance police protection and continue the ongoing services from the fire and EMS services.	Town Board	Ongoing
Budget for future improvements to the Town Hall, as needed and make it available for community activities.	Town Board	Ongoing
Continue to support the local NTC branch.	Town Board	Ongoing
Parks and Recreation Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Develop a timeline for implementing the bike and pedestrian plan.	Town Board	Short-Term
Identify and secure funds for the construction and maintenance of a bicycle and pedestrian route through the Town	Town Board	Short-Term
Work with the existing campground in the area to encourage the use of its facilities.	Town Board	Ongoing
Work with the school district to continue to support the school forest and playgrounds.	Town Board	Ongoing
Discuss the preservation of the McMillan Marsh.	Town Board	Short-Term

Economic Development Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Zone land appropriately to enact the Town's land use plan.	Plan Commission	Ongoing
Coordinate with the City of Marshfield and the Village of Spencer to direct commercial and industrial growth to appropriate areas.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Review and update Town ordinances to allow desired home occupations to occur in the Town.	Town Board	Immediate
Take an active role in regionally based agricultural forums and programs.	Town Board	Immediate
Encourage agricultural operators in the Town to participate in regional programs aimed at improving the agricultural economy.	Town Board	Ongoing
Intergovernmental Cooperation Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Work with Marathon and Wood County to re-open the nutrition center in the Village of Spencer.	Town Board	Immediate
Meet with surrounding communities to identify areas where services could be provided jointly to enhance efficiency and service levels.	Town Board	Immediate
Work with the City of Marshfield or the Village of Spencer to develop a joint service agreement for police protection.	Town Board	Short-Term

Appendix A

State Comprehensive Planning Goals

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

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

Appendix B

Marathon County Guiding Principles

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

- 1. Respect Local Governance** - Planning in Marathon County should build on local town, village and city government as a system that is unique, has served residents well, and is a strong component of local identity.
- 2. Preserve Working Agriculture** - Agriculture has been central to the culture and economy of Marathon County for over 100 years. Farming has been a way of life for generations of county residents and is fundamental to both community and individual identity. Efforts such as protecting prime farmland from development, exploring niche markets, and supporting cooperative practices can be implemented at the local level to help maintain and preserve working agriculture.
- 3. Maintain a Sense of Place** - As Marathon County's population grows and changes, communities will need to ensure that important physical features, buildings, and landscapes that exemplify their local identity are retained. These features provide a sense of heritage and continuity that contribute to a community's identity and sense of place.
- 4. Preserve Rural Character** - Shifts in the farm economy and urban expansion are altering the County's rural landscape characterized by working farms, woodlands, rolling hills, marsh areas, and plentiful water bodies. As open spaces, farms, and woodlands are being lost or fragmented by development, Marathon County communities will need to make some important choices in order to preserve the qualities and character of the rural landscape.
- 5. Safeguard Natural Resources** - Marathon County is graced with abundant natural resources including numerous rivers, wetlands, forests, and wildlife. Careful stewardship of natural resources is essential to protect against fragmentation and degradation and ensure these resources continue to contribute to the ecology, character, quality of life, and economy of Marathon County into the future.
- 6. Foster Managed Growth and Coordinated Development** - Managing growth is important to ensure that no area is overwhelmed by development, land use conflicts are minimized, and development occurs in a quality manner that minimizes impacts on natural resources. Managing growth requires coordination of land uses and infrastructure, within and between communities, and recognizes that high quality growth in any one community will benefit surrounding communities as well.
- 7. Cost-Effective and Efficient Provision of Public Services** - Marathon County residents are clear in their desire to keep local taxes reasonable. One of the most effective

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

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

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

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

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

RESOLUTION

RE: ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS PREPARED BY THE TOWN OF SPENCER PLANNING COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Spencer established a Plan Committee for the purposes of preparing a recommended Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Spencer and

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

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

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

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

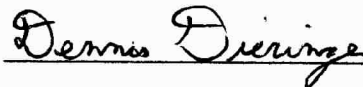
WHEREAS, after said public hearing, the Town Board will decide whether to adopt by ordinance the Comprehensive Plan; and

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

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

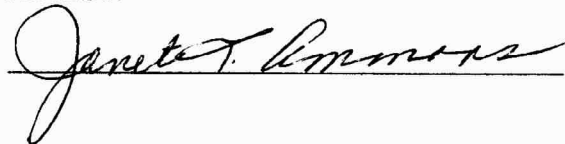
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town of Spencer Planning Committee that the recommended Comprehensive Plan is hereby adopted as a part of the Town of Spencer's Comprehensive Plan pursuant to s.62.23 and s.66.0295, Wis. Stats. and that the Planning Commission recommends said Comprehensive Plan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

APPROVED:



Chairperson
Planning Commission

ATTEST:



RECEIVED

JUN 14 2005

MARATHON CO. CONSERVATION
PLANNING & ZONING

Ordinance No. 100

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

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

Section 1. Pursuant to section [59.69(2) and (3)(for counties)/62.23(2) and (3)(for cities, and towns exercising City powers under 60.22(3))] of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Spencer is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in section 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

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

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

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

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

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

Adopted this 13 Day of December, 2005

Town Board President

(Published/Posted):

(Approved, Vetoed):

Attest:

Town Clerk



RECEIVED

DEC 16 2005

**MARATHON CO. CONSERVATION,
PLANNING & ZONING DEPT.**

RECEIVED

AUG 20 2003

MARATHON COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWNSHIP OF SPENCER

Public participation Plan for the Comprehensive Plan Process

1. Official meetings must comply with applicable Wisconsin open meeting statutes.
 - A. Notices should be made at least 1 week prior to meeting.
 - a. Date, time and location of meeting.
 - b. Location of land involved.
 - c. Subject matter.
 - d. Interested persons may present testimony in person or in writing.
2. Members of the Town Comprehensive Plan will try to attend all County informational meetings and be responsible for bringing any information collected back to the regular township and planning commission meetings.
3. Through public meetings, residents will be able to voice their concerns and ideas. A public meeting will also be conducted before the Town Board can adopt the comprehensive plan.
4. A newsletter will be sent annually to update and inform the public on the planning process.
5. A survey of residents of the Town of Spencer was sent with the property tax bills in 2000 and were tabulated in 2001. You can find the survey results attached.
6. The Township of Spencer will follow the procedures for adopting the comprehensive plan as listed in 66.1001, Wis. Statutes (Comprehensive Planning). The first step in the adoption process is being met by adoption of this document which details written procedures that are designed to foster public participation throughout the local and County wide Comprehensive Plan Process. Plans created at the local level will be used as building blocks to build the County Development Plan.

Bill Kautz
Chairman

Leonard Bruntz
Supervisor

Joe J...
Supervisor

Diana Danney
Town Clerk

*Copy Plan for
Plan*

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

Natural Resources

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

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

Land Use

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

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

Transportation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. Federal Highway Administration:

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

Utilities

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

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

Parks and Recreation

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

Economic Development

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

Appendix F: Guidelines for Paving Gravel Roads¹

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

Traffic Demand

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

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

Maintenance Considerations

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

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

Base and Drainage Needs

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

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

Safety and Design Considerations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Costs

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

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

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

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

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

Public Opinion

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

Staged Construction

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

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

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

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

Summary

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

Appendix G: Economic Development Programs

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

Federal Programs

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

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

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

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

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

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

Wisconsin State Programs

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

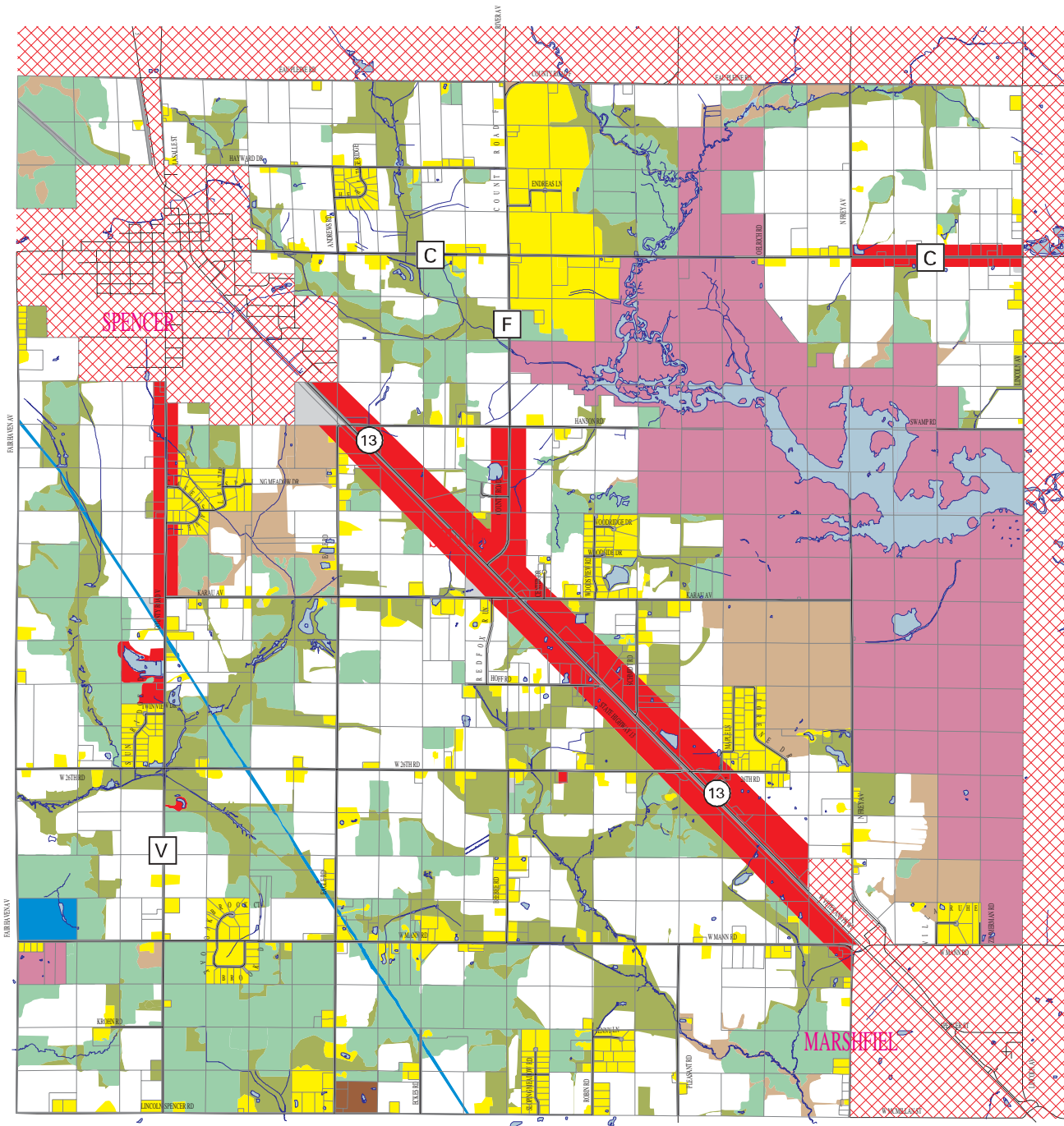
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR): The Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment consolidates state and federal clean up programs and provides assistance to help businesses clean up and re-use existing brownfield sites.

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

County, Regional, and Local Programs

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

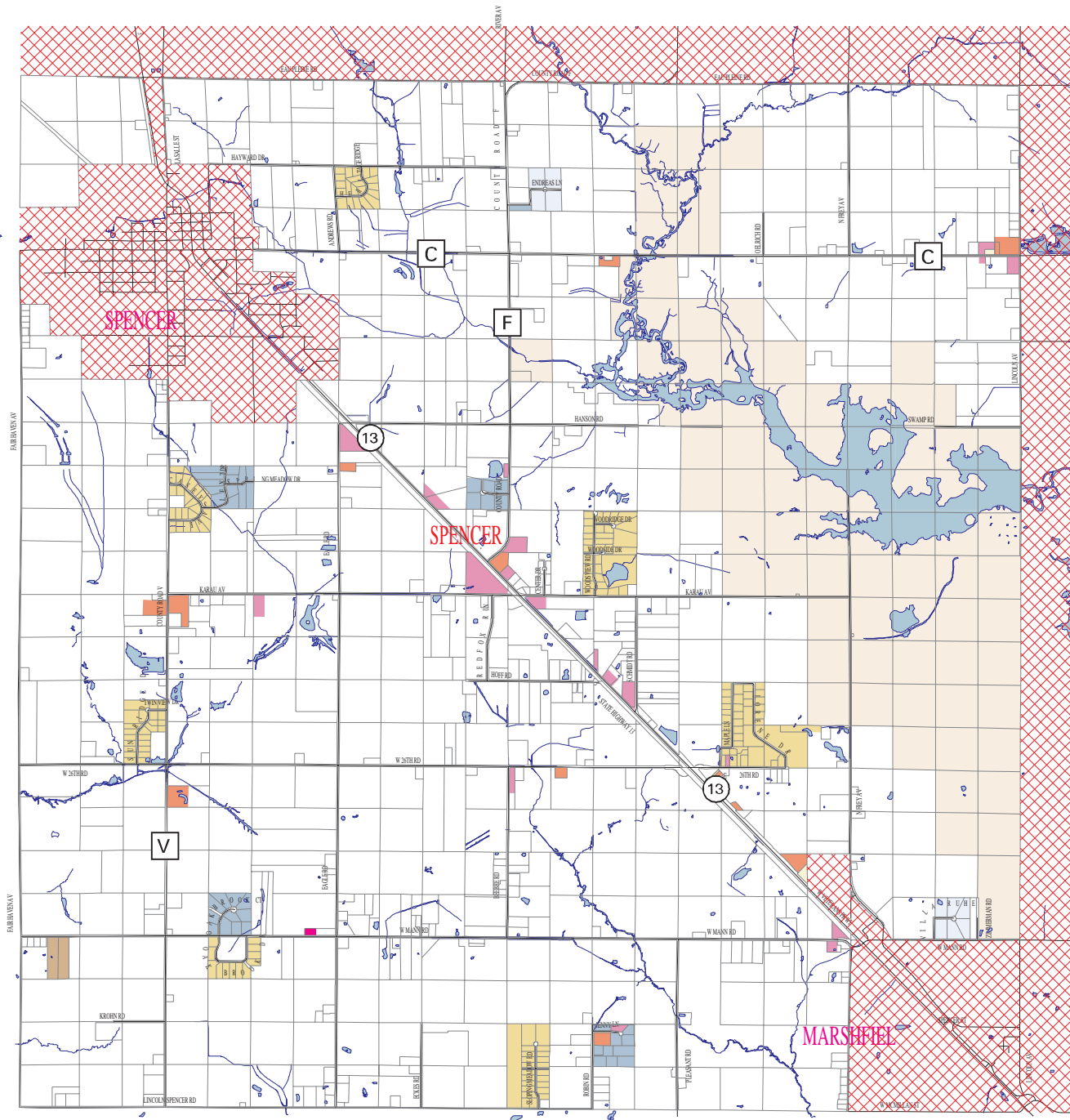
- **North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC):** The NCWRPC is a designated Economic Development District and provides services such as economic research, marketing, financial packaging, evaluation and analysis of public infrastructure needs that support private economic development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



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

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

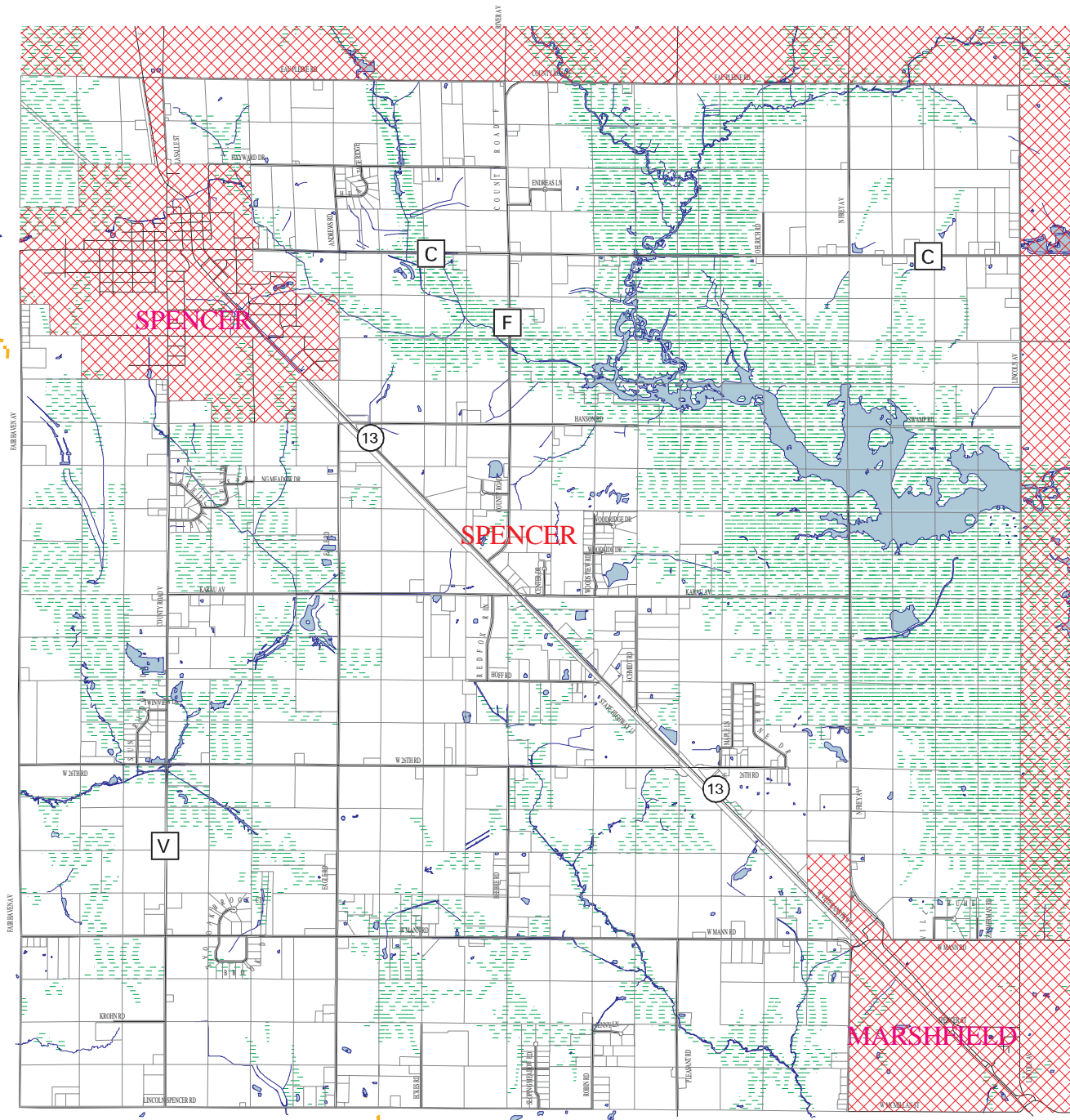
Figure 3-1
 Future Land Use
 T-SPENCER






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

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

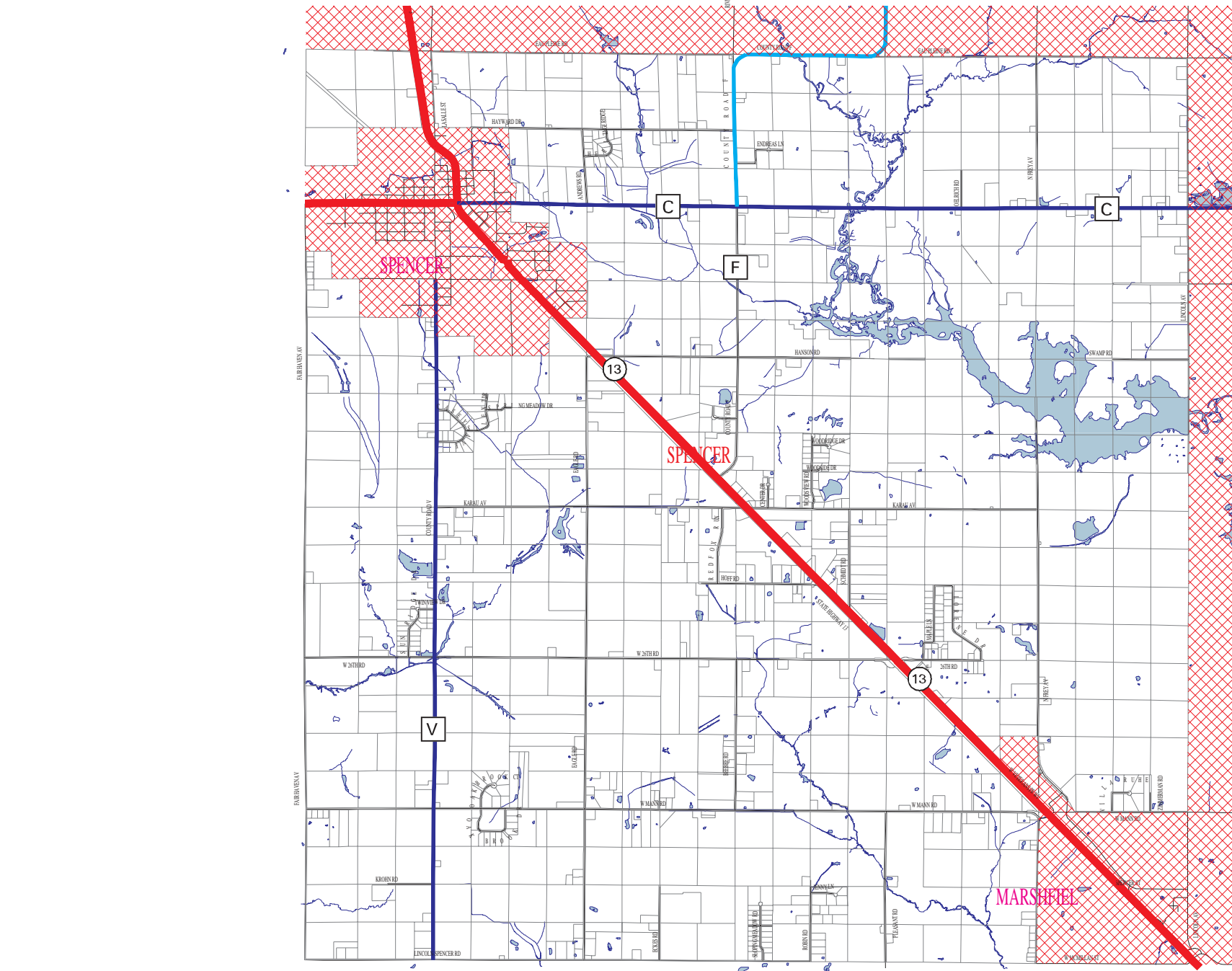
Figure 3-2
County Zoning
T-SPENCER



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


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

Figure 3-3
Development Constraints
T-SPENCER

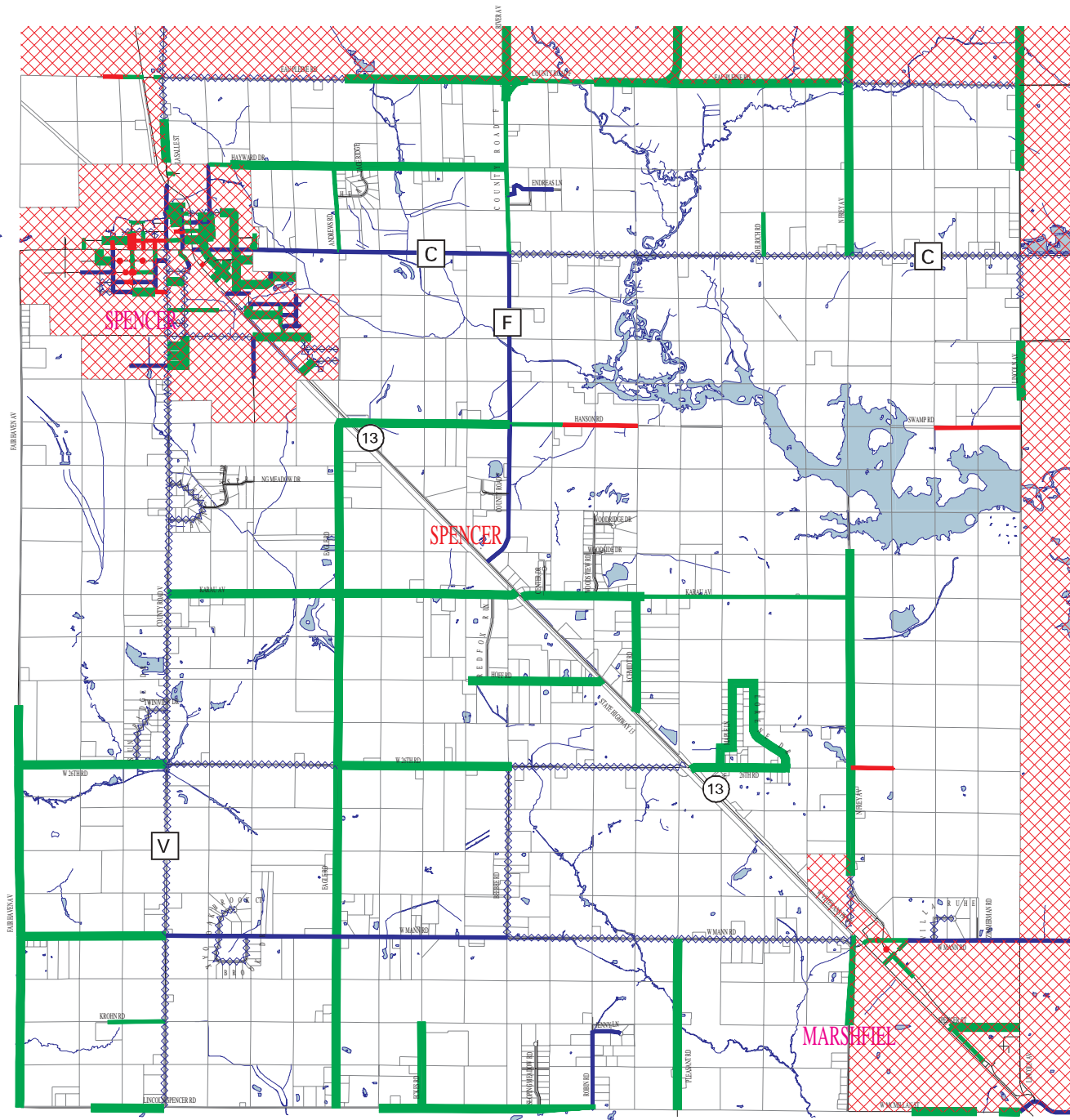


- █ Principal Arterial
- █ Minor Arterial
- █ Major Collector
- █ Minor Collector

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

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

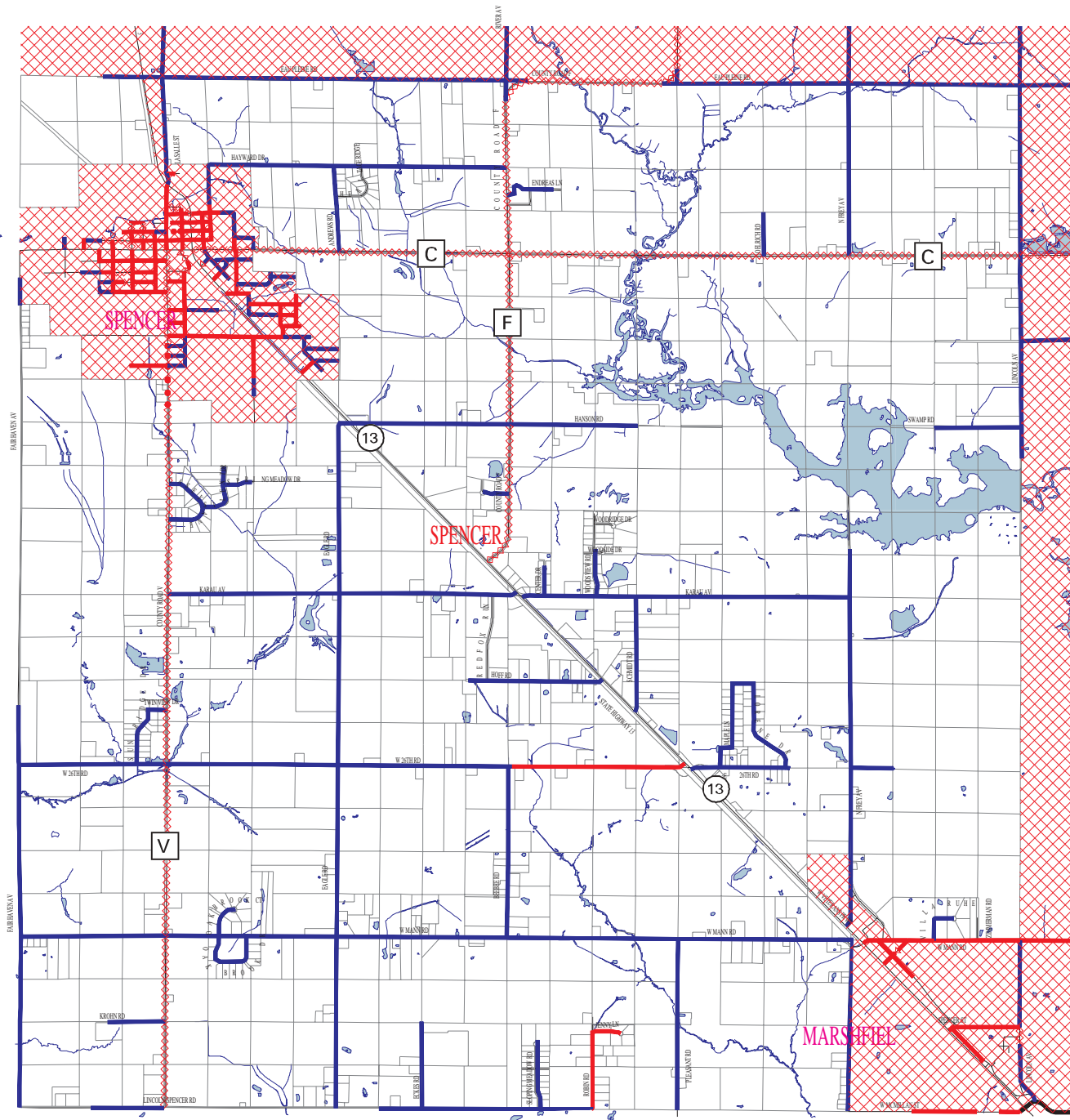
Figure 4-1
Functional Classification of Roads
T-SPENCER



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


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

Figure 4-2
Road Surface Rating
T-SPENCER



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

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

Figure 4-3
Road Surface Types
T-SPENCER