

Chapter V - AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Historically, the Town of Richmond has been classified as a mainly agricultural region. Agricultural is the prominent land use in the Town, and is an important component of the town's local economy, heritage, and character. It is also a way of life for many town residents.

AGRICULTURE

A. Character of Farming

During the period from 1991 through 1996, the number of farms in Shawano County actually decreased, as did the farm acreage. As of the 1990 census, 11.8% of the population of the Town of Richmond was living on a farm; however, only 4.7% of the population was actually earning their living from farming.

Per the 1997 Agriculture Census, there were 33 parcels in the Town for a total of 1794 acres of agriculture land sold, with 1646 of those acres continuing in agriculture and the remaining acreage converted out of agriculture use.

Note: "Farm" is defined as a place that sells, or would normally sell, at least \$1,000 of agricultural products during the year. The number of farms in Wisconsin peaked at 199,877 in 1935.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, departmental data.

Wisconsin Town Land Use Data Project: Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

B. Farmland Preservation Efforts

The Town of Richmond farmers can participate in several federal, state and countywide programs and initiatives that are intended to preserve long term farming activities. The 2002 Farm Bill reauthorized several federal programs, including:

- Conservation Reserve Program
- Wetland Reserve Program
- Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
- Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program

In addition, the Wisconsin Department of Revenue offers two (2) important farmland preservation programs; the Farmland Preservation Credit Program and the Farmland Tax Relief Credit Program.

Both of these programs are designed for property tax relief.

C. Agriculture Resource Goals

1. Protection of economically productive farmsteads, farmland and forest areas.

A. Objectives:

1. Support development of agriculture and diversification of farming types and practices to maintain agriculture as a viable economic activity.
2. Existing agriculture uses and buildings should be taken into consideration when locating new development to avoid conflicts.
3. Preserve productive farmland for long term agricultural uses

B. Policies:

1. The Town of Richmond has adopted ATCP51 Livestock Siting Law
2. Non farm development will be encouraged in areas away from daily agricultural activities in order to minimize conflicts.
3. The State of Wisconsin has a right to farm law.
4. Support sustainable forestry practices.

The State of Wisconsin offers tax breaks for putting your property into Managed Forest Land (MFL). We would anticipate that would continue to increase the land put into MFL for the tax break. While there are considerable regulations involved in getting your property out of the Managed Forest Land designation, property owners are getting a substantial break on their property taxes for this property while it is so designated.

The State of Wisconsin does have a program that attempts to offset the tax loss, although this is relatively minor, and there is no guarantee that will continue in the future. With the money crisis in the state, it is unlikely that even this minor amount will be allowed to continue. It could be expected that some of the unused cropland will be planted in trees and that land set aside into forestland as well. Land taken out of agriculture production could be changed to recreation or forestland, not necessarily in MFL, especially if we continue with recreation as a goal to pursue.

Farming continues to be viewed as an important occupation that contains a positive way of life and encompasses fundamental values.

While agricultural lands only require a minimum of local government services, the tax revenue from these lands continues to decrease, based on the current "Land Use Valuation" methods of taxation now in effect. While helping the farmers, this has a negative impact on the remaining property owners in the Town, as costs to provide services continue to rise and the tax base has been lowered.

The Town of Richmond is expected to continue to advocate the "farmers right to farm". People that purchase land in this area must remember that the odors and noises that are already here will remain here. As stated in our goals and objectives, we expect to continue to discourage the location of industrial "mega" farms near residential areas. By specifying where we encourage residential development, we hope to minimize the effect

of the farms to our citizens. Commuters, on their way to work, will continue to share our roads with the slow moving farm equipment.

Among the Goals and Objectives of the Town we have included the responsibility to safeguard the public from foreseeable hazards whenever possible.

It is apparent that the Town must balance the rights of individuals regarding their property with the community's right to safety and to maintain their quality of life as well. Town of Richmond expects to have agriculture continue to be the major use of land within the Town.

NATURAL RESOURCES

A. Metallic and Non Metallic Minerals

There are no metallic mining operations in the Town of Richmond or in Shawano County. The Town does have sand and gravel pits that are active.

B. Groundwater

Groundwater supplies water for residential, agriculture, commercial and industrial uses in the Town, except for the paper mill, which is supplied by the City of Shawano. Most, if not all, other residents, businesses and farms rely on private wells for their water supply. The quality of water in the town is generally good. There is an area in the eastern portion of the town that has high iron in the water.

C. Watersheds and Surface water

Water bodies in the town include the Wolf River, Red River, Kroenke Creek, and Rose Brook.

Major Basins: Wisconsin is divided into 3 major river basins, each identified by the primary body of water where that basin drains into. The purpose of this is to identify the major drainage patterns in the state. The Town of Richmond lies in the Lake Michigan Basin, the Wolf River Watershed.

The Major Basins in the state are divided into Water Management Districts. These are used to manage water resources at the local level. These units have also primarily been used to prepare reference base maps for the NPS Priority Watershed Program. These are a further hydrologic subdivision of Water Management Units in the state.

D. Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency designates floodplains. These are areas predicted to be inundated with flood waters in the one hundred (100) year storm event. The goal of Wisconsin's Floodplain Management Program is to protect people and their property from unwise floodplain development, and to protect society from the costs which are associated with developed floodplains.

Through floodplain zoning, state and local governments regulate how development can actually occur within floodplains.

Under this program, Wisconsin's counties, cities and villages are required to zone their flood-prone areas. The state has set minimum standards for local regulation, but local governments can set more restrictive standards. For the Town of Richmond, Shoreland zoning is the responsibility of Shawano County.

The shoreland area includes all areas within 1000 feet of the ordinary high water mark of navigable lakes, ponds or flowages or within 300 feet of the ordinary high water mark of navigable rivers or streams.

E. Wetlands

These ecosystems play significant roles in maintaining the quality of groundwater and surface water; and provide valuable habitats for fish, birds, and other wildlife. The Town of Richmond does include wetland designation for a small area. DNR mapping shows minimal 'open water' areas.

The stated goal of the Shawano County Land and Water Resource Management Plan is to restore, improve, and protect the ecological diversity and quality and promote the beneficial uses of the land, water, and related resources found throughout the County. In addition to being under the county's management plan, the Town of Richmond also answers to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Army Corps of Engineers regarding what is allowed in any wetlands or floodplains that are located in the Town. The controversy over the recent Shawano County Shore land Zoning Ordinance indicates that this is a very controversial subject. Again this illustrates the need to balance the individual's property rights with the public interest

Following is a chart showing estimated projections in the area. It would be expected that areas of wetland will have a direct relationship to growth patterns.

Shawano Lake Planning Area Growth Projections, 1995-2020 (Permanent and Seasonal Population)

Geographic area

Years	Population	Persons per household	Total Households
1990	1,587	2.73	581
1995	1,602	2.69	596
1996	1,620	2.66	609
2000	1,647	2.63	626
2005	1,639	2.56	640
2010	1,626	2.50	650
2015	1,607	2.43	661
2020	1,582	2.37	668

Source = Census Bureau – 1990, WDA 1996, ECWRPC 1996

The population estimates in the above chart have proven to be pessimistic, as the population for the Town of Richmond in the year 2009 has hit over 1,800.

2018 Population Numbers

DOA Code	FIPS 5	Muni Type	Municipality Name	County	Final Estimate 2018	Census 2010	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Voting Age Estimate 2018	Voting Age Census 2010
59040	67675	T	Richmond	Shawano	1,879	1,864	15	0.80%	1,498	1,468

Source Wisconsin Dept. of Administration Population Lab for 2018

F. Soils

The two most prevalent soil types in the town are as follows:

Tilleda – Menominee: nearly level to moderately steep, well drained, loamy and sandy soils; on uplands.

Menahga – Crosswell – Mahtomedi: nearly level to steep, excessively drained and moderately well drained, sandy soils; on uplands.

G. Woodlands

The woodlands in the town are a mixture of coniferous and deciduous forest types.

H. Natural/Wildlife Areas (including threatened and endangered species)

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources owns 150 acres of mostly woodland on the north end of Beech Road, which is open to the public. The town owns 62 acres of the former novitiate property on Butternut Road in the western edge of the town. This area is wooded with frontage along the Red River and is open to the public.

While we have many bear, deer and various species of other animals, as well as birds within our borders, we are currently aware of eagles and Sand Hill Cranes that are on the threatened species list. At one time, there were very few of these birds in our area, however, their numbers seem to be growing, simply based on the regular sightings that are now occurring. The Wisconsin Badger is also on the list of protected animals. The Karner Blue Butterfly is listed on the Shawano County list of endangered species; however, it is uncertain if any of these live in the Town of Richmond. There are no animals, that we are aware of, that are currently on the endangered species list.

The State of Wisconsin has the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program (WDACP), which provide damage prevention assistance and partial compensation to farmers when deer, bear, geese, and turkeys damage their agricultural crops.

I. Runoff Management Program

The state Legislature created the Wisconsin Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Abatement Program (now called the Wisconsin Runoff Management Program) in 1978. The goal of the program is to improve and protect the water quality of streams, lakes, wetlands and groundwater by reducing pollutants from urban and rural nonpoint sources.

J. Natural Resource Goals

- 1. Protection of natural areas including wetlands, wildlife habitats, streams and rivers.

A. Objectives

- 1. New development in the town should not negatively impact natural resources.
- 2. Minimize impacts to the town’s natural resources from non-metallic mineral mining.

B. Policies

- 1. New development should be discouraged from areas shown to be unsafe or unsuitable for development due to flood hazard and potential groundwater contamination.
- 2. Expansion of existing non-metallic mining operations or development of new sites should be allowed only on lands where the expansion will not conflict with pre-existing development.

K. Cultural Resources

Historic Resources

The Wisconsin Historical Society’s Architecture and History Inventory contains data on a wide range of historic properties throughout the state.

The following are some Century Farms located within the Town of Richmond:

Willard & Loraine Bartz	1882
Bruce Buettner	1883
Richard Dillenburg	1882
Wayne & Justin Engel	1883
Gordon & Larry Lindner	1888
Steve Pingel	1883
Alfonso & Jean Zaddock	1894

Archeological Resources

Archeological sites in the town include all our cemeteries and burial sites, which are protected under state law.

2008 Statement of Town of Richmond Assessment

The following chart indicates the breakdown of parcels, acreage and land values, without improvements for the Town of Richmond for the tax year 2008. This is the most recent information available.

2008

Class	Acreage	Land Values
Residential	1,336	\$22,786,600
Commercial	170	\$771,500
Manufacturing	72	\$202,500
Agricultural	10,569	\$2,164,100
Swamp & Waste	1,445	\$986,200
Forest	2,476	\$6,690,900
Ag Forest	2,542	\$3,491,600
Farmstead	155	\$604,200
TOTAL	18,765	\$37,697,600

Source: Town of Richmond Plan Commission

2019 Statement of Town of Richmond Assessment Equalized from Department of Revenue

Class Name	# of Parcels	# of Improved Parcels	# of Acres	Value of Land	Value of Improvements	Total Value
Residential	965	829	1418	\$23,745,500	\$98,777,500	\$122,523,000
Commercial	38	37	126	758,500	5,787,400	6,545,900
Manufacturing	9	5	73	200,000	3,276,500	3,476,500
Agriculture	554	--	10,411	1,921,100	--	1,921,100
Undeveloped	379	--	1,386	1,312,900	--	1,312,900
Ag Forest	256	--	2,413	3,564,500	--	3,564,500
Productive Forest	169	--	2,084	5,974,00	--	5,974,000
Other	55	55	176	827,500	8,012,000	8,839,500
Total All Columns	2425	926	18,087	\$38,304,000	\$115,853,400	\$154,157,400

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Summary

The Town Board of Supervisors of the Town of Richmond will:

- Work with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to protect our groundwater and sensitive environmental areas
- Encourage the State of Wisconsin to continue their attempts to offset the tax loss on managed forest plans and use valuation for agriculture properties

It is the intention of the Town of Richmond to protect existing residents, both farm and residential. In an effort to do this, the Town of Richmond will:

- Continue to advocate the “farmers right to farm”
- Continue to discourage the location of large farms near residential areas
- Protect the values of its current citizens

Private property rights are important to our citizens. The Town will:

- Protect the values of the people currently living here and new farms or residents
- Not adversely affect business, but also will not adversely affect the residents within the Town

Property owners are responsible for their property, even when they rent it out for use by others. This is a Quality of Life issue for the whole Town. The Town of Richmond recognizes the need to balance individual property rights with the public interest.

The Town of Richmond will continue to preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas and:

- Continue to cooperate with the Watershed Manager, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Wisconsin DNR to protect environmentally sensitive areas
- Seek information regarding the reclamation plans on nonmetallic mining sites. State statutes regulate reclamation plans and East Central Regional Planning handles the reclamation plans in this area.

The Town of Richmond will continue to work with property owners on development of their properties to ensure that this occurs in area designated and in areas that will not damage the environment.

Historic preservation will be encouraged. While the Town of Richmond cannot provide funding for this preservation, any available grant information we receive will be made available to the property owners upon request. The Town of Richmond will:

- Encourage a solid basis for preservation through any state programs that are available
- Establish an agenda for future preservation activities and attempt to create a way to measure that progress.
- Attempt to preserve any cultural and archaeological sites discovered