



TOWN OF RIB MOUNTAIN

Where Nature, Family & Sport Come Together

www.townofribmountain.org

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PLAN COMMISSION

OFFICIAL NOTICE & AGENDA

A meeting of the Town of Rib Mountain Plan Commission will be held on **Wednesday, August 9th, 2017; 6:30 P.M. at 3700 North Mountain Road, Town of Rib Mountain Municipal Center.** The Town Board may attend for purposes of gathering information. Subject matter for consideration and possible action follows:

- 1.) Call to Order
- 2.) Roll Call
- 3.) Minutes
 - a. **Approval of minutes from the 6-14-2017 and 6-28-2017 Plan Commission meetings.**
- 4.) Old Business
 - a. **Discussion on the Rib Mountain Comprehensive Plan Update Project, including Natural and Cultural Resources, Housing, and Utilities and Community Facilities. Docket #2017-05.**
- 5.) Correspondence/ Questions/Town Board Update:
- 6.) Public Comment
- 7.) Adjourn

TOWN OF RIB MOUNTAIN
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
June 14, 2017

Chairperson Harlan Hebbe, called the meeting of the Plan Commission to order at 6:30 pm. Other Plan Commission members present included Jim Hampton, Ryan Burnett, and Laura McGucken. Tom Steele, Jay Wittman and Ann Lucas were excused. Also present were Community Development Director, Steve Kunst, and Building Inspector / Assistant Zoning Administrator, Paul Kufahl.

MINUTES:

Motion by Jim Hampton, second by Ryan Burnett to approve the minutes of the May 24, 2017 Plan Commission meeting as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. *TRS Development, applicant, requests a pre-application conference for a potential Unified Development District project at the property addressed 4703 Lilac Avenue. Parcel #34.142807.006.007.00.00. Docket #2017-15.*

Representatives for the redevelopment of the TRS properties at 4703 Lilac presented a conceptual development plan to Plan Commissioners. The site plan presented included a Culver's restaurant in the southwest corner of the property and two retail buildings situated to the east along Swan Ave. The plan included moving the sanitary lift station to the southwest corner of the property and the development of two stormwater management facilities. Representatives noted a vacation of Sunflower Lane is necessary to begin the redevelopment. They also noted it would be a phased redevelopment approach, starting with the Culvers location, a stormwater facility, moving of the sanitary lift station, and aligning access with the current Kwik Trip/Koletsy private road. Subsequent phases would depend on the acquisition of businesses and their needs.

Plan Commissioners main discussed the duration of demolition, bike and pedestrian safety, the overall condition of Lilac Avenue, Morning Glory Lane and Swan Avenue with the increased traffic and potential interaction with the residential buildings across Swan Ave.

There was a brief discussion about the zoning preference for these parcels. Kunst noted the entire proposed development area could be rezoned to a Unified Development District (UDD) or left as Urban Commercial (UC) with a conditional use for the restaurant. Commissioners generally felt leaving it UC for the Culvers parcel development was acceptable and they could go either way for the remaining development.

- b. *Tom Jamgochian, applicant, requests a pre-application conference for a potential conditional use application at the property addressed 2901 Rib Mountain Drive. Parcel #34.102807.001.008.00.00. Docket #2017-16.*

The applicant presented a redevelopment idea for the current Michael's Supper Club property, along with the adjacent vacant lot and residence which are all under the same ownership. Tom Jamgochian presented a 24-hour, high efficiency, high volume car wash which would also feature a number of free vacuum bays. He noted patrons would enter the site from Robin Lane, approach a kiosk where they would select their intended wash type and proceed to que up for the wash bay. He noted the typical wash time is about 4.5 minutes, but instead of waiting for a car to be completely finished before the next car enters, the new car wash designs incorporate conveyor systems allowing for multiple cars in different stages of the wash cycle in the enclosed structure at the same time. He noted a 16-25 second load time for each new car. Upon exiting the car wash, customers would have the ability to use the free vacuum stations or exit back onto Rib Mountain Drive.

Plan Commissioners identified the following concerns related to the proposed redevelopment and asked the applicant to consider them as he continues his plan; noise levels related to the washing process and vacuums, compatibility with the residential zoning to the east, impact on traffic at the intersection and customer's ability to enter onto Rib Mountain Drive, impact on pedestrian and the school crossing route, and limiting the hours of operation. The Commission did note the proposal was an effective fit for the parcel layout.

- c. *Robert Alexejun, applicant, requests a pre-application conference for potential conditional use application for an off-premise direction sign within the I-39/USH-51 Corridor as part of a Home Occupation at the property addressed 510 E Lakeshore Drive. Parcel #34.238.000.006.00.00. Docket #2017-18.*

Robert Alexejun noted he is considering becoming a dealer/representative for Earth Blind products and would like to display a ground blind model along with his phone number in a natural setting amongst the trees somewhere along the highway corridor between County Roads N and NN to capture the attention of traffic heading north. He sought feedback from the Plan Commission as to whether this type of display and sign would be acceptable and where. Alexejun noted the blinds are meant to resemble rock outcroppings and would fit in with the surroundings.

Plan Commissioners asked how the sale transaction would take place, to which Alexejun noted the phone call would allow him to meet customers at the display and discuss sales and options. He noted there would be no use of his home for sale or business.

After some discussion whether the display is an off-premise directional sign or an outdoor display use, the Plan Commission recommended finding a commercial property owner willing to allow him to lease a section of land for his display and then apply for a conditional use for outdoor display.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. *Christina Suarez, applicant, requests a pre-application conference for a potential modification of a Unified Development District project at the property addressed 2101 North Mountain Road. Parcel #34.032807.012.021.00.00. Docket #2017-17.*

Community Development Director Kunst noted this discussion is a follow up to a previous inquiry by staff to determine if the Plan Commission felt the addition of a Tesla charging station to the future Hilton Garden Inn development would constitute a formal amendment to the projects Precise Implementation or if it were a minor site plan amendment. The Plan Commission reviewed the following questions they presented to Telsa from the previous meeting.

1. Why was the proposed location chosen for the equipment and charging stations (the concern is based on the proximity to the residential housing units and the thought that a location on the north side of the property would allow easier access from the main site entrance and highway accessibility)?

Representatives from the Hilton Garden Inn and Telsa noted they wanted to keep the parking closest to the hotel entrance points specifically for the guests staying at the hotel. Also, the charging equipment will be enclosed with the same vinyl fencing used on the south end of the site and therefore not visible. They felt by setting the equipment enclosure along the previously approved fence line would aesthetically work the best. Further, the proposed area was chosen as it does not conflict with any other underground utilities.

2. Who is the intended customer (hotel guests or will it act as a fueling/charging station for any Tesla in the area)?

It was noted the Supercharger Station is available 24/7 for any Tesla customer/driver. Supercharger stations are located along well-traveled highways and each station contains multiple Superchargers to help drivers get back on the road and minimize stops during long distance travel. Supercharger Stations located at hotels, provide Tesla customers the option for an overnight stay, while providing proximity to restaurants and retail offerings.

3. What is the anticipated traffic impact to, from, and through the hotel site?

Anticipated traffic impact will be minimal and likely not noticed throughout a given day. Tesla will specifically direct incoming traffic to the North Mountain Road site entrance and through the parking lot via the in-car GPS system and will avoid Robin Lane.

4. Does the Equipment generate noise, EMF or other potential nuisances?

The location of the hotel, adjacent to Highway 51 and Hwy 29, makes any noise generated from cooling fans undistinguishable. The chart below identifies the equipment's generated noise in decibels. The equipment works much like a radiator in that it is cooled with water. The equipment does not produce any EMF, or produce any other type of nuisance. Cooling fan noise is generally confined to the system enclosure.

NOISE	Fan not running	55 dB(A) at 1 meter from rear (typical)
	Fan running full speed	75 dB(A) at 1 meter from rear (typical)

5. Why choose a Supercharging Station versus standard charging station?

Supercharger is Tesla’s branded name. Tesla has deployed a fast-charging solution called the Supercharger. Superchargers are connectors that charge a Tesla in minutes instead of hours and are strategically built to minimize stops during long distance travel. Tesla vehicles are 100% electric with range capability of up to 335 miles on a single charge. The average charge session is around 35 minutes, with cars fully charged in about 1 hour if the battery is near empty.

6. How is the charging station marketed?

Tesla customers are directed to recharge at a Supercharger via the in-car navigation (GPS). While the car charges, Tesla owners often patronize local businesses to show their support for hosting a Supercharger station. To maximize efficiency and minimize impact, the car alerts its owner through their cell phone once charging is complete.

7. Will there be sufficient parking on site with eight spaces designated for charging?

Chris Ghidorzi noted the site will maintain sufficient parking onsite. These parking stalls, while marketed to Tesla users are still available for the general public to park at and they will likely do so during peak times. Plan Commissioners noted concerns about the total site parking and the impact on the neighboring residents.

Additional concerns related to electrical safety and driver crime were addressed by Brian Craig, Tesla’s Installation Manager. Craig noted he could provide the Town’s Fire Department with additional literature on the charging stations in the unlikely event of a fire. Based on this information the Plan Commissioners indicated they felt the proposal constitutes a minor site plan amendment and no public hearing was required.

CORRESPONDENCE / QUESTIONS / TOWN BOARD UPDATE:

IGA / Peoples State Bank – Staff noted an upcoming Site Plan review for parking lot improvements for People’s State Bank and the IGA grocery store. In discussions with their landscapers it was noted they won’t likely be able to meet the landscape requirements for new development, so Plan Commission will need to consider the amount of improvements made when reviewing the request.

Kwik Trip – Staff noted Kwik Trip is adding a fuel type and are considering a request for an electronic fuel pricing board on an existing canopy.

Azura Memory Care – Staff asked whether the Plan Commission considers the placement of a garden shed on this property a minor site plan amendment or if they would like to see it as a Site Plan Review at a future meeting. Commission members indicated depending on its location they would like to review it.

Mobilitie – Staff noted representatives from Mobilitie met with the Town’s Public Works Committee to discuss their request for placement of a telecommunications pole in Town right-of-way.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURN:

Motion by Ryan Burnett, second by Jim Hampton to adjourn the Plan Commission Meeting. Motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned 8:57 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul Kufahl, Building Inspector / Assistant Zoning Administrator

DRAFT

TOWN OF RIB MOUNTAIN
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
June 28, 2017

Chairperson Harlan Hebbe, called the meeting of the Plan Commission to order at 6:30 pm. Other Plan Commission members present included Ryan Burnett, Tom Steele, and Laura McGucken. Jim Hampton, Jay Wittman, and Ann Lucas were excused. Also present were Community Development Director, Steve Kunst, and Building Inspector / Assistant Zoning Administrator, Paul Kufahl.

MINUTES:

Plan Commission Members agreed to Table action on the Minutes from the June 14, 2017 meeting to allow for additional members to be present.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. *People's State Bank, owner, requests Site Plan approval for parking lot improvements at the property addressed 2904 Rib Mountain Drive. Parcel #34.102807.002.013.00.00. Docket #2017-19.*

Community Development Director Kunst noted that the proposed project will coincide with the Town's next phase of Rib Mountain Drive improvements and more specifically the ingress/egress locations along the corridor. Kunst stated that proposal meets our zoning code requirements for parking, landscaping and lighting within the parking area. He noted that some lighting does spill onto Rib Mountain Drive and onto an adjacent vacant property owned by People's State Bank, but should not cause any nuisances. It was also noted that the right of way acquisitions and improvements made to Rib Mountain Drive will create the need for a shared access point with the IGA.

Plan Commission members asked for clarification on ingress and egress locations to the site and questioned the process of right of way acquisition and. Kunst indicated that People's will be losing one of their current access points, but will have a shared access on Rib Mountain Drive to the north of their parcel and their current southern access will remain, with a right out only turn option due to a new raised median being installed as part of the Rib Mountain Drive improvement project. Kunst also explained the notification and informational meeting process that was used to inform property owners of the right of way acquisitions and Rib Mountain Drive modifications.

Commissioners discussed the extra parking spaces available and the current "handshake agreement" with Quality Foods IGA to share that parking. They considered making a formal signed agreement for the shared parking and access a condition of approval. Additionally they questioned the dumpster location and its current screening and whether any additional updates

to the lighting would be made. Dan Detert, agent from REI, indicated that the current dumpster location is within the detached shed on the south side of the parking lot and it will remain in place and there was no plan to update the lighting locations.

Commissioners expressed some concern for the right out only access after the bank's drive thru, to which Kunst indicated that there may be some additional discussion with Streets and Park Superintendent Scott Turner and the property owner about modifications to the raised median to allow for a left turn.

Commission Members then verified that other existing items like their signage location and drop-box would remain and Detert confirmed they would. Kunst noted that approval could be conditioned up any necessary State or County approvals.

Motion by Tom Steele, seconded by Laura McGucken to approve the Site Plan application for parking lot improvements addressed 2904 Rib Mountain Drive, as presented. Motion carried 4-0

- b. *Quality Foods IGA, owner, requests Site Plan approval for parking lot improvements at the property addressed 2900 Rib Mountain Drive. Parcel #34.102807.002.001.00.00. Docket #2017-20.*

Kunst opened by comparing the proposal with our typical zoning standards, noting that the proposal will make the pavement setback along Rib Mountain Drive conforming and that while IGA does not have enough parking on their own site, the shared parking arrangement with People's provides more than enough parking spaces for both businesses. Additionally, Kunst noted that while the proposed landscaping plan does not meet our requirements, it is a considerable improvement to the current site conditions.

Plan Commission members felt that the landscaping improvement was adequate and continued discussion related to the shared parking and Rib Mountain Drive access. Commissioners applauded the fact that the property owners are able to work together informally to share site features, however, they generally felt it necessary to have a formal agreement in place to protect that cooperation in the future. Kunst indicated that if an agreement cannot be made, staff would consider a no fee site plan review in the future to allow for approval without the condition of a signed agreement.

Commissioners verified dumpster, can collection, signage and card board collection locations with the applicants agent. Detert indicated there would be no changes to their current locations. It was also noted that there would be no improvements to the lighting or building appearance as part of this project.

Motion by Tom Steele, seconded by Laura McGucken to approve the Site Plan application for parking lot improvements addressed 2900 Rib Mountain Drive, conditioned upon a signed shared access and parking agreement between People’s State Bank and Quality Foods IGA. Motion carried 4-0

c. *Discussion and recommendation on canopy/tent-like structures. Docket #2017-21.*

Staff asked for clarification related to metal carport structures. It was noted that under the Town’s detached accessory buildings code section, carports are allowed. However, rigid metal frames and siding are included in the prohibition of Canopy/Tent accessory structures. After some discussion about the codes adoption in 2007, it was determined that metal carport structures were intended to be prohibited, however, site built wood carport structures are acceptable, provided that they meet the minimum design standards.

CORRESPONDENCE / QUESTIONS / TOWN BOARD UPDATE:

Mobilite – Kunst updated Plan Commission members on Mobilite’s discussion with the Public Works Committee and noted that a State Assembly Bill may limit a municipalities authority over these structures.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURN:

Motion by Tom Steele, second by Laura McGucken to adjourn the Plan Commission Meeting. Motion carried 4-0. Meeting 7:37 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Kufahl, Building Inspector / Assistant Zoning Administrator

REPORT TO PLAN COMMISSION & TOWN BOARD

FROM: Steve Kunst, Community Development Director
DATE: August 4, 2017
SUBJECT: Rib Mountain Comprehensive Plan Update Project

ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:

1. Review of 'Natural Resources' Chapter
2. Review of 'Housing' Chapter
3. Review of 'Utilities and Community Facilities' Chapter

NARRATIVE:

After initially reviewing the aforementioned chapters in May, the Plan Commission recommended scheduling another meeting to more closely review the information. The draft chapters included in the packet contain **red text**, representing staff suggested language additions. Also, as part of this review staff identified a few specific questions related to each chapter topic. Generally, discussion will focus on prominent strengths or issues associated with the given chapter topic, followed by relevant goals for the future. As mentioned earlier in the process, the Comprehensive Plan is intended to help guide decision making for the next 20 years. Below are a few questions, by chapter, to help direct conversation.

Natural Resources

- What, if any, do you see as challenges to natural resources over the next 20 years?
- What is the Commission's stance on non-metallic mines (e.g. sand, gravel)? Does the Commission want to encourage new mine development?
- Do you have any concerns with existing or new non-metallic mines?

Housing

- What do you consider as strengths of the Rib Mountain housing market?
- Do you identify any current weaknesses within the housing market?
- Do you foresee any housing challenges over the next 20 years?
- Should the Town take encourage on senior housing? If so, what form of senior housing is appropriate and where?
- Is there interest in a revolving loan fund or similar program for home improvements in older neighborhoods within the Town?
- General comments related to multi-family housing. Appropriate areas, concerns, etc.

Utilities and Community Facilities (Chapter still in need of updated information)

- General comments on the quality of service for cellular, television, internet, electrical, sewer, and water facilities.
- Do you feel the Town needs a secondary polling location for major elections?
- Do you foresee the need for additional law enforcement services in the next 20 years?

Chapter 2: Natural and Cultural Resources

This Chapter describes local land and water conditions in detail as well as agricultural resources and cultural heritage. It is important to consider the patterns and interrelations of natural resources on a broader scale beyond the Town's borders as these resources do not follow geo-political boundaries. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administrated at the County, State, or Federal level. An overview of recent natural resource planning efforts is described below, followed by a description of local natural resource conditions.

The natural character of the Town is highly valued residents and the protection and enhancement of these resources is a continuing priority. However, Rib Mountain has little regulatory authority over many natural resources, so the Town will continue to work with Marathon County and WDNR to protect and enhance natural resources within the Town, including threatened and endangered species.

Relevant and Recent Planning Efforts

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.

Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan

The Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of soil and water conservation in Marathon County from 2010 to 2020. The Land Conservation and Zoning Committee identified the following long-term program outcomes for the natural resource protection efforts in Marathon County:

1. Land Use activities are well planned to enhance community development, minimize conflicts, maximize infrastructure investments, and protect rural character.
2. Improve and protect the surface and ground water assets to enhance public health and safety, recreational opportunities, and economic development.
3. Maintain the soil and water resources as productive assets through topsoil and organic matter conservation.
4. Marathon County agriculture and woodlot producers are economically strong.

Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan

The Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan is required under Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The purpose of this plan is to guide and manage the preservation of farmland and agricultural production capacity. Although there are limited agricultural areas in the Town, this program is of overall importance to the county in general and may have an impact on Town residents, for example, related to emerging trends such as the local foods movement.

Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan

The Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan is a management guide for the Marathon County Forest and is updated every ten years. The mission of the plan is to manage and protect natural resources on a sustainable basis for the ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future residents throughout the county. The report includes a number of recommendations for timber management, wildlife habitat and game management, land acquisition and forest boundary management, biodiversity management, watershed management, and tourism.

Marathon County Groundwater Protection Guide

The Groundwater Protection Guide was an extension of a 1988 groundwater plan. In April 2001, the guide was created to assist county and local officials in setting policy related to groundwater. It also

serves as a resource for information about groundwater and strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection. The County is considering a new groundwater planning effort.

USGS Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater through Comprehensive Planning

In a joint effort by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the University of Wisconsin System, and the U.S. Geological Survey, a website has been made available with data and information on geology, general hydrology, and groundwater quantity and quality. The website was developed to aid government officials and planners in addressing groundwater in their comprehensive plans. The most recent data available for Marathon County was published in 2007.

Natural Resources

Marathon County is characterized by its abundance of natural resources, including water, soil, and biological resources. The Town contains two of the significant natural areas in Marathon County - Rib Mountain State Park and Nine-Mile Forest Unit.

Water Resources

Marathon County contains a plethora of water resources. Many have remained in a fairly pristine condition and others are in need of focused efforts to improve water quality. Surface water resources help replenish the groundwater as part of the hydrologic cycle. Under natural conditions, the aquifers generally receive clean water from rainfall percolating through the overlying soils. However, contamination of groundwater reserves can result from runoff and pollution. Protection of these groundwater reserves is necessary to ensure adequate water to domestic, agricultural, and commercial uses. If groundwater is not protected, contamination could result, endangering the quality and supply of water in the Village.

Streams and Rivers

The Wisconsin River forms the eastern border of the Town of Rib Mountain and the Big Rib River meanders along the northern Town border. Black Creek runs through the Nine-Mile Forest Unit. See *Natural Resources Map*.

The Big Rib River is used for recreation, including fishing and paddling. However, the river is also a source of water for Granite Peak Ski Area for snow creation. In the 2016-2017 ski season, Granite Peak Ski Area drew more than 135 million gallons of water from the river to create snow. This has impacts on wildlife in and along the river. Such intensive water use has been a point of controversy as the ski area seeks to expand in the near future.

An Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) is a lake, stream or flowage having excellent water quality, high recreational and aesthetic value and high quality fishing. ORW waters are free from point source or nonpoint source pollution. An Exceptional Resource Water (ERW) is a lake, stream, or flowage exhibiting the same high quality resource values as outstanding waters, but may be affected by point source pollution. Several streams in the County are classified as ORW or ERW. There are no Outstanding Resource Waters or Exceptional Resource Waters in the Town of Rib Mountain.

Watersheds

The Town of Rib Mountain is geographically located in what the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has named the Central Wisconsin Basin, which is a subset of the entire Wisconsin River corridor located in Central Wisconsin. The Central Wisconsin Basin extends south from the Merrill Dam located on the Wisconsin River in Lincoln County to the Castle Rock Flowage Dam in Juneau and

Adams Counties. The Central Wisconsin River Basin is comprised of 29 watersheds, including the two watersheds which cover the Town of Rib Mountain.

A watershed is an area of land that is drained by a waterway that flows to a lake, reservoir, or river. The watershed boundary line is defined as a topographic dividing line from which surface streams flow in two different directions. The Lower Rib River watershed includes the portion of the Town north of Rib Mountain and the Mosinee Flowage watershed includes the portion of the Town south of Rib Mountain.

Floodplain

Floodplains consist of land likely to be covered by floodwater during a 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.

Generally, “floodway” consists of the channel of a river or stream and those portions of the floodplain adjoining the channel that are needed to carry the regional flood discharge. “Flood fringe” consists of that portion of the floodplain outside of the floodway covered by floodwaters during the regional flood and is generally associated with standing water rather than flowing water.

In the Town of Rib Mountain, large areas in the 100-year floodplain are located along the Big Rib River and a narrow band of floodplains edges the Wisconsin River and Black Creek. See *Natural Resources Map*.

Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as areas between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is at, near, or above the land surface for a significant part of most years. Wetlands include marshes, wooded swamps, and wet meadows. Soils in these areas are usually saturated during the growing season within a few inches of the surface. The presence of wetlands in an area can limit the type of development that can occur in that location.

Wetlands are found in several places in the Town. The majority of the southwest portion of the Town around Black Creek, which makes up much of the Nine Mile area, is wetland area. The northern border of the Town is also predominantly wetland around the Big Rib River. See the *Natural Resources Map*.

Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle, and local ecological systems. In a natural condition, they control floodwater by moderating peak flows, and some may act as groundwater recharge sites. All wetlands have valuable water purification capabilities and make significant contributions to surface and groundwater quality. They act as settling areas for inflowing streams as well as functioning in the reduction of water nutrients through uptake of these compounds into plant tissues. They also have a buffering effect on water acidity or alkalinity and are helpful in the elimination of harmful bacteria, which may be found in surface or groundwater. They also serve as breeding and nesting grounds for waterfowl and many other animals that depend on aquatic habitats; they are an important recreational, education, and aesthetic resource. In many instances, wetlands serve as the combined roles of flood moderation, water purification and aquatic habitat, wetlands are important to the maintenance of downstream habitat as well.

Groundwater

The depth to groundwater varies from shallow to moderately deep throughout the Town. The volume of groundwater available for domestic and business uses also varies from sufficient to limited in some areas. High bedrock in some areas limits the supply and access to groundwater.

Soil Resources

Geology

The most notable geologic features in the Town are Rib Mountain and Mosinee Hill. Rib Mountain, formerly called Rib Hill, is a four-mile-long ridge of ancient rock dating back about 1.7 billion years. It is among the oldest geological features on earth. It is composed of very hard metamorphic rock called quartzite. Rib Mountain reaches to 1,924 feet above sea level, making it the fourth tallest peak in Wisconsin.

Adjacent to Rib Mountain are Mosinee Hill and Hardwood Hill. Mosinee Hill is within the Town of Rib Mountain, while Hardwood Hill is within the Town of Marathon. Mosinee Hill is located 1.5 miles south-southeast of Rib Mountain and consists of two peaks (the Upper and Lower) joined by a “saddle”. The two peaks reach elevations of 1,610 and 1,472 feet above sea level respectively. All three hills are composed of rock of the same composition and have similar geology as Rib Mountain.

Soil Types

There are five different soil associations present in Rib Mountain. Areas adjacent to the Big Rib and Wisconsin rivers consist of Mahtomedi-Fordum-Sturgeon. Most of the Nine-Mile Creek area contains Cathro-Seelyville soils. The area encompassing and surrounding Rib Mountain consists of Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozellville soils. Other soil associations include Mosinee-Meadland-Dancy and Marathon-Mylrea-Moberg. Susceptibility for soil erosion is generally consistent with the average soil loss rate in Marathon County overall and is not a major concern.

Prime Farm Soils

Areas most suitable for agricultural production, with minimal limitations and requiring minimal inputs for successful production have been identified as “prime farm lands” by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA further defines prime farm lands into land capability classes. Land Capability Classification (LCC) is a system of grouping soils primarily on the basis of their capability to produce common cultivated crops and pasture plants without deteriorating over a long period of time. Prime farm lands in Marathon County have been classified into the USDA Land Capability Class II.

Soils can also be categorized according to other factors, such as how well drained they are on a scale of Excessively Drained to Very Poorly Drained. Another method for categorizing soils is by how good they are for agriculture. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Marathon County for growing all crops. The “prime farm soils” designation given to Class 1 soils indicates that these soils are good for productive farmland.

Areas of Group 1 and 2 prime farmland soils are mostly concentrated around the base of Rib Mountain extending a little south of CTH N. It should be noted that not all prime farm soils are used for farming; some have been developed with residential or other uses. The “prime farm soils” designation simply indicates that these soils are good productive farmland.

Steep Slopes

Steep slopes are defined as slopes with gradients over 12 percent. Most of the steep slopes in the Town are associated with Rib Mountain. Generally, development is restricted or prohibited on steep slopes.

Non-Metallic Mining

There are about 400 operating or abandoned sand, gravel, decomposed (“rotten”) granite and stone excavation sites in Marathon County. In 1989 the County adopted a Non-metallic Mining Ordinance that requires reclamation of these sites to a purposeful and acceptable landscape appearance and use. The program is administered by the Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning Department and includes incentives to reclaim abandoned excavations. **Two active non-metallic mines remain in the**

Town; one owned by the Town of Wausau on Red Bud Road and the other by Mathey Construction on South Mountain Road.

Contaminated Sites

The Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) is an inventory of every known contaminated site, such as oil or chemical spill, in the state of Wisconsin. These sites are also known as brownfields. Contaminated sites are not uncommon as all communities with commercial and industrial development have the potential for air emissions, groundwater contamination, soil spills, and surface water contamination. Contaminated sites originate when a property is used for such activities as a gas station, industrial processing facility, a landfill, or laundry mat. There are no listed open sites on the BRRT currently in the Town.

These properties create many problems for communities, including potential harm to human health and the environment; reduced tax revenue and economic growth, neighborhood deterioration and blight; and attraction of illegal activity, including vandalism and dumping. Brownfield investigation, cleanup and redevelopment can reduce many of these problems. Communities gain by recycling land infrastructure for new businesses and employment, housing, parks, athletics fields and other local needs. Additionally, residential property values near remediated sites increase anywhere between 4.9% and 32.2%.

Agricultural Resources

In the Town, prime farmland soils are mostly concentrated around the base of Rib Mountain extending a little south of CTH N, as noted in previous sections. There are no areas in the Town zoned Exclusive Agriculture. Agricultural uses account for XX% of land use in the Town of Rib Mountain. While a relatively small percentage of Town land use, forty-three percent of the land in Marathon County, or 439,346 acres, is devoted to agricultural production.

Biological Resources

Vegetation

The Town contains a significant amount of woodlands, many owned by the State (Rib Mountain State Park) or County (Nine-Mile forest unit). A portion of the County owned woodlands are logged. Vegetation in developed areas of the Town generally consists of urban landscaping of lawns, trees, shrubs and private gardens. However, many of the more rural, large lot residences are heavily wooded.

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 bear, badger, wolf, 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, and Rib Mountain State Park. In addition, Nine Mile Creek provides significant wildlife habitat area in the Town of Rib Mountain.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The following is a list of threatened and endangered species and natural features on the Natural Heritage Working List that have been documented for the Town of Rib Mountain. Bald eagles are not represented, and sensitive species have been removed, where applicable, including cave bats.

Communities

The Natural Heritage Inventory listed three communities in the Town of Rib Mountain:

- **Northern Sedge Meadow Community:** This open wetland community is dominated by sedges and grasses. There are several common subtypes: Tussock meadows, dominated by tussock sedge (*Carex stricta*) and Canada bluejoint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*); Broad-leaved sedge meadows, dominated by the robust sedges (*Carex lacustris* and/or *C. utriculata*); and Wire-leaved sedge meadows, dominated by such species as woolly sedge (*Carex lasiocarpa*) and few-seeded sedge (*C. oligosperma*). Frequent associates include marsh bluegrass (*Poa palustris*), manna grasses (*Glyceria* spp.), panicled aster (*Aster lanceolatus*), joy-pye-weed (*Eupatorium maculatum*), and the bulrushes (*Scirpus atrovirens* and *S. cyperinus*).
- **Shrub-Carr Community:** This wetland community is dominated by tall shrubs such as red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), meadowsweet (*Spiraea alba*), and various willows (*Salix discolor*, *S. bebbiana*, and *S. gracilis*). Canada bluejoint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*) is often very common. Associates are similar to those found in Alder Thickets and tussock-type Sedge Meadows. This type is common and widespread in southern Wisconsin but also occurs in the north.
- **Fast; Soft; Cold Stream Community:** This community generally consists of cold water streams that run fast and have soft or gravelly bottoms, not rocky. These streams are well suited for trout.

Flora

The inventory listed two plants as of special concern in the Town:

- Missouri Rock-cress (*Boechera missouriensis*)
- Drooping Sedge (*Carex prasina*)

Fauna

Five animals were listed on the Heritage Inventory:

- Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax vireescens*)
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)
- American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*)
- Black Redhorse (*Moxostoma duquesnei*)
- Broad-banded Forestsnail (*Allogona profunda*)

Cultural Resources

A cultural resource is a broad term that can encompass many aspects of heritage. Cultural resources may include archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to Native Americans or other cultural groups. Cultural resources are those elements that signify 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 Rib Mountain

The Town of Rib Mountain was originally part of the Town of Weston. In 1905, the area west of the Wisconsin River was separated and initially renamed Erickson (after the Town Chairman), but soon

renamed Flieth. Flieth Street, now part of Wausau, commemorates this early name. The community name was changed in 1930 to Rib Mountain.

Like other nearby towns, lumbering was an early activity in the Town, followed by farming. The Town has experienced much change as a result of its location along the Wisconsin River, and due to its proximity to the City of Wausau. The Town was first connected to Wausau by the 100-foot McCleary Bridge across the Big Rib River. Built of steel, the bridge's height made it accessible only by steep ramps at each end. The McCleary Bridge (also known as the "Snake Bridge") was reconstructed in the early 1900s. At that time, the Big Rib River still flowed its natural course and construction of the new bridge occurred on dry land in some areas. The 1909 construction of the Rothschild Dam created Lake Wausau and the water impoundment at the mouth of the Big Rib River.

The Town is home to Rib Mountain State Park, created when 160 acres were donated to the State of Wisconsin. A road to the top of the mountain was completed in 1931. By the mid-1930s, another 160 acres were added to the park, and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) made improvements to develop the ski area on the mountain. Rib Mountain is one of the highest points in Wisconsin and has become an important economic and recreational contributor to the region.

Growth in the Town of Rib Mountain over the last several decades was influenced in part by construction of Highway 51 (then referred to as the "Highway 51 Bypass"), which was completed in 1963. The new highway and interchanges greatly improved access to the Town, fostering development of new commercial and housing areas along its route in Rib Mountain and also in the Town of Stettin to the north.

The Town's primary commercial corridor, Rib Mountain Drive, is the premier retail attraction in northcentral Wisconsin. Home to a host of large, national retail chains and restaurants, Rib Mountain drive alone sees nearly 20,000 annual average daily traffic (AADT) trips.

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

There are no properties in Rib Mountain 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 11 historic properties in Rib Mountain that have been previously surveyed and included in the AHI.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has identified 12 archaeological sites and historic cemeteries in Rib Mountain.

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. 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. The one known cemetery in the Town is the Bethlehem/Zion Lutheran Cemetery on CTH NN.

Issues

- **Development on Rib Mountain:** There are some conflicts between environmental groups and ski resort owners regarding development on Rib Mountain. The owner of Granite Peak Ski Resort is interested in **expanding the ski resort by increasing the number of ski runs; adding chalets and retail structures, and** developing condominiums on a 25-acre site at the base of the ski hill. Opposition groups are concerned about development impacts on the natural character of Rib Mountain.
- **Development at High Elevations:** Very steep topography limits development in some areas, particularly on Rib Mountain and the Mosinee Hill area south of CTH KK. While development may be restricted on areas with steep slopes, development is not necessarily prohibited on more level areas located at higher elevations. Because the Town does not restrict driveway construction on steep slopes, access can be provided to building sites located on more level ground at higher elevations. However, such sites generally must be accessed via private driveways because the maximum grade allowed for public roads is 12 percent. Development at high elevations poses problems for the Village because it is difficult to pump water to serve these areas and water for private wells is generally not readily available.
- **Water Use from Big Rib River:** The large quantities of water drawn from the Big Rib River annually by the ski resort to make snow have become a controversial issue due to the impacts of that water drawing on local flora and fauna and due to the resort's plans to expand and draw even more water in the future. The Town have limited to no jurisdiction regarding this issue.
- **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 Town to have current information about cultural resources in order to maximize planning and make the best use of historic properties.
- **No Recognition Process:** There is no process to recognize historic buildings or begin to plan for their protection. Once historic properties are identified, the Town does not have an established mechanism for recognizing them or integrating them into ongoing planning processes.

Natural and Cultural Resources Goal, Objectives, and Actions

Natural and Cultural Resources Goal: The Town of Rib Mountain will protect and enhance the quality of significant natural and cultural resources.

1. **Protect and enhance natural resource areas in the Town.**
 - a. Continue working with the WDNR and Marathon County to ensure appropriate preservation of wetlands and shorelines.
 - b. Encourage restoration of native vegetation along the Big Rib River to minimize the potential for bank erosion.
 - c. Consider restricting development and land disturbance on steep slopes (i.e., via establishing maximum allowable grades for private driveways).
 - d. To the extent possible, limit uncontrolled runoff, overuse of fertilizers, and other contaminants that could negatively affect water quality.
2. **Protect and enhance the woodlands in the Town.**
 - a. Minimize clear-cutting of mature trees and woodlands.

- b. Actively enforce the Town's ordinances regarding clear-cutting on private property and revise, as necessary to maintain consistency with County's clear-cutting regulations for Nine-Mile Forestry Unit.
 - c. Consider establishing buffer requirements between areas disturbed (e.g., graded) for new development and woodlands to minimize destruction or encroachment into the woodland edge. The buffer should be maintained in a natural condition.
 - d. Continue to serve as the liaison to foster communication between private property owners in the Town and the County, WDNR, and others regarding the Managed Forest Law (MFL), Forest Crop Law (FCL), and other programs aimed at protection and preservation of woodlands.
3. **Preserve the natural character and scenic quality of Rib Mountain.**
- a. Minimize intensive development in areas that could affect views of, or the natural character of Rib Mountain.
 - b. Continue to work cooperatively with the Ski Resort and the State to manage and coordinate development to minimize impacts on the natural character or appearance of Rib Mountain.
4. **Preserve historically significant buildings and sites.**
- a. Work with the County Historical Society to identify and map historic resources so they may be considered in future planning.
 - b. Ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or any development activities.
 - c. Work with the County Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Office to determine if structures are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Chapter 3: Housing

Housing characteristics and trends are important components of a comprehensive plan. The physical location of housing determines the need of many public services and facilities. Furthermore, understanding dynamics in the market likely to affect housing development in the future provides a basis for the formulation of policy to coordinate transportation facilities with a sustainable pattern of residential development. Understanding the factors affecting people's ability to meet their own housing needs provides a basis for reinforcing community ties, fostering economic development and environmental sustainability, and improving the quality of life.

Previous Plans and Studies

While quality housing is an essential aspect of livability, there are few housing studies or plans at the local level. Two plans, at the state and regional levels relate to housing in the area.

Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the State in accessing formula program fund of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS. "The Consolidated Plan provides the framework for a planning process used by States and localities to identify housing, homeless, community, and economic development needs and resources, and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs."

Regional Livability Plan

The 2015 Regional Livability Plan (RLP), written by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, addresses issues of livability in the areas of housing, transportation, economic development, and land use. The RLP identifies a number of issues affecting community livability related to housing:

- an aging population,
- smaller household sizes,
- a lack of housing options, and
- an increase in housing costs related to incomes.

Housing Data

The majority of the housing data in this section is taken from the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census as well as the 2014 American Community Survey. As discussed in the demographics section, there was a miscalculation in the 2000 U.S. Census in Rib Mountain when the bureau included several suburbs that were not a part of the township in the Rib Mountain count. This resulted in a 611-person difference in the population Wisconsin DOA estimate and the U.S. Census count. This miscalculation also affected the housing unit count in the U.S. Census in Rib Mountain, although there is not DOA estimation for housing units for municipalities.

The 2000 U.S. Census counted 2,769 housing units, which would have indicated a .3 percent decrease from 2000 to 2010. The counted number of housing units is high. The NCWRPC estimates that the number of housing units was closer to 2,563. This was estimated by dividing the DOA 2000 population estimate by the 2000 Census average household size, 2.78. This yields 2,498 households. The number of households was then multiplied by 102.6 percent to account for the 2000 Census housing vacancy rate of 2.6 percent.

There is a difference of 206 housing units between the NCWRPC estimate and the U.S. Census 2000 housing unit count. This would mean that between 2000 and 2010 there was an increase of 7.7 percent.

However, as with demographic markers, there is no substitute for the housing unit data in 2000 provided by the Census Bureau. Therefore the statistics on housing units in this section are left unaltered for consistency.

Housing Inventory

The following information provides a summary overview of the type, character and conditions of the housing stock in the Town of Rib Mountain.

As shown on **Table 3.1** the Town of Rib Mountain has 2,761 housing units, a decrease of 8 units since 2000. This represents a decrease of .03 percent in housing units, compared to a decline of 9.7 percent in population and a 1.7 percent decrease in the number of households. Marathon County and the state’s housing units grew by 14.6 and 13.1 percent, respectively.

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2014	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
Rib Mountain Town	2,769	2,761	2,664	-0.3%	-8
Marathon Town	374	415	400	11.0%	41
Mosinee Town	784	864	802	10.2%	80
Rothschild Village	1,988	2,332	2,476	17.3%	344
Schofield City	1,022	1,099	1,124	7.5%	77
Wausau City	16,668	18,154	18,345	8.9%	1,486
Marathon County	50,360	57,734	58,040	14.6%	7,374
State of Wisconsin	2,321,144	2,624,358	2,635,602	13.1%	303,214
United States	115,904,641	131,704,730	132,741,033	13.6%	15,800,089

Source: U.S. Census, 2014 ACS Five Year Estimates

Housing Projections

Table 3.2 shows the projected number of housing units needed from 2020 to 2040. These housing projections were based on the WDOA population and household projections from 2013. The calculation for number of households was determined by dividing the projected population by the projected household size for each five year increment. The total needed housing units shown below also assumed that the town vacancy of rate of 4.0 percent would hold steady.

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Rib Mountain Town	2,907	2,971	3,018	3,044	3,038

Source: DOA Household Projections 2013, NCWRPC 2016

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 house 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 after 1980 are typically much larger than housing built in previous decades. Additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and attached garage space are among the amenities found in newer housing units.

Table 3.3: Housing Units by Year Built

Minor Civil Division	<1940	'40s	'50s	'60s	'70s	'80s	'90s	'00	> 2010
Rib Mountain Town	5.4%	0.5%	9.8%	12.3%	16.7%	18.3%	24.2%	12.2%	0.6%
Marathon Town	15.8%	3.0%	3.5%	12.3%	20.8%	12.0%	22.3%	9.8%	0.5%
Mosinee Town	9.6%	3.2%	3.1%	5.2%	15.5%	17.2%	31.9%	14.2%	0.1%
Rothschild Village	8.8%	9.5%	11.2%	14.0%	22.4%	6.8%	11.6%	15.7%	0.0%
Schofield City	23.9%	8.5%	24.4%	11.7%	9.5%	6.9%	7.5%	7.3%	0.3%
Wausau City	26.1%	10.7%	16.7%	10.0%	10.6%	6.2%	6.6%	12.1%	1.0%
Marathon County	18.8%	6.1%	10.0%	9.0%	15.1%	9.6%	14.0%	16.5%	0.9%
State of Wisconsin	21%	6%	11%	10%	15%	10%	14%	13%	7%
United States	13%	5%	11%	11%	16%	14%	14%	15%	10%

Source: U.S. Census, 2010 ACS Five Year Estimates

Table 3.3 shows housing age distribution in Rib Mountain and surrounding communities for 2014. Housing built in the 1990s makes up approximately 24 percent of the total housing stock. That is significantly higher than overall percentages for the County as homes built in the 1990s make up 13 percent of the County’s overall housing stock. The 2000s saw housing growth slower than the county and the state in Rib Mountain. Housing growth in the Town, surrounding communities, and the county slowed significantly since 2010.

Housing Units by Type

Single-family detached units were the dominant housing type in the Town, as in the County in 2014, as shown in Table 3.4. Single-family houses made up 94.3 percent of all housing units. This is significantly higher than the overall figures for the County (77%) or State (69%). Only 1.5 percent of housing units in Rib Mountain are structures with more than 10 units.

The Table also compares housing unit types in Rib Mountain with nearby communities, both rural (the Towns of Marathon and Mosinee) and urban (the Cities of Schofield and Wausau and the Village of Rothschild). Rib Mountain has more housing types of three or more units (2.6%) than the Town of Marathon (1.0%), but fewer than the Town of Mosinee (2.9%). The urban communities have a significantly higher proportion of housing types of three or more units than the Town of Rib Mountain. Wausau has the most multifamily units with 23.4%, followed by Schofield (21.7%) and Rothschild (18.5%). With Rib Mountain’s a mix of urban, suburban, and rural housing areas, the Town has a comparatively low percentage of multifamily housing.

Table 4.3: Housing Units by Type

Unit Type	Town of Rib Mountain	Town of Marathon	Town of Mosinee	Village of Rothschild	City of Schofield	City of Wausau	Marathon County
1, detached	88.0%	95.3%	88.9%	75.3%	62.1%	61.2%	74.4%
1, attached	6.4%	0.0%	1.0%	2.5%	3.5%	2.8%	2.6%
Duplex	2.7%	0.5%	1.0%	3.6%	11.6%	11.7%	5.7%
3 or 4	0.0%	1.0%	1.6%	0.0%	2.2%	4.3%	2.1%
5 to 9	1.1%	0.0%	1.2%	5.7%	3.6%	6.6%	5.1%
10 to 19	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%	14.0%	6.3%	3.9%
20 to 49	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	6.1%	1.4%	2.9%	1.6%
50 or more	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.4%	3.4%	1.5%
Mobile home	0.5%	3.3%	6.2%	0.0%	1.2%	1.0%	3.0%

Source: 2014 ACS Five Year Estimates

From a government perspective, multifamily housing can have many real benefits to a community. Rental units in multifamily housing developments provide an alternative to owning a single-family house, **more efficient living spaces for smaller families, and less required upkeep for items like appliances and yards.** **The Town of Rib Mountain seeks to offer both existing and potential future residents with housing options while also maintaining its high quality of residential neighborhoods.**

A variety of multifamily housing options are possible in a community:

- Duplexes are a type of semi-detached house in which separate houses share a common wall, usually side-by-side.
- Townhouses are side-by-side units, each with a separate owner and entrance, often with multiple floors. Any number of townhouses can be connected in a row.
- Apartment buildings can be small or large, having only one story and a few apartments or many floors and hundreds of apartments. Apartment buildings typically have a hallway interior to the building with inside entrances to each apartment unit. Units in such a building can be owned by a single party and rented to tenants or owned as a condominium by separate parties.
- Mixed use buildings include space for commercial, business, or office use and space for residential use. Different configurations of uses are possible, with the most common being business on the first floor with residential above or business in the front with residential in the back.

Another trend in residential neighborhoods are accessory dwelling units. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs), also called secondary suites, are self-contained apartments attached to or on the same lot as the principal dwelling on a single-family lot. These units typically have their own entrance, kitchen, bathroom, and living area. Usually small one-bedroom or studio apartments, ADUs can be a means of increasing the variety of types of housing units available and can provide a way for seniors to downsize while still remaining in their neighborhood. **What is the Commission's stance on ADUs?**

Occupancy Characteristics

In 2010, about 96.0 percent of housing units in the Town were occupied and 4.0 percent (111 units) were vacant. The County occupancy rate was 92.1 percent, and the State had 86.9 percent occupancy.

Homeownership

Owner occupied housing is the norm in Rib Mountain, with 87.8 percent of occupied housing units being owner occupied, as noted in Table 3.4. The homeownership rate decreased 2.3 percentage points from 2000 to 2010 in the Town. The County's homeownership rate dropped 2.2 percentage points while the state decreased .3 percentage points. Owner occupancy for the county was 73.5 percent, and the state's rate was 68.1 percent.

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2014
Rib Mountain Town	90.1%	87.8%	84.1%
Marathon Town	94.2%	92.2%	88.9%
Mosinee Town	90.7%	88.0%	91.8%
Rothschild Village	84.8%	74.0%	72.6%
Schofield City	68.2%	61.8%	57.8%
Wausau City	66.1%	58.2%	58.9%
Marathon County	80.0%	73.5%	73.5%
State of Wisconsin	68.4%	68.1%	67.7%
United States	66.2%	65.1%	64.4%

Source: U.S. Census

Value Characteristics

The median value of single-family house in the Town of Rib Mountain was \$166,011 in 2000, when adjusted for inflation in 2010 dollars. The median value then decreased 3.2 percent in 2010. Nonetheless, the median value of a house in Rib Mountain is well above the median values for the county and the state, see Table 3.5. During the same ten-year period, the median value increased by 18.9 percent for the state and 15.0 percent for the county.

Table 3.5 Median Value (dollars)

	2000 Inflation Adjusted (2010 \$)	2010 (2010 \$)	2014 (2014 \$)	2000-2010 Adj. % Change	2000-2010 Adj. Net Change
Rib Mountain	\$ 166,011	\$ 160,700	\$ 176,100	-3.2%	-\$5,311
Marathon County	\$ 121,311	\$ 139,500	\$ 142,900	15.0%	\$18,189
Wisconsin	\$ 142,078	\$ 169,000	\$ 165,900	18.9%	\$26,922

Source: U.S. Census 2000 and ACS 2010 and 2014

Specified Owner Occupied Housing Units

Total number of owner occupied housing units described as either a one family home detached from any other house or a one family house attached to one or more houses on less than 10 acres with no business on the property.

Range of Values

The **Figure 3.2** and **Figure 3.3** show the distribution of housing values that existed in the Town and the County in 2010. For example, the figure to the left shows that in Rib Mountain, 2.6 percent of all owner occupied houses were valued less than \$50,000. The distribution of the town values was slightly skewed to the right, with the greatest number of house values falling into the range between \$100,000 and \$149,999, which was the same for the county. However, in the Town, 41.2 percent of the housing units were above \$200,000 while only 26.3 percent of houses in the county were above \$200,000.

Figure 3.2: Range of House Values in Rib Mountain, 2010

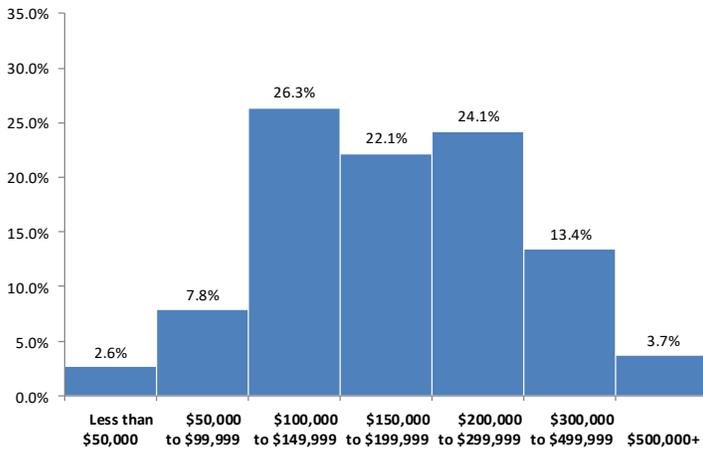
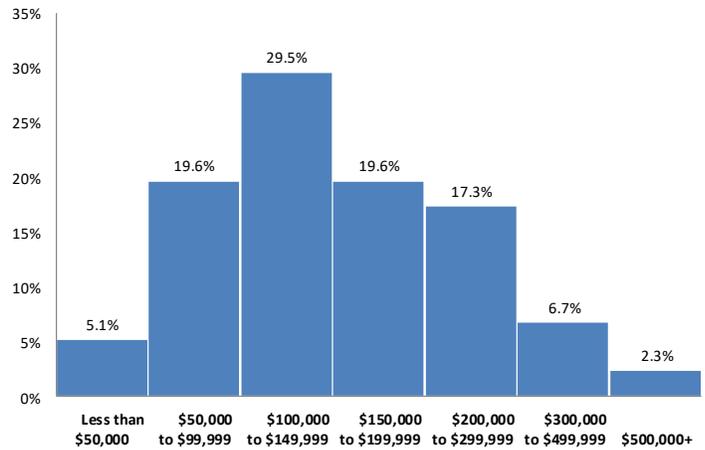


Figure 3.3: Range of House Values Marathon County, 2010



Source: U.S. Census 2010

Housing Affordability

Monthly Housing Costs

Table 3.6 displays the monthly housing costs by tenure. The median monthly housing costs for homeowners with a mortgage in the town were 15.2 percent higher than the county and 4.0 percent higher than the state in 2014. This is unsurprising, given that the median house value was higher than the county and the state. Monthly housing costs for those homeowners without a mortgage were also higher than the county and state medians.

Table 3.6: Median Monthly Housing Costs by Tenure, 2014

Civil Division	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied
	Median Selected Month Owner Costs		Median Gross Rent
	With Mortgage	Without Mortgage	
Rib Mountain	\$1,483	\$540	\$759
Marathon County	\$1,287	\$481	\$690
Wisconsin	\$1,431	\$533	\$772
Source: ACS 2014			

Median monthly costs for renters were 10.0 percent higher than the County but 1.7 percent lower than the State. 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.

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. Multifamily housing options tend to be more affordable housing options.

Statistically speaking, those spending in excess of 30 percent of their total household income on housing costs may be facing affordability difficulties. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that rental-housing costs not exceed 30 percent 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 percent of the monthly household income.

As shown in Table 3.7, 31.3 percent of homeowners with a mortgage paid more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs, which was slightly higher than the state and county. However, owners without mortgages have a slightly lower incidence of being cost burdened while the percentage of cost burdened renters is significantly less than the percentage of county and state renters who are cost burdened.

Table 3.7: Cost Burdened Households by Tenure, 2014

Civil Division	Owner with Mortgage	Owner without Mortgage	Renter Occupied
Rib Mountain	31.3%	10.5%	13.7%
Marathon County	27.5%	11.5%	47.0%
Wisconsin	31.0%	15.8%	48.2%
Source: American Community Survey 2014			

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 Aging and Disability Resource Center of Central Wisconsin, 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. The Town of Rib Mountain is home to several senior and assisted living residential facilities, including Azura Memory Care and

Wellington Place at Rib Mountain. 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.

Table 1.2 in Chapter 1 shows the population at or near retirement age for the Town of Rib Mountain as well as several nearby communities. In 2015, the Town has 1,209 persons age 65 and over, which is 18 percent of the total population. This represents a higher percentage of senior citizens within Rib Mountain than in the surrounding communities.

Aging-in-place is the preference of most people, with the AARP finding that 73 percent of seniors would like to stay in their current residence and community as long as possible. However, remaining in their own house as they age raises some particular issues for seniors regarding housing including: housing costs, maintenance needs, accessibility features, transportation concerns, and in-home health care options. Addressing these issues can help seniors maintain independence and age-in-place longer.

- **Housing Costs:** Most seniors are living on reduced or fixed-incomes. Rent or mortgage payments are generally among the highest monthly household expenses. The increasing costs of housing-related expenses force seniors to cut back on other necessities such as food and medical care.
- **Maintenance Needs:** Owning a house comes with a certain amount of necessary maintenance, both inside and outside the house. Both the cost of such maintenance and the physical demands it requires can be a significant burden to seniors.
- **Accessibility Features:** Much of the current housing stock lacks basic accessibility features. Many seniors with disabilities are unable to afford accessibility modifications, preventing them from living safely and comfortably in their homes. Some of the features which can improve accessibility for those with impaired mobility or difficulty grabbing and turning knobs include: no-step entries and single floor living, switches and outlets reachable at any height, extra-wide hallways, and lever-style door and faucet handles.
- **Transportation Concerns:** Older adults are at risk of becoming house-bound. Particularly in suburban and rural areas, seniors who are unable or unwilling to drive may find themselves house-bound and disconnected from family and friends. Those with vehicles and able to drive have the additional stress of vehicle ownership and maintenance on their limited budgets. Further, pedestrian infrastructure is generally ill-suited to those who cannot or choose not to drive, making it impossible or unsafe to walk.
- **In-home Health Care Options:** In-home health services are expensive and affordable service-enriched housing is in scarce supply in most communities. Seniors who cannot access healthcare services where they live may be at high risk of premature institutionalization.

Communities can adopt policies to address these concerns and improve the ability of seniors to thrive in their homes. Incorporating livability principles through housing, transportation, and walkability initiatives can be a step to address several of the key concerns. Providing a range of smaller housing units within the community can ease the cost burden of owning or renting a house on a fixed-income. Requiring all new residential construction to include certain accessibility features and offering tax incentives or low-cost loans to help owners modify their homes are methods to address the need to accessibility features. Providing access to recreational, educational, and other opportunities and services can enhance the quality of life for seniors in a community. Increasing availability of public transit and paratransit programs can greatly assist older citizens in making necessary trips to stores and medical appointments.

A variety of senior living communities, with varying levels of care, are also options for seniors unable to live at home any longer. These options include independent living communities, assisted living communities, and nursing homes.

- Independent living communities cater to seniors who are very independent with few medical problems. Residents in these communities, also called retirement villages or senior apartments,

living in private apartments with some communal amenities such as dining services and social events.

- Assisted living communities are designed for seniors who are no longer able to live on their own safely, but do not require the high level of medical care provided in a nursing home. Assisted living communities provide 24 hour per day staff for additional safety, some nursing services, communal dining, and assistance with tasks such as medications and housekeeping.
- Nursing homes provide around-the-clock skilled nursing care for the frail elderly who require a high level of medical care and assistance. Residents typically share a room and are served meals in a central dining area unless they are too ill to participate. Many nursing homes also provide short-term rehabilitative stays for those recovering from an injury, illness, or surgery.

A variety of home care services are also options which allow older people to remain in their homes while receiving the assistance they need to remain independent.

Livability

Livability is often defined as the sum of the factors that add up to a community's quality of life—including the built and natural environments, economic prosperity, social stability and equity, educational opportunity, and cultural, entertainment, and recreation possibilities. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities, a joint effort of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency, has established six livability principles. The six principles are 1) provide more transportation choices, 2) promote equitable, affordable housing, 3) enhance economic competitiveness, 4) support existing communities, 5) coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment, and 6) value communities and neighborhoods.

Location of Housing

One aspect of a livable community is that housing is situated in close proximity to the locations people frequent on a regular basis such as jobs, grocery stores, and medical facilities.

Preservation and Rehabilitation of Older Housing Stock

Older housing is often located in traditional neighborhoods and has great character that adds to the identity of the community. Preserving and rehabilitating older housing units is important to the character of the community and the diversity of housing options.

Diversity of Housing Options

Having a diversity of housing options available in a community provides many benefits. Housing of different sizes and styles accommodates the diverse households within the community. Different sizes and styles also provide a variety of housing costs, allowing housing to be affordable to everyone.

Higher Density Housing

Housing in higher density neighborhoods allows for a larger percentage of people to locate near desirable amenities like schools, parks, and shopping areas. Dense housing also minimizes the costs to the municipality to provide services to the community.

Assistance Programs

Direct governmental involvement in housing began with the Federal Housing Act of 1934, when home construction was a method of eliminating blighted slums while creating jobs during the Depression. Today, Federal, State, and local governments operate numerous housing programs focused on providing quality affordable housing for those persons who have the greatest need.

There are a variety of State and Federal housing programs geared to addressing a variety of housing issues. Grants and low interest loans are available for counties, communities, or individual homeowners. Below is a listing of some of the major programs available for housing assistance for owners, renters, and the Town.

State Programs

- The **Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Housing (DOH), provides grants to general purpose units of local government for housing programs which principally benefit low and moderate income (LMI) households. These funds are primarily used for rehabilitation of housing units, homebuyer assistance, and small neighborhood public facility projects. CDBG dollars are flexible and responsive to local needs.

In addition to addressing LMI housing needs, CDBG can be used to leverage other programs or serve as a local match. The grant also can be used as an incentive to involve the private sector in local community development efforts or to respond to area needs. The CDBG program often serves as a catalyst for other community development projects.

- **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)** aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. It provides an incentive for private entities to develop affordable housing. The credit reduces the federal taxes owed by an individual or corporation for an investment made in low-income rental housing. LIHTC provides funding for the construction of new buildings or the rehabilitation or conversion of existing structures. To qualify, a property must set aside a certain share of its units for low-income households.

Federal Programs

Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD):

- **Section 502 Homeownership Direct Loan Program of the Rural Health Service (RHS)** provides loans to help low-income households purchase and prepare sites or purchase, build, repair, renovate, or relocate homes.
- **Section 502 Mutual Self-Help Housing Loans** are designed to help very-low-income households construct their own homes. Targeted families include those who cannot buy affordable housing through conventional means. Participating families perform approximately 65 percent of the construction under qualified supervision.
- **Section 504, the Very-Low-Income Housing Repair Program**, provides loans and grants to low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes. Improvements must make the homes more safe and sanitary or remove health or safety hazards.
- **Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance Program** provides an additional subsidy for households with incomes too low to pay RHS-subsidized rents.
- **Section 533 Rural Housing Preservation Grants** are designed to assist sponsoring organizations in the repair or rehabilitation of low-income or very-low-income housing. Assistance is available for landlords or members of a cooperative.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

- **Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program** finances land acquisition and site development associated with self-help housing for low-income families. Loans are made to the nonprofit sponsors

of development projects and are interest-free. Portions of the loans are forgiven if promised units of housing are completed within a given period. These forgiven “grant conversion” funds may be used to subsidize future development projects.

- **HOME Investment Partnership Program** aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. HOME funds may be used for rental assistance, assistance to homebuyers, new construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of rental housing.

Housing Issues [please build out these issues sections according to the Town’s specific concerns]

- **Senior Housing:** As the population ages, there is greater need for housing options tailored to seniors, including resources to age-in-place and senior living facilities.
- **Rising Housing Costs:** The national trend of rising housing costs and stagnant wages affects our local community. Almost a third of homeowners with a mortgage in the Town are housing-burdened because they spend over 30% of their monthly income on housing costs.
- **Balancing Multifamily Housing with Residential Community Character:** The Town is known for its strong neighborhood fabric. Increasing desire for more additional housing options have led to some calling for more multifamily housing. The Town is now faced with how to balance these two concerns: maintaining the character of the community while entertaining options for some multifamily housing into the local housing market.
- **Aging Housing Stock:** In some of the older residential neighborhoods of the Town, the housing stock is aging and may be in need of renovation.

Housing Goal, Objectives, and Actions

Housing Goal: The Town of Rib Mountain has equal access to quality, affordable housing for all residents.

1. **Ensure the Town has high quality housing stock and strong neighborhoods.**
 - a. Encourage new residential development within the sewer service area.
 - b. Continue to ensure timely and consistent code enforcement.
 - c. Routinely review building codes to ensure that they are adequate for anticipated new construction.
 - d. Encourage redevelopment and new development where appropriate to provide new housing and a broader array of housing options.
 - e. Consider establishing a revolving loan fund to help fund rehabilitation of aging housing stock.
 - f. Support established neighborhood groups and encourage the creation of new groups until all residential areas are represented.
2. **Promote programs and policies that provide housing opportunities for all residents.**
 - a. Promote home ownership opportunities for low and moderate income households within the Town of Rib Mountain.
 - b. Work with Marathon County and Wausau Metro Area organizations to provide information to residents regarding area housing agencies that provide senior housing options.

Chapter 5: Utilities and Community Facilities

This section describes the existing conditions and issues relative to utilities available to the Town of Rib Mountain, including sewage disposal, water supply, power supply, and telecommunication facilities and services. Additionally, the chapter inventories community facilities and parks.

Previous Plans and Studies

Outdoor Recreation Plan

[insert brief summary of plan here]

Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

[insert brief summary of plan here]

Public Utilities

Waste Water

The Rib Mountain Sanitary District provides public sanitary sewer service in the Town of Rib Mountain. Wastewater treatment is provided by the Rib Mountain Metropolitan Sewerage District (RMMSD), which treats wastewater for the southern portion of the Wausau urban service area.

Much of the eastern half of the Town of Rib Mountain is within the sanitary sewer service area defined in the 2025 *Wausau Urban Area Sewer Service Plan*, which was prepared by the Marathon County Planning Department and updated in 2007. Preparation of this plan was mandated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) as one component of the *Upper Wisconsin River Water Quality Plan* and as a requirement for receiving wastewater treatment facilities grants and administrative approval of sewer extensions. The WDNR's involvement in this planning effort is promulgated in State Administrative Rules and in the Federal Clean Water Act. Another update to this plan is currently in progress and is expected to be completed in 2017.

The primary purpose of the plan was to establish a sewer service boundary for the Wausau Urban Area. This boundary sets the 20-year maximum limit for the extension of sanitary sewer services in a cost effective, environmentally sound manner. Generally, property located within the sewer service boundary line is eligible to receive sanitary sewer service during the 20-year planning period and property lying outside this sewer service area boundary would not unless the boundary was amended.

Town's wastewater collection system (pipe network and lift stations) is owned and maintained by the Rib Mountain Sanitary District, which transfers waste to the RMMSD treatment plant. The treatment plant was built in 1985 and is in excellent condition. It has capacity to serve anticipated future development within the service area and several upgrades have been made since it was originally built. The collection system is generally in good condition. Sewer pipes and mains are replaced and upgraded in conjunction with road reconstruction or in response to known problems.

Water

Public water is supplied by the RMSD from four wells located along the Wisconsin River. Each well is approximately 90 feet deep and produces about 500 gallons per minute. The water is treated to reduce naturally occurring minerals, pH adjusted for corrosion control, fluoride is added, and the water is chlorinated to assure bacteriological safe drinking water.

Public water supply is stored in a 500,000-gallon ground storage tank located on the east slope of Rib Mountain. The water distribution system is owned and maintained by the Rib Mountain Sanitary

District. The system contains 48 miles of piping and two booster stations to service the higher elevations around the mountain.

Surface Water Management

Rib Mountain adopted its first Town-wide Stormwater Management in 2009 to comply with the provisions of the Town's General Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. Updates to this Plan were made in 2016. Rib Mountain also has a wellhead recharge ordinance to ensure protection of its water supply.

In the region, surface water management is generally conducted at the watershed level. In 2001, Marathon County adopted a Land and Water Resource Management Plan in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). This plan was updated in 2010. 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.

Solid Waste Management

The Town of Rib Mountain contracts with a private company for waste management. Municipal, commercial and industrial waste is accepted at the Marathon County Landfill in Ringle. User fees collected at the landfill defray the cost of landfill operations.

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

Recycling

Recycling pick-up is provided by a private contractor on a bi-weekly basis.

Private On-Site Waste Disposal Systems

Private On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) include a septic tank or aerobic treatment tank and some type of absorption field alone or in combination with passive or active treatment components or holding tanks. Areas determined unsuitable for septic systems, for reasons such as high bedrock or high water tables, are not conducive to installation of conventional, in ground absorption fields and must use other methods. Some areas of Rib Mountain have private waste disposal systems. However, high bedrock and wetlands limit the use of conventional septic systems in some areas.

Regulation of POWTS

Regulations for POWTS in Marathon County are found in Chapter 15 of the County General Code of Ordinances. All premises intended for human occupancy and not served by public sewer are required to have a private sewage system. The WDNR reviews septic treatment and dispersal systems that handle over 12,000 gallons per day.

Permit Requirements

Permits for private sewage systems are issued CPZ. Soil and site evaluations are required to determine if the proposed septic system is suitable for the specific property and location

Energy Utilities

The Town of Rib Mountain receives electric power and gas from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS).

One high-voltage power line, owned by [COMPANY] runs through the Town.

Telecommunication Facilities and Services [insert general information here]

Television and Cable is provided by Charter Communications. Telephone service is provided by Verizon as well as Charter.

The Town adopted a cell tower ordinance in 1994. There are towers located on Rib Mountain, as well as the Wisconsin Public Television Tower and radio towers.

Internet access, broadband and wireless.

Community Facilities

Primary and Secondary Schools

The Town of Rib Mountain is served by the Wausau School District. The Wausau School District has a pre-school center, 13 elementary schools (grades K-5), 2 middle schools (grades 6-8), and 2 high schools (9-12). Two of the district's facilities, Rib Mountain Elementary (2701 Robin Lane) and South Mountain Elementary School are located in the Town. Residents of Rib Mountain are in the attendance zones for both those schools. The district reports that most students attend the middle and high school on the side of the Wisconsin River where they reside; therefore, Rib Mountain students attend John Muir Middle School at 1400 Stewart Avenue and Wausau West High School at 1200 West Wausau Avenue.

In 2015, there were 1,083 students, ages three and older, from Rib Mountain in grades K-12, enrolled in the public school system. The trend over the past decade has been fewer children in the public school system.

Table 5.1: K-12 Public School Enrollment from Rib Mountain

2009	1,343
2010	1,351
2011	1,180
2012	1,129
2013	1,024
2014	1,111
2015	1,083

Source: ACS 2009-2015

Private Schools

There are no private school facilities within the Town of Rib Mountain. However, there are several private schools in the Wausau metro area and other surrounding communities. In 2015, 283 students from the Town of Rib Mountain were enrolled in grades K-12 in private schools.

Post-Secondary Educational Facilities

University of Wisconsin – Marathon County (UW-MC), located in the City of Wausau, offers lower level (freshman and 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) are offered in Business Administration, General Studies, and Nursing. Enrollment averages around 1,100 students.

Northcentral Technical College (NTC), also located in the City of 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.

In addition to the public schools, the Wausau has one private college. Rasmussen College, located in Wausau, offers bachelor's degrees, associate's degrees, certificates and diplomas in fields like business, design, education, justice sciences, and nursing.

Libraries

The Town of Rib Mountain is served by the Marathon County Public Library system. The Wausau Headquarters Library is located on First Street in downtown Wausau. This main Wausau Library is open seven days a week and offers books, magazines and other materials, as well as internet access.

Public Protection

Law Enforcement

Rib Mountain does not have a local police department but has a constable to handle nuisance issues. The Town relies on the Marathon County Sheriff's department for law enforcement and police protection services.

Fire and Emergency Medical Services

The South Area Fire District (SAFER) provides Fire and EMS and rescue operations to the Town of Rib Mountain, Village of Weston, Town of Weston, Village of Kronenwetter and the Towns of Easton, Ringle, Guenther, Stettin, and Marathon. The District originated in 2014 and operates stations in both Rib Mountain and the Village of Weston. The EMS service area covers nearly 300 square miles with a population over 36,000; while first due fire coverage serves over 26,000 people and 125 square miles.

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 Examiner's Office.

Hospitals

Three major hospitals serve the Town. Aspirus Hospital is located in the City of Wausau and is a 321-bed facility that is a multi-specialty regional health center serving a 12-county region in north central Wisconsin. Ministry Health Care St. Clare's Hospital is a 104-bed hospital and medical office complex located in the Village of Weston. Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital and Marshfield Clinic, located in the City of Marshfield, provide regional medical services to north central Wisconsin. Though further than Wausau and Weston, these facilities also serve the Town.

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

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

Recreation

This section describes existing and proposed park and recreation facilities in the Town of Rib Mountain and major County and State facilities in the vicinity.

Local Existing Parks, Trails and Open Space **[use the CORP to update this section]**

Town of Rib Mountain has a Park Commission and completed an *Outdoor Recreation Plan Update* in 2014. Rib Mountain maintains five parks, with some of the parks owned by the Town or developed in cooperation with the Wausau School District and the Rib Mountain Sanitary District. Town parks include:

- **Chellis Park** (3 acres): This is a neighborhood park located on Woodsmoke Road. The park has woodlands, wetlands, and an active recreation area. Facilities include a picnic shelter, basketball court, playground equipment, turf field, and a walking and bluebird trail.
- **Liberty Street Park** (14 acres): This park is owned by the Rib Mountain Sanitary District and leased to the Town of Rib Mountain for park use. Facilities include a playground, picnic shelter, two parking lots, a ball diamond, basketball court, two tennis courts, woodlands and open fields for unstructured play.
- **Rib Mountain Elementary** (8.0 acres): Located at the corner of Robin Lane and Bob-O-Link Avenue this school ground is owned by the Wausau School District. Facilities include: playground equipment, tennis courts, a basketball court, and two baseball diamonds that are also used for soccer.
- **South Mountain School** (25 acres): Owned by the Wausau School District, the Rib Mountain Park Commission is working with the District to develop a park on the school grounds. The facilities will include: soccer fields, a baseball diamond, basketball courts, play equipment, and a walking trail. Tennis courts and an ice skating rink may also be added.
- **Flax Lane Tot Lot** (.6 acres): This is a small neighborhood park that includes a half size basketball court.
- **Fritz Doepke Recreation Area** (37.35 acres): The Town purchased a plot from Fred Doepke in 1999 off South Mountain Road. Planned park facilities include: two ball fields, a playground area, a basketball court, a skateboard park, fitness trail, bike/walk path, picnic shelter, and ice skating area. There is also be a parking lot for about 100 cars.
- **Rib Mountain Golf Course** (115 acres): This privately owned golf course is located on CTH NN just west of USH 51/STH 29 near the entrance to Granite Peak Ski Resort. This is a 9-hole course with a driving range.

Park System Needs

The *Outdoor Recreation Plan Update* identifies the lack of neighborhood parks in growing residential areas as a serious deficiency. The *Outdoor Recreation Plan Update* makes specific recommendations for improvements relative to specific parks and/or neighborhoods.

Trails and Connections

Rib Mountain and Lake Wausau are major recreational amenities for the Town, but it is important to include access to such amenities to the discussion of recreation. Trails and connections are a key part of ensuring residents can enjoy the many local natural features in and around the Town. Making sure that all residential areas are connected by a local trail system is a first step. Such a system could connect residents to Rib Mountain State Park and local parks and kayak launches, as well as to Nine Mile Recreation Area.

County or State Parks, Forest and Trails

Several County and State park facilities are within or in close proximity to the Town of Rib Mountain, including:

- **Rib Mountain State Park:** This park is located entirely in the Town of Rib Mountain. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1,924 feet above sea level is one of the highest elevations in the State of Wisconsin. The 1,500-acre park surrounds the mountain and includes a picnic area, 13 miles of hiking trails, and a nature trail. A portion of park is leased to a ski resort, a private downhill ski area with 72 runs. In addition, about 16-acres at the top of the mountain are leased for communications towers and associated buildings.
- **Bluegill Bay Park:** Bluegill Bay Park is a 68-acre County park located on the west shore of Lake Wausau between Cloverland Lane and Parrot Lane. The park provides access to Lake Wausau at its boat landing with piers and a boat trailer parking lot, and is subject to overcrowding at times. The park's picnic area has tables, grills, shelters, flush toilets and parking available. A fishing area, including a handicapped pier is also available. Forty-eight acres of the park are undeveloped, and the County's tree nursery is also in the park.
- **Nine-Mile Forest Unit:** This area 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 over 4,900 acres of mixed uplands, marshes, and water impoundments.

Issues

- **Quality Broadband Access:** Reliable, high-speed access to the internet is vital to daily work and leisure activities. Ensuring that the Town has access to this service is important, particularly as technology continues to improve.
- **Lack of Access to Lake Wausau:** The Town is bordered on one side by the Wisconsin River and Lake Wausau. With this incredible amenity at hand, more public access points are needed to ensure that residents can utilize the lake and river for recreational opportunities year round.
- **Lack of Neighborhood Parks:** Growth in some residential neighborhoods has been very rapid as a result of recent installation of municipal sewer and water services. Keeping up with the provision of community facilities such as neighborhood parks has been a challenge.
- **Other UCF Issues?**

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal, Objectives, and Actions

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal: The Town of Rib Mountain has high quality utilities and community facilities available for all residents.

1. **Maintain high quality water and sewer services and standards within the Town.**
 - a. Monitor growth and development trends to anticipate areas where new development is most likely to occur that will require public utilities.
 - b. Continue to enforce the Town's wellhead recharge ordinance.
 - c. Implement and enforce storm water management guidelines.
 - d. Continue to work with the Rib Mountain Metropolitan Sewerage District (RMMSD) to maintain and upgrade the wastewater collection and treatment system.
 - e. Continue to work with the RMMSD to maintain the water supply and storage facilities to keep pace with anticipated growth.
 - f. Continue to cooperate with the RMMSD to enforce water quality controls in the well recharge area.
 - g. Ensure that lot sizes are adequate in areas where private waste disposal systems are required.
 - h. Limit intensive residential development with on-site waste disposal systems in areas with high bedrock and wetlands.

2. **Support and maintain existing community facilities and services.**
 - a. Maintain the Municipal Center as a seat of local government and community gathering place, and expand as needed.
 - b. Identify necessary repairs and allocate funds to maintain and/or improve the Municipal Center on a regular basis.
 - c. Perform annual reviews and budget allocations to fund public services. Evaluate cost-effectiveness of current agreements with adjacent municipalities regarding provision of fire and emergency response services.
 - d. Continue to explore methods of cost sharing, such as equipment sharing, with surrounding municipalities to increase the efficiency by which services are provided.
 - e. Analyze future developments for their impact on the Town's tax base in relation to the cost of additional services the development would require.
 - f. Support the continued provision of cost-effective community services.
 - g. Continue to work with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department to provide law enforcement and communications services.
 - h. Support the SAFER District and its fire, EMS, and rescue operations as an active member of the organization.
 - i. Maintain regular communication with municipalities the Town has service agreements with to discuss opportunities to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of services.

3. **Maintain and improve parks in Rib Mountain to improve the quality of life in the Town.**
 - a. Strive to provide adequate park and recreation facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents.
 - b. Supports development of an interconnected system of parks and trails.
 - c. Strive to provide timely and sufficient maintenance of park facilities and ensure that maintenance and upkeep costs for parks are included in annual budgeting.
 - d. Upgrade park facilities and equipment as needed to ensure safety and accommodate residents' recreational needs.
 - e. Develop a community center or similar facility.

- f. Routinely review and update the Town's park dedication requirements to ensure they are reasonable and sufficient to address needs, and encourage new residential developments to include parks, green space and trails as appropriate.
- g. Identify opportunities to purchase property for future park or trail development. Map these properties as "future park" to encourage preservation for future park development.
- h. Support the development of a regional multi-use trail system and work with appropriate agencies, such as the WDNR, WDOT, Marathon County, and others, to identify possible trail routes in Rib Mountain to connect to a regional system and to the Mountain-Bay Trail.
- i. Work with the Marathon County and surrounding municipalities to identify and map potential trail routes in the Town to become part of a regional trail system. Use this map during development review to identify where trails should be installed in conjunction with new development or road construction.
- j. Establish requirements for provision of trail easements in conjunction with new development.
- k. Recognize and support the various public and private park and recreational facilities located in the Town as important assets to the community.
- l. Encourage adequate funding for maintenance and improvements of Marathon County parks and forests, particularly Nine Mile Forest Unit.
- m. Continue to work cooperatively with the WDNR on efforts to improve Rib Mountain State Park.
- n. Continue to work cooperatively with Granite Peak Ski Resort to ensure that development and expansion is done in an environmentally sensitive manner.