

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
FOR THE CITY OF  
**MONROE,**  
WISCONSIN  
2015-2035

PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY:



SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN  
**REGIONAL PLANNING**  
COMMISSION

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Monroe Comprehensive Plan was collaboratively developed by community members in order to create a vibrant, thriving, and resilient Monroe for the 20 years to come. This extensive public input included Visioning Boards, a Visioning Kickoff Meeting, 14 Topic Meetings, and two Implementation Meetings. Together over 100 unique participants provided their experience and expertise during these public meetings. Additionally, a Community Survey was distributed that received over 570 responses -- gaining input from 498 people who did not attend a public meeting for the comprehensive plan.



This planning process resulted in Goals, Objectives, and Strategies organized by topic areas. These topics include: Housing; Transportation; Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources; Culture, Creativity, and Community Resources; Economic Development and Agriculture; Utilities and Energy Management; and Land Use and the Built Environment. Additionally, there are four 'lenses' for this planning process. These are subjects that are integral to the well-being of Monroe and, due to their all-inclusive nature, were interwoven throughout the entire planning process. The lenses are:

- **Health:** The overall well-being of community members, including their nutrition, exercise opportunities, mental health, and more.
- **Education:** The quality of and access to K-12 education, colleges and universities, and continued learning courses.
- **Inter/Intra-Governmental Cooperation:** The collaboration and clear communication between the City, Townships, County, and State government units, and internally within the City of Monroe.
- **Youth Retention and Aging in Place:** The services and amenities that attract and retain youth and allow seniors to continue living in their residence of choice.



*Photo credit: Marc Kohlbauer*

The following are the Goals of the plan organized by their topic.



## HOUSING

- Improve the quantity of safe, quality, and affordable rental properties.
- Increase a diverse range of modern, aesthetically pleasing housing supply and housing resources.
- Modernize the zoning ordinance to allow for flexibility and creativity in land use and housing development across the city.
- Use strategic funding resources to promote new development and home ownership.



## TRANSPORTATION

- Increase bicycle and pedestrian access and safety across the city.
- Increase the efficiency of existing transit services and future investments.
- Increase intergovernmental coordination on infrastructure maintenance and development.
- Prioritize safe roadways while providing efficient freight routes throughout the city.



## PARKS, RECREATION, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Maintain, and when needed increase, the inclusivity of recreational activities.
- Use parks and recreation to improve overall community health and wellness.
- Increase recreational trail usability and connectivity.



## CULTURE, CREATIVITY, AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Sustain current funding, and identify ways to increase and diversify funding for existing local community resources.
- Adapt resources to accommodate the anticipated demographic shifts.
- Improve the cultural and business environment on the square.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE

- Increase workforce training and education for local careers, and awareness of these opportunities.
- Strive for a healthier workforce.
- Explore growth opportunities through land and infrastructure adaptations.
- Maximize industry clusters and economic opportunities unique to Monroe.
- Rewrite the zoning ordinance to meet the evolving needs of residents, developers, and business prospects.



## UTILITIES AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT

- Improve communication with the public on utility and public safety issues.
- Meet the EPA standards for phosphorus levels.
- Capitalize on the ability of the Wastewater Treatment Facility to use high strength waste to create energy.
- Improve emergency management technology systems.
- Determine a predictable and sustainable utilities rate model.



## LAND USE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Allow development with higher densities and a greater range of uses throughout Monroe while maintaining an attractive aesthetic.
- Repurpose existing land to increase the number of parks and athletic fields to meet current demand.
- Take advantage of the culture and activity on the Square.
- Enhance the aesthetics of the main entrances into Monroe.
- Promote a culture of growth in Monroe.

Through these Goals, Objectives, and Strategies and the public meetings, four themes were recognized. These are issues that were continuously stated by community members as high priorities. These are discussed in more detail within the chapters of the plan. The themes are:

- **Zoning Updates:** Updating the zoning ordinances to allow for flexibility in development including mixed-use, high-density development.
- **Communication and Coordination:** Communicating information effectively related to existing community services, local events, and other public issues.
- **Infill Development:** Developing on parcels that are being underused and creating higher densities in portions of Monroe, especially on the Square.
- **Increased Housing:** Building an affordable, quality housing stock that meets the needs of diverse community members at varying stages of their life.

# INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT SCOPE

## Introduction

The Monroe Comprehensive Plan update is a community-driven planning effort that was initiated in 2014 in order to enhance or maintain the many assets Monroe possesses and prepare the city to take advantage of future opportunities over the next 20 years. The planning process was completed by the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and aided by the valuable efforts of the City of Monroe, Green County Development Corporation, and Green County UW-Extension. Much of the plan's success was due to the strong community participation, which included input from over 100 community members during public meetings and over 570 people who completed a Community Survey. There were also critical partners within Monroe that distributed meeting announcements and the Community Survey, provided data, and contributed community insight to help the plan succeed.

This plan provides the most relevant data to support the proposed outcomes of the plan. It covers topics mandated by Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001, and also reflects local issues and opportunities. This plan looks forward to the year 2035, but it should be reviewed annually and updated every ten years.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

When the Monroe Comprehensive Planning process started in 2014, there were six objectives desired from the plan. These were:

- Bring together diverse people from our city and develop a vision for our shared future.
- Create strategies for a competitive edge in a demanding economy.
- Support the implementation of innovative ideas.
- Foster a healthy community.
- Give Monroe residents access to the best possible education and lifelong learning.
- Make the City of Monroe the best place that it can be for our grandchildren.

## Project Scope

### LENSES AND TOPIC GROUPS







There are seven topics within the Monroe Comprehensive Plan. These topics each had a series of dedicated public meetings and extensive data collection. These topics are also chapters and requirements within the plan. The topics are:






- **Housing:** Exploring the physical buildings where Monroe residents live and how to ensure that every resident has access to housing that meets their needs.
- **Transportation:** Exploring the current transportation network including automotive vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, air, and rail infrastructure.
- **Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources:** Exploring the recreational resources and infrastructure including parks, trails, exercise opportunities, and more.
- **Culture, Creativity, and Community Resources:** Exploring the significant cultural aspects of Monroe and the community resources that help people of all ages thrive.
- **Economic Development and Agriculture:** Exploring the existing conditions of Monroe's wealth, prosperity, and jobs including how to improve these resources and how to become more competitive.
- **Utilities and Energy Management:** Exploring how public utilities like water, sewer, and electricity are used and how to ensure their maximum efficiency.
- **Land Use and the Built Environment:** Exploring how and where land should be used.

There are four ‘lenses’ for this planning process. These are subjects that are integral to the well-being of Monroe and, due to their all-encompassing nature, were intertwined throughout the entire planning process. The four lenses are:

- **Health:** The overall well-being of community members, including their nutrition, exercise opportunities, mental health, and more.
- **Education:** The quality of and access to K-12 education, colleges and universities, and continued learning courses.
- **Inter/Intra-Governmental Cooperation:** The collaboration and clear communication between the City, Townships, County, and State government units, and internally within the City of Monroe.
- **Youth Retention and Aging in Place:** The services and amenities that attract and retain youth and allow seniors to continue living in their residence of choice.

The following are Goals, Objectives, and Strategies within each topic that relate to Health, Education, Inter/Intra-Governmental Cooperation, and Youth Retention and Aging in Place. This table highlights how critical these four lenses are throughout all aspects of life in Monroe.

	 <b>Health</b>	 <b>Education</b>	 <b>Inter/Intra-Governmental Cooperation</b>	 <b>Youth Retention and Aging in Place</b>
<b>Housing</b> 	<p>Consistently administer the building code with a priority on the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.</p> <p>Consistently administer the weatherization codes for all properties</p> <p>Have housing resources in place to support those with unexpected housing events or conditions.</p>	<p>Increase education for landlords and renters.</p> <p>Increase educational resources for mortgage readiness and financial literacy.</p>		<p>Increase senior housing.</p> <p>Improve the quantity of safe, quality, and affordable rental properties.</p>
<b>Transportation</b> 	<p>Increase bicycle and pedestrian access and safety across the city.</p>	<p>Continue to provide courses on bike safety to youth, and promote bike safety and awareness to adults and motorists.</p>	<p>Eliminate current gaps and redundancies in service provisions between the local transit services.</p> <p>Create a Coordination Plan between State, County, and local governments for long-term infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>Develop a common database of the existing infrastructure, inclusive of Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER), age, and other data – to be used within all three governmental jurisdictions.</p>	<p>Increase bicycle and pedestrian access and safety across the city.</p> <p>Improve the sidewalk network.</p>

	<b>Health</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Inter/Intra-Governmental Cooperation</b>	<b>Youth Retention and Aging in Place</b>
<b>Economic Development and Agriculture</b> 	<p>Strive for a healthier workforce.</p> <p>Educate and guide small businesses about the benefits of having healthy employees.</p> <p>Use existing knowledge and programs of companies in the city to promote community health.</p>	<p>Inform students and parents about local career opportunities.</p> <p>Educate and guide small businesses about the benefits of having healthy employees.</p>	<p>Create a centralized, shared location for employers and employees to access information about successful healthy incentive programs in the region.</p> <p>Develop a local and regional freight study that draws upon available data and knowledge of local businesses, the goal of which would be affirmation of existing, or identification of new, freight corridors in the city.</p> <p>Meet with Townships to discuss potential future areas of development outside of current city limits.</p>	<p>Inform students and parents about local career opportunities.</p> <p>Attract young entrepreneurs by leveraging the history and long standing tradition in Monroe of “growing our own” businesses.</p>
<b>Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources</b> 	<p>Use parks to support mental, behavioral, and spiritual well-being of city residents.</p> <p>Increase safety at trail crossings and major intersections.</p>	<p>Use park space and natural areas for outdoor classrooms.</p>	<p>Explore using athletic fields in nearby communities.</p>	<p>Improve existing recreational infrastructure to become fully accessible.</p> <p>Continue to offer a wide variety of options for all skill and age levels.</p>
<b>Culture, Creativity, and Community Resources</b> 	<p>Utilize resources available to increase overall community health and wellness.</p> <p>Leverage the arts to improve mental health in the community.</p>	<p>Promote education and lifelong learning for all generations through the creation of new opportunities for skills exchanges among community members.</p> <p>Encourage language learning by connecting community members with the language learning resources in Monroe, including the Monroe High School, Black Hawk Technical College, and UW-Extension.</p>	<p>Encourage more businesses to enroll participants in Green County Leaders.</p>	<p>Prepare community resources for the growing senior population.</p> <p>Prepare policies and the overall community culture for the projected future population.</p>
<b>Utilities and Energy Management</b> 	<p>Reduce the discharge of phosphorus by businesses and the community at large into the treatment facility.</p>	<p>Increase community awareness of, and input in, large utility decisions and investments.</p>	<p>Research and meet other communities that have implemented a small rate increase annually to learn from their experiences.</p> <p>Build additional communication towers within Green County to ensure county-wide coverage.</p>	<p>In recognition of the city’s demographics, ensure that all messaging be mixed-media and multi-generational, including the newsletters, listservs, social media sites, and flyers.</p>
<b>Land Use and the Built Environment</b> 	<p>Use existing underused land as practice and recreational athletic fields.</p>		<p>Work collaboratively with Townships to find mutual gains and identify future areas for development.</p>	<p>Create a walking path connecting the Square to the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC).</p>



Through the Monroe Comprehensive Planning process, four themes emerged. These are issues that were continuously stated as high-priorities by community members in the public meetings and the Community Survey. The themes are:

- **Zoning Updates:** Updating the zoning ordinances to allow for flexibility in development, including mixed-use, high-density development.
- **Communication and Coordination:** Communicating information effectively related to existing community services, local events, and other public issues.
- **Infill Development:** Developing on parcels that are being underused and creating higher densities in portions of Monroe, especially on the Square.
- **Increased Housing:** Building an affordable, quality housing stock that meets the needs of diverse community members at varying stages of their life.

The following is a table showing the topics where these themes emerged. These are discussed in more detail in their corresponding chapters within the plan.

	Zoning Updates	Communication & Coordination	Infill Development	Increased Housing
Housing	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transportation		✓		
Economic Development and Agriculture	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources		✓	✓	
Culture, Creativity, and Community Resources		✓		✓
Utilities and Energy Management		✓		
Land Use and the Built Environment	✓	✓	✓	✓

# PLANNING PROCESS

The Monroe Comprehensive Planning process brought together community stakeholders to collaboratively plan and coordinate city resources through 2035, in order to create a vibrant and resilient future for the City of Monroe. This planning process included stakeholder identification, data collection, a review of existing local plans, and extensive community outreach that incorporated stakeholder interviews, public meetings, and a Community Survey.

This planning process was completed by Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC) in coordination with the City of Monroe, Green County Development Corporation, and Green County UW-Extension.

## Stakeholder Interviews

A series of interviews were held with stakeholders with varying fields of expertise. These interviews were used to discuss particular aspects of life in Monroe in a thorough and detailed manner. These interviews included dialogs on real estate, community health, funding sources, utilities and other topics.

## Visioning Public Meeting and Visioning Boards

Community members focused on creating a vivid and unified understanding of the desired future state of Monroe in 2035 during a Visioning Public Meeting at the beginning of the planning process. This meeting was planned and facilitated by Victoria Solomon, a Community Resource Development Educator from Green County UW-Extension (UWEX). In conjunction with this meeting, UWEX posted four Visioning Boards around the community, including at the Behring Senior Center, Green County YMCA, Monroe City Hall, and Monroe Public Library. These Visioning Boards were large pieces of paper that asked community members to write down what they did and did not want to see in 2035. This vision, gained from the public meeting and the Visioning Boards, set the tone and built momentum for the Monroe Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, the results from the Visioning Boards and Visioning Meeting were integrated into the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies of the plan, and informed the final City Vision Statement. The complete visioning results are shown in Appendix C.

## Topic Public Meetings

Over 100 community members provided their experience and expertise in 14 topic public meetings for the Monroe Comprehensive Plan. Two public meetings were held for each of the seven topics within the plan: Housing; Transportation; Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources; Culture, Creativity, and Community Resources; Economic Development and Agriculture; Utilities and Energy Management; and Land Use and the Built Environment. These meetings aimed to create a clear understanding of the current state of Monroe and develop actionable Goals, Objectives, and Strategies to maintain or improve the assets of Monroe.

## Monroe Planning Process Timeline:



## Implementation Public Meetings

A future of action and change was the focus of two Implementation Meetings for the Monroe Comprehensive Plan update. Participants of these meetings generated project ideas based on the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies of the plan and identified assets, funding sources, and stakeholders that can make these ideas a reality. Additionally, the community members discussed the potential to create public/private partnership, which is a group charged with overseeing the implementation of the plan over the next 20 years. More information on this group can be found in the Implementation Section on page 60 and in Appendix B.

Public Meeting Schedule		
MEETING TOPIC	DATE	MEETING HOSTS
Visioning	April 9th, 2015	Green County UW-Extension
Housing	June 15th, 2016 June 29th, 2015	Green County UW-Extension Monroe Public Library
Transportation	June 16th, 2015 June 25th, 2015	Green County UW-Extension
Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources	July 15th, 2015 July 30th, 2015	Green County UW-Extension Green County Humane Society
Culture, Creativity, and Community Resources	July 22nd, 2015 July 29th, 2015	Green County YMCA
Economic Development	August 11th, 2015 August 18th, 2015	Wisconsin Bank and Trust
Utilities and Energy Management	August 26th, 2015 September 1st, 2015	Behring Senior Center City of Monroe
Land Use and the Built Environment	September 2nd, 2015 September 9th, 2015	First National Bank and Trust
Implementation	November 18th, 2015 December 10th, 2015	First National Bank and Trust

## Monroe Community Survey

The Monroe Community Survey asked respondents to prioritize projects that came up during the previous public meetings and provide new ideas and input. It was open for four weeks and received 572 responses. This was more than 5% of the entire city population and approximately 40% of those who received the survey directly – a very successful return rate. This success is largely due to community partners that distributed the survey, including: the City of Monroe, Behring Senior Center, Blackhawk Technical College, Green County Development Corporation, Green County Leaders, Kiwanis, Monroe Clinic, Monroe Public Library, Monroe School District, and the Monroe Times. In particular, the Monroe Times donated two full-page spreads to print the full Community Survey, allowing community members to fill out a paper copy of the survey and drop it off at locations within Monroe. The full results of this survey are shown in Appendix C.

# MONROE AT-A-GLANCE

## POP QUIZ!

**Q.** Turner Hall of Monroe is one of the oldest, continuously-running Swiss entities in the country. **When was it established?**

- A. 1868      C. 1936  
B. 1922      D. 1900

Please find the answer on page 20.

**CITY-WIDE VISION STATEMENT:** A progressive community founded on an agricultural and Swiss heritage offering the highest quality of life achievable through educational and artistic excellence, a strong downtown center, world class health care, family-orientated recreation, and a vibrant business community.

Situated in the rolling hills of Green County in southwestern Wisconsin, Monroe is a city with many of the amenities of a large metropolitan area coupled with the comforts and familiarity of a small town. This scenic city provides a high-quality of life for people of all ages, with community resources that include a historic downtown Square, attractive parks, and an active arts center. Additionally, there is a strong sense of community and volunteerism in Monroe; people work together to better the lives of their friends, family, and the community as a whole. In all, Monroe is a truly livable community that works to promote the health, education, and overall well-being of its residents and visitors.

Monroe's Swiss heritage and award winning cheesemaking has earned it's recognition as being a must-visit for dairy connoisseurs. Though being known for cheese, businesses in Monroe provide a diverse range of services and products ranging from truck body manufacturing to mail-order gift production and distribution. Furthermore, Monroe is situated in close proximity to many larger cities, creating easy access to additional products, services, and atmospheres – it's an hour drive to Madison, a two hour drive to Milwaukee, and a two and a half hour drive to Chicago.

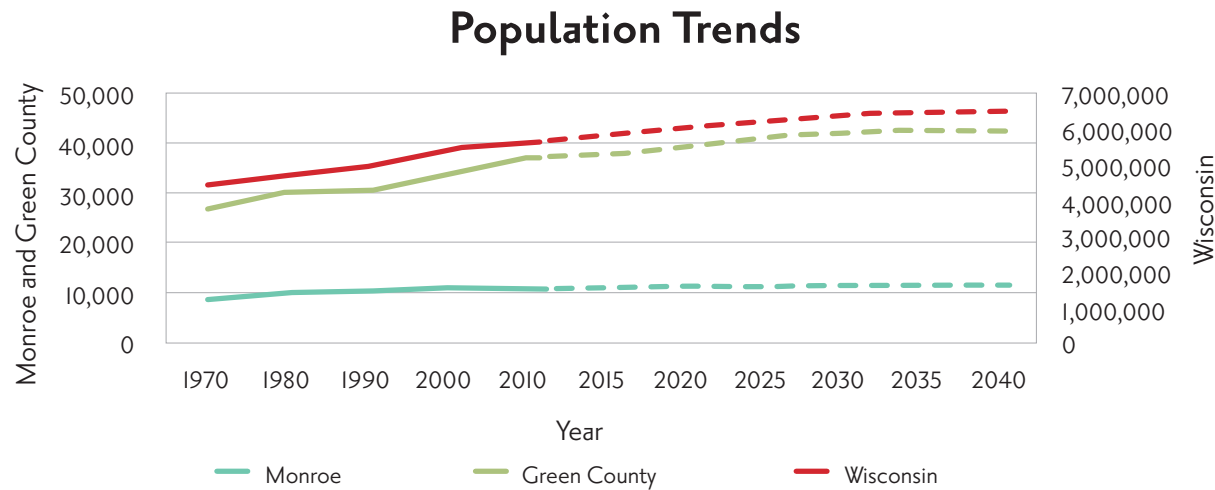
## Demographics

The total population of Monroe has increased 25% between 1970 (8,654) and 2010 (10,827), but has remained stagnant between 2000 (10,843) and 2010 with 0.3% decrease<sup>1</sup>. It is expected that the total population will increase 2.5% between 2010 and 2040 – a low rate of growth compared to Wisconsin overall, which is expected to grow by 16%<sup>2</sup>, as shown in Figure 1.

<sup>1</sup> US Census 2000-2010

<sup>2</sup> Wisconsin Department of Administration

Figure 1: Population Trends, Actual 1970-2010 and Projected 2015-2040



Source: US Census 1970-2010, and WI Department of Administration

Though there is little change in the total population count, the racial/ethnic composition of Monroe is becoming increasingly diverse. Between 2000 and 2010, there was a 233% increase in the Hispanic or Latino population (from 158 to 526 people), a 63% increase in the Black population (from 38 to 62 people), a 124% increase in the Asian population (from 34 to 76 people), and a 56% increase in the population of people with two or more races<sup>3</sup> (from 79 to 123 people), shown in Figures 2 and 3.

Additionally, the age distribution is changing in Monroe - becoming an increasingly older community. In 1970, 8% of the total population was 75 years and over. In 2010, that same age group encompassed 11% of the total population. Conversely, in 1970, 34% of the total population was under 19 years old. In 2010, it had decreased to 25%<sup>3</sup>. The full population distributions from 1970 to 2010 are in Appendix A Table A1.

As with much of the United States, Monroe's population is more educated than in the past. When examining the highest level of educational attainment in the city of Monroe, shown in Figure 4, the population with a Bachelor's degree between 1970 and 2013 doubled, with an increase from 6.3% to 12.7%. The amount of those with Graduate or Professional degrees also increased from 4.2% to 6.7%, during the same time period. The most significant change was the amount of people with less than a high school diploma, which plummeted from 43.6% (1970) to 3.8% (2013)<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> US Census 1970-2010

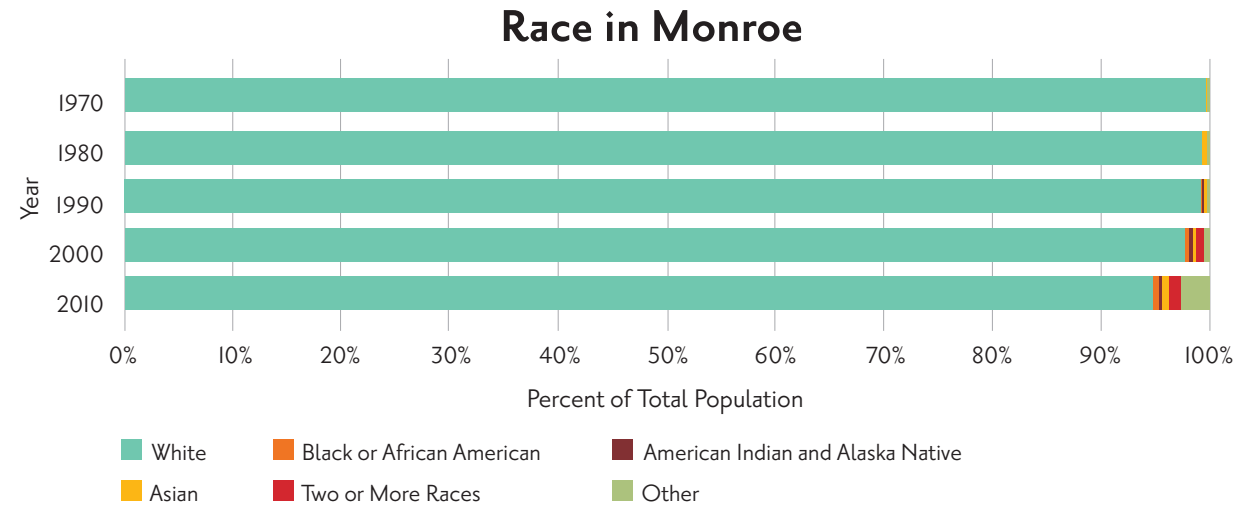
<sup>4</sup> American Community Survey 2009-2013

## COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT!

When choosing which aspect of life in the city of Monroe is the most satisfactory, **“SMALL TOWN AND RURAL ATMOSPHERE”** was chosen the most out of 13 options by survey respondents.

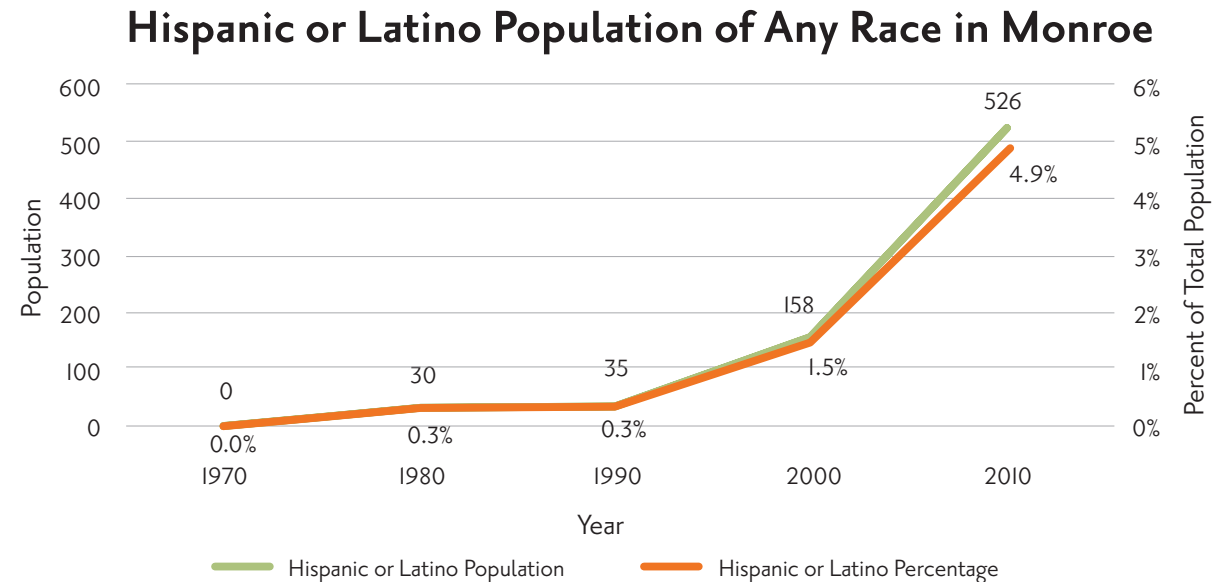


Figure 2: Race in Monroe, 1970-2010



Source: US Census 1970-2010

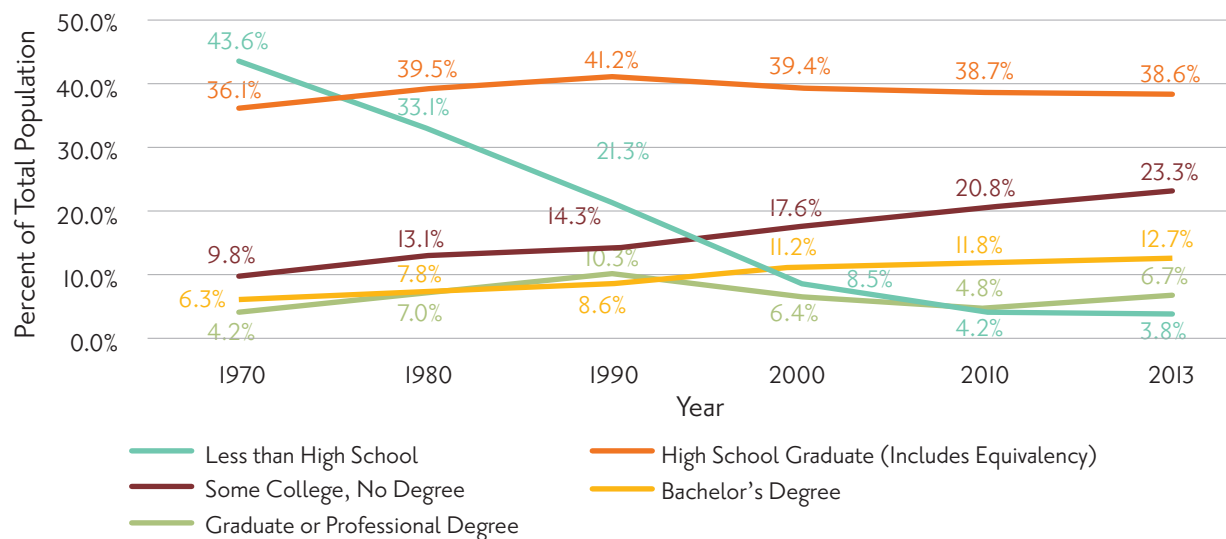
Figure 3: Hispanic or Latino Population of Any Race in Monroe, 1970-2010



Source: US Census 1970-2010

Figure 4: Educational Attainment in Monroe, 1970-2013

## Highest Level of Educational Attainment in Monroe



Source: US Census 1970-2010, and American Community Survey 2009-2013 Estimates

## Education

The Monroe School District consists of the Monroe High School, Middle School, and three Elementary Schools (Northside, Parkside, and Abraham Lincoln Accelerated Learning Academy). In the 2013-2014 school year, the schools had 2,481 enrolled students and employed 361 people. The average classroom size was 22 students for the elementary schools, 21 students for the middle school, and 17 students for the high school. Out of these students, 42% were eligible for free or reduced lunch and 13% had a disability<sup>5</sup>.

The Monroe High School is known for providing a high quality of education to students. In fact, it received a School Report Card score of 75 meaning “Exceeds Expectations” for the 2013-2014 school year. Exceeding expectations is evident in the high graduation rate: the Monroe High School had a graduation rate of 96.6% in the 2012-2013 school year. This was well above the state average of 87.5%.

Blackhawk Technical College has a campus in Monroe and provides education and training that is highly fitting for the careers available in Monroe. There are four programs offered exclusively to this location: Laboratory Technician Assistant, Medical Laboratory Technician, Agribusiness Specialist, and Medical Coding<sup>6</sup>. Many other associate degrees, technical diplomas, and certificates are offered at this location. Blackhawk Technical College also provides college credits to high school students and is a key partner in various city initiatives.

<sup>5</sup> Monroe School District  
<sup>6</sup> Blackhawk Technical College



**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Monroe School District received \$453,000 in donations and grants from community organizations and foundations. This money is to be used for technology, building upgrades, and grants for school staff initiatives.

*Source: School District of Monroe*



# HOUSING

**VISION STATEMENT:** A diverse inventory of energy efficient and economical housing options that satisfy the needs of an aging community and attract the youth of tomorrow, across a wide spectrum of income levels.

## Public Meeting Participants

**John Brunner** • Family Promise Green County

**Cara Carper** • Monroe Chamber of Commerce

**John Glynn** • Green County Board of Supervisors

**Al Hanusa** • TMP Ventures and Colony Brands

**Lindsay Lemmer** • TDS Telecom

**David Litin** • Monroe Times

**Harold Marzolf** • TMP Ventures

**Tom Miller** • Monroe City Council

**Bridget Mouchon-Humphry** • Green County  
UW-Extension

**Jordan Nordby** • Monroe Main Street

**Lori Olson Pink** • Southwestern Wisconsin  
Community Action Program

**David Parr** • Parrfection Produce

**Craig Patchin** • Monroe Main Street

**Jean Sinkule** • Wisconsin Bank and Trust

**Victoria Soloman** • Green County UW-Extension

**Kevin Visel** • Lighthouse Commercial Real Estate

**RoAnn Warden** • Green County Health Department

**Tim Wolff** • Colony Brands, Inc.

**Ryan Ziltner** • Century 21 Real Estate





Housing is a fundamental need for all people. It's essential for one to feel secure, be healthy, be part of a community, and have self-worth. When one has quality housing, they are able to focus on fulfilling desires in their life like raising a family, gaining an education, progressing in their career, artistic expression, and more. For these reasons, the quality and availability of diverse housing options is a top priority for Monroe, including low-income and emergency housing.

## Young Professionals

Companies throughout Monroe rely on young professionals for their success. In efforts to retain these employees, Monroe needs to adapt the housing stock to meet the wants and needs of young professionals who, early in their career, are often looking to rent instead of buy their home. This interest of young professionals to rent is noticeable in the age of homeowners between 2000 and 2010. In 2000, 41% of homeowners in Monroe were 44 years old and younger. In 2013, only 24% of homeowners in Monroe were that age or younger<sup>7</sup>. While having access to any rental properties is critical, Monroe community members emphasized the need for quality and affordable rental units where residents feel safe and comfortable. Without this type of housing, there is fear that young professionals will live in other cities, commute to Monroe temporarily, and eventually find a job in their city of residence.

## Families

Keeping families in Monroe is imperative. Families are often involved in a community in many ways and create a large positive impact. For example, the adults may work in Monroe, own a home, and be involved in community activities; while the children may go to the Monroe schools and be involved in many after-school programs. This heavy involvement often leads to families staying in a location for a long period of time -- creating stability in a community. To ensure that this positive impact is possible, Monroe must provide ample quality housing for families. Often this housing is characterized as detached single-family housing with a yard, but may also include large apartments or duplexes.

## Seniors

As Monroe continues to be an aging community, housing catered to seniors is a priority. Senior housing is often characterized as quality housing units that are either single level or have an elevator, small and easy to maintain, and affordable. Senior housing also includes assisted living and senior homes. While there are existing housing units that fit this description in Monroe, there is a consensus that the total amount needs to increase dramatically to meet the changing demographics.

<sup>7</sup> US Census 1990-2010, American Community Survey 2009-2013

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Green County Council on Housing and Homelessness Prevention (“The Housing Council”) is a working group in Monroe that focuses on helping the community understand the major housing issues facing Monroe, with an emphasis on low-income housing. A portion of their work is specifically focused on outreach to landlords and renters to ensure that they know their rights, responsibilities, and other important considerations.

*Source: Green County UW-Extension*



### TOTAL HOUSING STOCK VACANCIES

*Source: US Census 1990-2010, American Community Survey 2009-2013*



## DID YOU KNOW?

Almost a third of Monroe’s housing stock is over 75 years old.

Source: US Census 2010

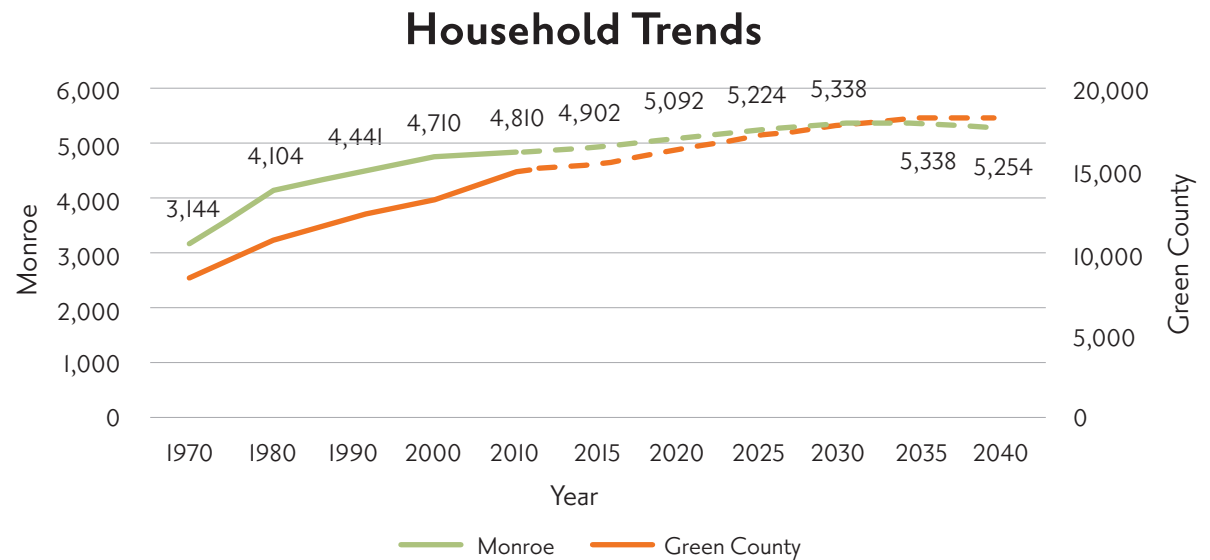
## DID YOU KNOW?

In Green County, 11% of housing is considered to have “Severe Housing Problems”, which is lower than Wisconsin overall with 15%.

“Severe Housing Problems” means they lack complete kitchen or plumbing facilities, have more than 1.5 persons per room, or have residents that spend more than 50% of their income on housing costs.

Source: County Health Rankings, 2015

Figure 5: Household Trends, Actual 1970-2010 and Projected 2015-2040



Source: US Census 1970-2010, and WI Department of Administration

## Low Income and Emergency Housing

It is important that housing is available for community members of all income levels. Participants in the Housing public meetings suggested working to receive grants dedicated to building moderate to low-income housing. In particular, there is a desire to build single-adult efficiency rooms. These are apartments that have personal bedrooms, but share common spaces like a living room and a kitchen. Additionally there is need for shelters in emergency situations and unexpected housing events – especially given Wisconsin’s intense weather variations. For example, participants in the planning process suggested creating an overnight warming shelter for people to stay who need relief from harsh winter nights. There are also times where individuals and families lose their home unexpectedly. For this reason, community members suggested creating an emergency shelter to provide temporary housing while these individuals and families search for their new home.



Table 1: Value of Housing in Monroe 1990-2013

Value of Housing in Monroe, 1990-2013 Percent of Total Owner-Occupied Housing Units				
Value	1990	2000	2010	2013
Owner-occupied units	2,361	2,692	3,262	2,969
Less than \$50,000	35.5%	4.0%	8.2%	6.9%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	59.1%	59.4%	25.1%	24.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	4.6%	27.8%	46.4%	44.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0.6%	7.0%	9.5%	12.9%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	0.2%	1.7%	7.3%	8.9%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	0.0%	0.1%	2.1%	0.6%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	1.1%
\$1,000,000 or more	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.7%
Median Value	\$55,900	\$90,100	\$113,500	\$118,600

Source: US Census 1990-2010, American Community Survey 2009-2013 Estimates

## Housing Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

 **GOAL:** Improve the quantity of safe, quality, and affordable rental properties.

 **Objective:** Increase education for landlords and renters.

**Strategy:** Hold classes for landlords discussing best practices and legal requirements.

**Strategy:** Hold classes for renters to understand their rights and renter resources available.

**Strategy:** Create a website, for tenants in Monroe to visit, that describes tenants' rights and provides contact and resource information.

**Objective:** Enforce the building code pertaining to the quality of rental properties.

**Objective:** Increase the amount of affordable rental properties throughout the city through creative development.

**Strategy:** Seek and promote projects that utilize Section 42 assistance.

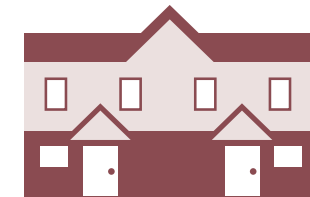
**Strategy:** Increase the number of single-adult efficiency rooms for rent.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT!

### RESPONSE TO SENIOR HOUSING

**44%**  
WANTED MORE  
INVESTMENT

**43%**  
WANTED THE SAME  
LEVEL OF INVESTMENT



**38%** of survey respondents  
wanted **MORE INVESTMENT**  
in Multi-Unit Housing.



**38%** of survey respondents  
wanted **MORE INVESTMENT**  
in Single Family Housing.



## ANSWER! POP QUIZ!

Question on page 12.

### A. 1868

Now head over on any Sunday at 1 p.m.  
and dance the day away in Swiss style!

Source: Turner Hall of Monroe

## GOAL: Increase a diverse range of modern, aesthetically pleasing housing supply and housing resources.

### Objective: Gain a greater understanding of the existing housing stock.

**Strategy:** Generate an inventory of the housing stock, including rentals, and use it for gap and overlap analysis.

### Objective: Concentrate on infill development.

**Strategy:** Map vacant lots within the city and prioritize lots for infill development.

**Strategy:** Market proactive incentives to developers to develop these areas.

### Objective: Improve the quality and efficiency of dilapidated housing.

**Strategy:** Consistently administer the building code with a priority on the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.

**Strategy:** Consistently administer the weatherization codes for all properties.

**Strategy:** Provide small, no interest loans to community members for home improvement projects.

### Objective: Increase senior housing.

**Strategy:** Explore gap funding and block grants that can be used specifically for new senior housing developments.

**Strategy:** Develop, incentivize, and publicize programs that assist homeowners into making their homes more accessible.

### Objective: Have housing resources in place to support those with unexpected housing events or conditions.

**Strategy:** Create a men's shelter.

**Strategy:** Create an emergency shelter for disasters and displacement.

**Strategy:** Create an overnight warming shelter for intense weather conditions.

### Objective: Cultivate new planned housing developments.

**Strategy:** Focus on creating small neighborhoods that are centered on a shared public space, instead of the historically common suburban fringe development.

**Strategy:** Encourage loft development downtown near the city center to encourage youth attraction.

### Objective: Prepare and establish one housing plan, as a resource for multiple agencies, to ensure housing is available for all levels and income brackets.

## GOAL: Modernize the zoning ordinance to allow for flexibility and creativity in land use and housing development across the city.

### Objective: Convert to form-based zoning regulations.

**Strategy:** Hire a consultant or organization to complete an ordinance re-write.

**Strategy:** Modify and update the definition of a "sub-standard lot" as defined in the City of Monroe's Title Five: Zoning Regulations.



**Objective: Update the zoning ordinance to allow for additional land uses.**

**Strategy:** Allow accessory dwelling units.

**Strategy:** Allow small-scale husbandry, such as chickens, in backyards within city limits.

**GOAL: Use strategic funding resources to promote new development and home ownership.**

**Objective: Use TIF funding to generate new construction.**

**Strategy:** Prioritize mixed-use in the downtown.

**Strategy:** Focus on having a flexible TIF plan to act proactively and react to unforeseen opportunities.

**Objective: Increase the ability for home ownership by reducing financial barriers.**

**Strategy:** Investigate the use of Land Trusts to lower costs for buying or building a home.

**Strategy:** Increase educational resources for mortgage readiness and financial literacy.





# TRANSPORTATION

**VISION STATEMENT:** Safe, efficient, and diverse transportation options that are accessible by all community members and visitors, in addition to providing easily navigable connections throughout the city and region.

## Public Meeting Participants

**Kelly Blanke** • Green County Human Services

**Cara Carper** • Monroe Chamber of Commerce

**Jason Coplien** • Badger State Ethanol

**Jesse Duff** • Fehr Graham

**Bob Gibson** • Green County Human Service Department

**Donna Glynn** • Monroe Main Street

**Stephanie Hafez** • Aging and Disability Resource Center

**Mike Johnson** • Green County Development Corporation

**Tom Kaprowski** • Wisconsin Department of Transportation

**Fred Kelley** • Monroe Police Department

**David Litin** • Monroe Times

**Ashley Nedeau-Owen** • Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program

**Phil Rath** • City of Monroe

**Jackie Ritschard** • Monroe Taxi

**Holli Rosenberg** • Community Member

**Tom Rygh** • Community Member

**Karl Schulte** • Brown Cab

**Colin Simpson** • City of Monroe

**Victoria Solomon** • Green County UW-Extension

**Jeff Wunschel** • Green County Highway Department



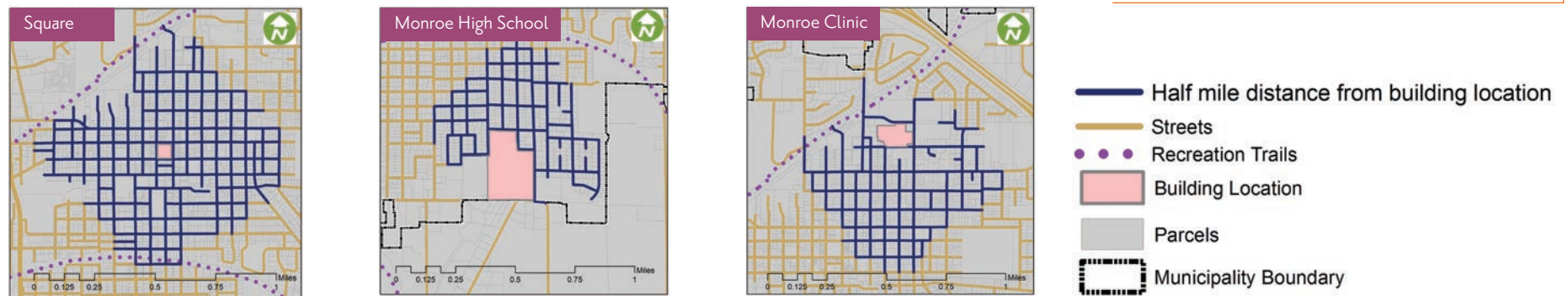
Transportation encompasses how people get to work and school, meet with friends, run for exercise, walk their dog, receive freight, and many more activities that are necessary to a full life. For this reason, ensuring that existing transportation options are working efficiently and to their maximum potential is a priority to Monroe. Specifically, many community members are calling for a heightened focus on active transportation, including walking and biking infrastructure – instead of the traditional focus on infrastructure for the automotive vehicle.

## Walking and Biking

Monroe has, historically, been a primarily car-dependent community. In 2010, 88% of people 16 years and over in Monroe commuted to work by car, truck, or van<sup>8</sup>. The dependence on the car can partially be seen in the varying walkability of areas throughout Monroe. For example, according to Walk Score, in 2016 the Square (located at the crossing of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> street with 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> avenue), had a walking score of 89 making it “Very Walkable”, while the Monroe Clinic had a walking score of 45 making it “Car-Dependent” and the Monroe High School had a walking score of 21 making it also “Car-Dependent”<sup>9</sup>. This inconsistency makes it difficult for one to rely on walking for their day-to-day activities.

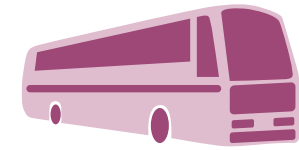
Walkability encompasses multiple factors, including: complete streets with sidewalks, small blocks, buildings that are close to the sidewalk, slopes, and the road patterns. Some examples of road patterns are square grids, rectangle grids, culs-de-sac, and loops. The impact that road patterns make on walkability in Monroe is apparent in Figures 6, which shows where one can reach by walking a half a mile from the three points previously described. In a half mile, one can reach parcels in all directions at the Square due to its small grid pattern. Conversely, one can travel in fewer directions and reach fewer parcels at the Monroe Clinic and Monroe High School, which have rectangle grids, culs-de-sac and dead-end roads.

Figure 6: The Walkability of the Square, Monroe High School, and Monroe Clinic Based on Road Patterns.



<sup>8</sup> US Census 2010  
<sup>9</sup> Walk Score 2016

## COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT!



**47%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Bus trips to other cities.”



**46%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Designated bike lanes on roadways.”

## DID YOU KNOW?

A new airport terminal was built at the Monroe Municipal Airport in 2013. This was a \$1,067,418 project funded primarily by the State of Wisconsin and the Federal Aviation Administration. The City of Monroe also contributed to funding this project.

*Source: City of Monroe*

The biking accessibility in Monroe is more consistent. Cyclists can ride on most roads. Additionally, there are two regional trails going through Monroe (Cheese Country Trail and the Badger State Trail) that increase biking opportunities significantly. However, many residents are not aware of the bike routes, or the safety guidelines and ‘rules of the road’ for cyclists.

Creating a more walkable and bike-friendly environment is important for the overall health of the community. Improvements in the sidewalk network, designated bike lanes on roads, bike safety courses, easy to understand maps, and other related changes will allow community members to choose more active modes of transportation throughout their day and rely less on sedentary transportation options like driving. Furthermore, active modes of transportation often build community spirit by creating opportunities for interactions with neighbors and others that are not possible when driving.

## Public Transportation

Beyond driving, walking and cycling, there are a small number of public transportation options available to Monroe residents and visitors. The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) operates a shuttle bus for residents of Green County who are 55 years and older or who have a disability. This shuttle can be used for any purpose. ADRC also has a driver escort service and provides personal rides to users for medical appointments and other health related services<sup>10</sup>. Additionally, Brown Cab and Monroe Cab have a Monroe ride-share taxi program that runs within city limits<sup>11</sup>.

## Freight Routes

Creating efficient freight routes through Monroe was stated as a top priority during several public meetings. While there are existing freight routes, shown in Figure 7, many businesses that require large freight are not located on these routes. Furthermore, some of these businesses are located near or on the Square, which has narrow roads and high pedestrian traffic. Community members suggested determining the most effective routes for freight and then analyzing what changes need to be made on those roadways to ensure that trucks can safely and efficiently travel to their destinations. Some of these changes may include altering on-street parking and changing speed limits.

The City of Monroe also has a Municipal Airport located northeast of the city. This airport has two terminals and is major resource for businesses in Monroe -- contributing to the economic vitality of the region<sup>4</sup>. Additionally, a railroad runs through Monroe, which is run by Wisconsin and Southern Railroad.

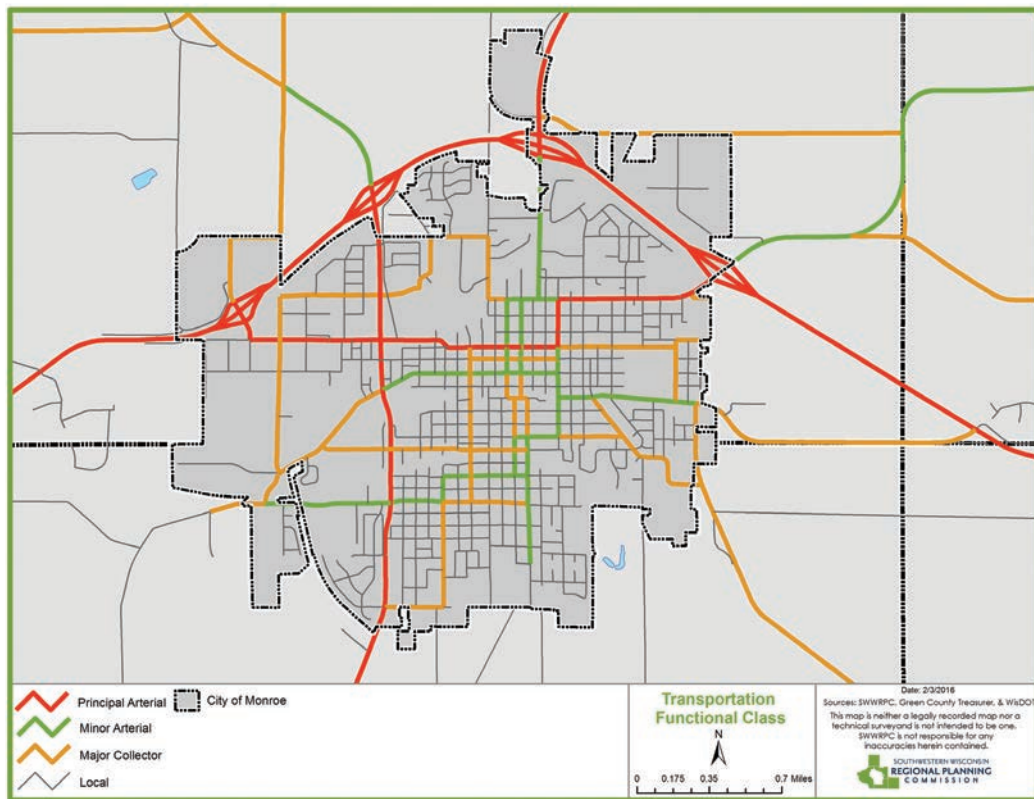
<sup>10</sup> Green County Aging and Disability Resource Center 2015

<sup>11</sup> City of Monroe 2015





Figure 7: Map of Road Classifications in Monroe.



## Transportation Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

**GOAL:** Increase bicycle and pedestrian access and safety across the city.

**Objective:** Create a safe riding experience for cyclists on the trails and on the streets.

**Strategy:** Create a map illustrating current and future bike paths, connecting points of interest throughout the city.

**Strategy:** Continue to provide courses on bike safety to youth, and promote bike safety and awareness to adults and motorists.

**Strategy:** Increase and improve bike signage.

**Objective:** Improve the sidewalk network.

**Strategy:** Develop criteria for selecting high priority sites for sidewalk installation or maintenance.

### COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT!

RESPONSE TO  
TRANSIT OPTIONS (taxi, bus, etc.)

43%  
WANTED MORE  
INVESTMENT

43%  
WANTED THE SAME  
LEVEL OF INVESTMENT




**73%** of survey respondents would be willing to pay a user fee for transportation services that they believe require more investment.



**Strategy:** Create a digital map of the current sidewalk network and its relationship to community facilities in the city.

**Strategy:** Analyze the current budget to shift the necessary funds towards sidewalk investments.

### **GOAL: Increase the efficiency of existing transit services and future investments.**

 **Objective: Eliminate current gaps and redundancies in service provisions between the local transit services.**

**Strategy:** Coordinate services through a needs and services study to identify areas of collaboration.

**Strategy:** Increase the number of transportation options, including a rental car agency.

**Objective: Communicate and publicize the existing transportation options.**

**Strategy:** Create a shared webpage with a comprehensive list of transportation options.

**Strategy:** Develop an overall marketing plan to distribute information about transit services in the city and region.

### **GOAL: Increase intergovernmental coordination on infrastructure maintenance and development.**

**Objective: Create a common understanding between state, county, and local authorities on the priorities for constructing, maintaining, and improving city transportation infrastructure.**

**Strategy:** Develop a common database of the existing infrastructure, inclusive of Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PÁSER), age, and other data -- to be used within all three governmental jurisdictions.

**Strategy:** Create a Coordination Plan between State, County, and local governments for long-term infrastructure improvements.

**Strategy:** Identify infrastructure priorities for arterials, the downtown, bike and pedestrian accessibility for new projects, and beautification of city entry points.

**Strategy:** Share infrastructure priorities so that projects can be planned with the priorities in mind across multiple agencies.

### **GOAL: Prioritize safe roadways while providing efficient freight routes throughout the city.**

**Objective: Ensure city streets are used for their intended function, per their respective functional classification.**

**Strategy:** Create traffic calming roadways by adding striping on the outside edges and center lanes.

**Strategy:** Where feasible and safe, eliminate on-street parking on freight routes to increase speed.

**Strategy:** Identify and map truck routes within the city to use when planning a new development.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE

**VISION STATEMENT:** A vibrant community providing quality jobs, supported by an exceptional workforce.

## Public Meeting Participants

**John Bauman** • Colony Brands, Inc.

**Michael Boyce** • City of Monroe

**Cara Carper** • Monroe Chamber of Commerce

**Scott DeNure** • Woodford State Bank

**Donna Douglas** • National Historic Cheesemaking Center

**Rex Ewald** • Voegeli, Ewald, and Bartholf

**Mary Jane Grenzow** • Monroe Times

**Aaron Holverson** • Holverson Design

**Erik Huschitt** • Badger State Ethanol

**Mike Johnson** • Green County Development Corporation

**Nathan Klassy** • Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

**Jenny Kuderer** • Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

**Patricia Lawson** • Monroe Clinic

**Ron Markham** • Wisconsin Bank and Trust

**Nikki Matley** • Woodford State Bank

**Mark Mayer** • Green County UW-Extension

**Gina McConoughey** • Blackhawk Technical College

**Suzanne Miller** • Highland Community College

**Jordan Nordby** • Monroe Main Street

**Diane Nyhammer** • Blackhawk Technical College

**Walter Orzechowski** • Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program

**Craig Patchin** • Transect

**Phil Rath** • City of Monroe

**Bill Ross** • City of Monroe

**Mike Sanders** • Monroe Clinic

**Ron Schaaf** • Bank of New Glarus

**Steve Schneider** • First National Bank and Trust

**Martin Shanks** • City of Monroe

**Colin Simpson** • City of Monroe

**Ron Spielman** • Monroe Clinic

**Terry Tackett** • Monroe United Methodist

**Mark Tallman** • Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

**Matthew Urban** • Blackhawk Technical College

**Kevin Visel** • Lighthouse Commercial Real Estate

**Ed White** • Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

**Dustin Williams** • Blackhawk Technical College



## DID YOU KNOW?

69% of workers in Monroe do not live in Monroe.

Source: EMSI



When one thinks of Monroe, often cheese and Swiss heritage comes to mind. While it is true that Monroe offers a wide supply of delicious dairy products, Monroe has a diverse portfolio of businesses and industries that are critical to its success and vibrancy. In fact, public meeting participants often referred to Monroe as an ‘employment magnet’ due to the number of workers it attracts from the region for far-ranging occupations. With this in mind, attracting employees (especially youth) to live in Monroe with quality, safe housing and keeping these workers healthy through wellness programs are a large focus of Monroe in order to maintain its robust and diverse economy.

## Industry Clusters and Employment

The importance of dairy on Monroe’s economy is clear in Monroe’s high concentration of dairy product sales and cheese manufacturing, compared to the nation – shown in the 2025 predicted location quotients in Table 2. Location quotients are determined by comparing the industry’s share of regional employment with its share of national employment. This cluster of dairy production and sales may be expected given the large agricultural presence in Green County, which, in turn, impacts the work opportunities in Monroe. In 2014, agriculture provided jobs for 6,979 Green County residents and contributed \$484 million to the county’s total income<sup>12</sup>.

Table 2: Industries in Monroe with the Highest 2025 Location Quotient

Industries in Monroe with the Highest 2025 Location Quotient	
Industry	Location Quotient for 2025
Dairy Product (except Dried or Canned) Merchant Wholesalers	158.43
Cheese Manufacturing	121.78
Mail-Order Houses	96.90
Power Boiler and Heat Exchanger Manufacturing	58.41
Lime Manufacturing	56.26
Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing	55.72

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists Intl.

Many other industries flourish in Monroe beyond dairy product manufacturing and sales. In fact, the second and third largest employers in Monroe are Colony Brands, Inc. (in production and distribution of mail-order gifts, with over 900 employees) and Monroe Truck Equipment (in manufacturing, with over 700 employees). Other major employers in Monroe are in similar industries including: Orchid Monroe LLC., Klondike Cheese Factory, and I Pacesetters<sup>13</sup>. Small businesses (1-4 employees) are also critical to the success of Monroe and comprise 64% of establishments in Green County<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Green County UW-Extension, Green County Agriculture: Value and Economic Impact 2014

<sup>13</sup> Green County Development Corporation

<sup>14</sup> American Community Survey 2009-2013



Health care also has a large presence in Monroe. Out of the ten highest paying occupations in Monroe, seven are in the health care industry including: family and general practitioners, physicians and surgeons, pharmacists, physicians’ assistants, nurse practitioners, and medical and health services managers. Jobs in the health care industry are also on the rise, with registered nurses being the fastest predicted growing occupation between 2014 and 2024 in Monroe. This emphasis on health care is likely due to the Monroe Clinic, which is the largest employer in Monroe with over 1,000 employees<sup>2</sup>.

Table 3: Median Household Income in Monroe, 2000-2010

Year	Median Income
2000	\$36,922
2010	\$43,556
2014	\$39,441

Source: US Census 2000-2010

## Youth Retention through Local Job Opportunities

There is a concern that many young professionals move to other metropolitan areas to find work instead of staying in Monroe. There is a sense that youth may move because they do not believe there are quality work opportunities with competitive wages in the area. This perception could be due to the relatively high unemployment rates for young professionals in Monroe. In 2014, people between the ages of 16 and 24 years old made up the majority of those unemployed (who are looking for work) in Monroe: 23.5% of 16 to 19 year olds in the workforce were unemployed, and 13.3% of 20 to 24 year olds in the workforce were unemployed<sup>15</sup> – as shown in Figure 8.

Many public meeting participants were employers in Monroe who stated that there are work opportunities for young professionals, but the young professionals are either not aware of the job opportunities or not properly trained to take these positions. Therefore, Monroe has made it a priority to convey the quality of local work opportunities to students and young professionals through 2035, and provide the necessary training so that youth are able to get local jobs early in their careers. Some ways of doing so include: a job fair geared towards students, job shadowing opportunities, promoting the use of Black Hawk Technical College classes while in High School, and creating a database showing the job opportunities, the training necessary, and their wages.



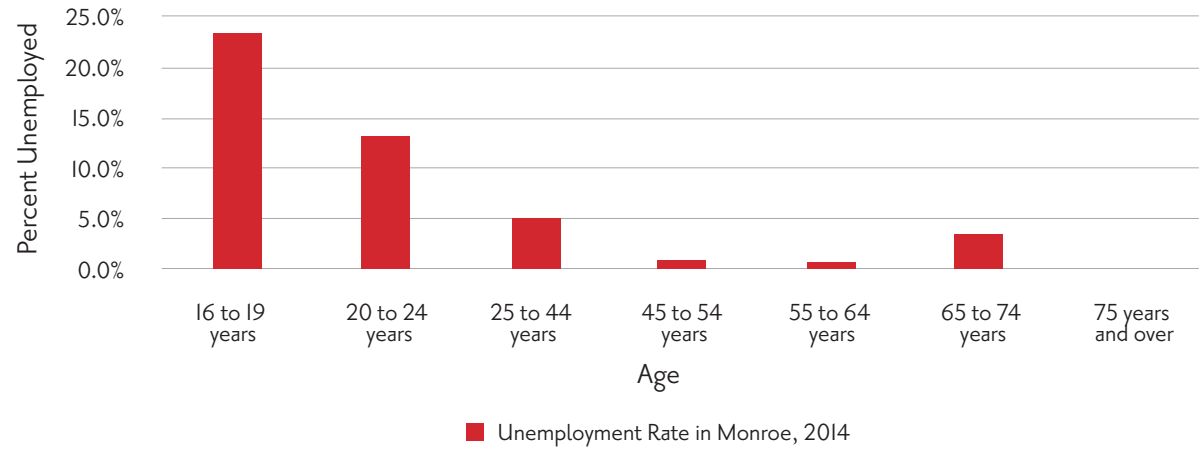
<sup>15</sup> American Community Survey 2010-2014





Figure 8: Age of People Unemployed in Labor Market, 2014

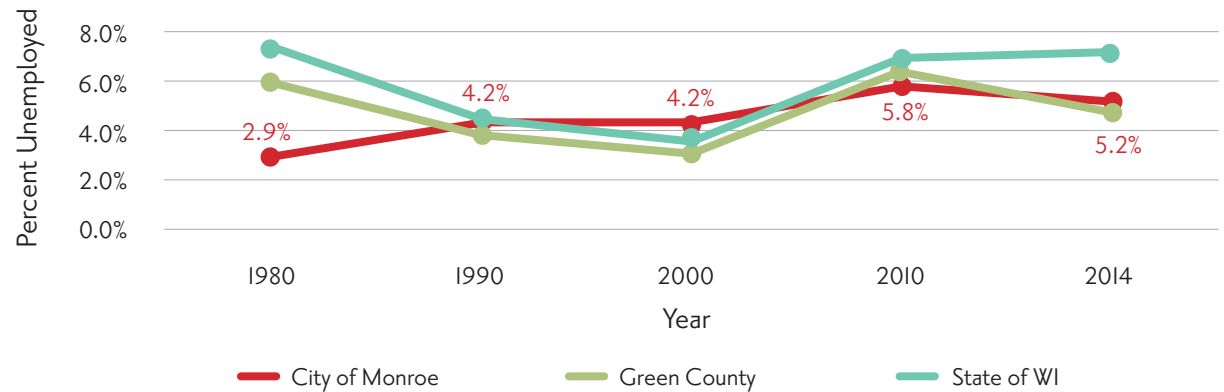
### Unemployment Rate by Age in Monroe, 2014



Source: American Community Survey 2010-2014 Estimates

Figure 9: Unemployment Rate in Monroe, 1980-2014

### Unemployment Rate in Monroe



Source: US Census 1980-2010, American Community Survey 2010-2014 Estimates



## A Healthy Workforce

Physically and mentally healthy employees is key to the success of businesses and organizations. To increase the number of healthy employees, public meeting participants suggested building partnerships between businesses and health related entities, like Black Hawk Technical College. Black Hawk Technical College has Medical Assistant, Nursing, and other programs whose students may be able to do low-cost health assessments for businesses. Businesses could also partner with the YMCA to provide discount annual memberships and encourage active employees.


Additionally, many businesses and organizations already provide highly successful wellness initiatives that other entities could emulate. In order to share information on these initiatives, community members suggested creating a shared location where employers and employees explain successful initiatives, steps to implement them, and lessons learned to ensure the programs are run successfully.

## Workforce Housing

Housing for the workforce was continually stated as a necessity for economic vitality in Monroe during the Economic Development and Agriculture public meetings. Monroe's businesses and organizations have workers at all ages and stages of their life, and the housing stock needs to reflect this diversity. For this reason, it was suggested that Monroe invest in single-family housing, apartment complexes, downtown lofts, and housing geared towards seniors. Additionally, this housing stock needs to have homes for rent and to own in order to accommodate the mixed desires of employees. This sentiment was echoed heavily in the Housing public meetings.

## Economic Development and Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

**GOAL: Increase workforce training and education for local careers, and awareness of these opportunities.**

 **Objective: Inform students and parents about local career opportunities.**

**Strategy:** Help middle school-aged youth develop career interest areas through job shadowing.

**Strategy:** Help parents become more aware of the Blackhawk Technical College classes, transfer credits, and advanced placement classes available at the high school level.

**Strategy:** Develop career pathway programs in the school system, exploring local grant opportunities as potential funding sources.

DID YOU KNOW?

29%

of adults in Green County are

**obese.**

*Source: County Health Rankings*



## COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT!



**64%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Events for students to learn about the career and job opportunities.”



**58%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Resources for businesses to increase employee health and wellness.”



**56%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Resources to assist entrepreneurs.”

**These three were in the top five developments and services that community members would like to see more investment in, out of all topics.**

**Objective: Develop a positive and modern image of agriculture and manufacturing jobs.**

**Strategy:** Create a local jobs database for the city and surrounding areas, including skills needed, pay rate, training required, benefits, and other pertinent information.

**Strategy:** Tailor the existing business expo to incorporate programming targeted at middle and high school students.

**GOAL: Strive for a healthier workforce.**

**Objective: Educate and guide small businesses about the benefits of having healthy employees.**

**Strategy:** Host Lunch and Learns to educate small businesses on health and wellness.

**Strategy:** Organize a small business co-op for health care information.

**Strategy:** Develop partnerships with local health providers and the Medical Assistant, Nursing, and other programs at Blackhawk Technical College to perform low-cost health assessments for local businesses.

**Strategy:** Develop partnerships between small businesses and the YMCA that incentivize increased physical activity among the community’s workforce.

**Objective: Use existing knowledge and programs of companies in the city to promote community health.**

**Strategy:** Create a centralized, shared location for employers and employees to access information about successful healthy incentive programs in the region.

**Strategy:** Use Employee Assistance Programs to promote and attract talent to local businesses.

**Strategy:** Create a clearinghouse of local employee health and wellness data to identify trends and develop conclusions.

**GOAL: Explore growth opportunities through land and infrastructure adaptations.**

**Objective: Target blighted areas for infill and redevelopment.**

**Strategy:** Identify reasons why some properties are not being maintained.

**Strategy:** Identify priority code enforcement issues while recognizing the community’s health and aesthetic priorities and the City’s financial constraints.

**Objective: Remove barriers to, and improve mobility of, freight carriers throughout the city.**

**Strategy:** Develop a local and regional freight study that draws upon available data and knowledge of local businesses, the goal of which would be affirmation of existing, or identification of new, freight corridors in the city.





**Objective: Identify available land that is ‘shovel-ready’ for new development.**

**Strategy:** Meet with Townships to discuss potential future areas of development outside of current city limits.

**Strategy:** Create a Development Handbook outlining processes for new or expanding businesses to assist economic developers, city staff, and business prospects through identification of a streamlined permitting process.

**GOAL: Maximize industry clusters and economic opportunities unique to Monroe.**

**Objective: Capitalize on the tourism and agriculture industry.**

**Strategy:** Contact the Wisconsin Department of Tourism to develop new agri-tourism opportunities and connect the city to existing agri-tourism events around the state.

**Objective: Attract young entrepreneurs by leveraging the history and long standing tradition in Monroe of “growing our own” businesses.**

**Strategy:** Implement the recommendation of the Green County Development Corporation’s Incubator Feasibility Study by creating a business incubator for small business startups, with services available to grow new businesses.

**Strategy:** Work with larger corporations in the community to identify opportunities for services or vendors that may be filled locally, and assist small businesses in meeting these demands.

**GOAL: Rewrite the zoning ordinance to meet the evolving needs of residents, developers, and business prospects.**

**Objective: Allow for innovative projects and new development patterns in the city, such as mixed-use housing and commercial spaces.**

**Objective: Reevaluate zoning districts and eliminate blanket zoning.**

**Objective: Concentrate new development on infill and redevelopment.**

**Objective: Streamline the approval processes for new housing developments and urgent business growth, to better accommodate developers.**



## DID YOU KNOW?

Colony Brands, Inc., located in Monroe, has a Corporate Fitness Program to encourage employees and spouses to stay healthy. The program offers multiple options, including annual membership reimbursements for fitness facilities, exercise class reimbursements, and a points system for self-motivated physical activity. Additionally, between January and May, they hold the Wellness Works Biggest Loser, which offers incentives to employees that lose at least 5% of their body weight.

*Source: Colony Brands, Inc.*





# PARKS, RECREATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

**VISION STATEMENT:** Diverse, inclusive, and affordable parks and recreation opportunities that reflect current trends and are open to surrounding communities.

## Public Meeting Participants

**Aaron Phillips** • Green County Family YMCA

**Mike Furgal** • Green County Board of Supervisors

**Tonya Gratz** • Green County Land and Water Conservation

**Jerry Guth** • Green County Board of Supervisors

**Todd Jenson** • Green County Land and Water Conservation

**Marge Klinzing** • City of Monroe

**Paul Klinzing** • City of Monroe

**David Litin** • Monroe Times

**Phil Rath** • City of Monroe

**Monica Schneider** • Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

**Colin Simpson** • City of Monroe

**Victoria Solomon** • Green County UW-Extension

**Elizabeth Sorn** • Behring Senior Center

**RoAnn Warden** • Green County Health Department

**Dana White Quam** • Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

**Adam Wiegel** • Green County Land Use and Zoning



Lively recreational opportunities are available to enjoy in Monroe regardless of one’s age, skill, or competitiveness. The Green County YMCA, Monroe Municipal Outdoor Pool, Behring Senior Center, and Monroe Den Roller Skating are just some of the recreational facilities throughout Monroe, which cumulatively cater to a diverse range of community members. Furthermore, there are many parks, playgrounds and trails that are open to the public for free – creating fun opportunities for families and individuals of all income levels. Together, these resources create a truly livable city that is home to active and engaged community members.

## Parks and Trails

Monroe is home to 13 public parks and playgrounds<sup>16</sup>. These parks have varying uses from scenic views for relaxation to fields for playing soccer. Twining Park is Monroe’s largest park, and has a basketball court, disc golf, horseshoe pits, a playground, tennis courts, and public restrooms. It is here that Monroe hosts the July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration with a firework show – an event that brings people to Monroe from throughout the southwestern Wisconsin region.

Additionally, the Badger State Trail and the Cheese Country Trail are two regional multi-purpose trails that pass through Monroe – connecting Monroe to nearby Madison and other smaller cities and villages. Community members noted that these are huge assets for Monroe due to their economic and tourist benefit, and their potential to increase the health and well-being of residents. However, much of the public is not aware of the trails. To change this, there is a desire to create a marketing campaign highlighting these two trails and other trails in the Monroe area. This campaign would include a map, signage, and multiple events and programs.

## Inclusiveness of Recreation Opportunities

Continuing and enhancing the inclusiveness of these Parks and Recreation resources is a key goal for Monroe through 2035. This inclusiveness includes vouchers for sports, recreational opportunities for people of all ages and skill levels, and ensuring that community members can physically reach parks easily. The accessibility of parks in Monroe is shown in Figure 10. As Figure 10 shows, there are portions of Monroe that are more than a quarter mile away from parks or trails. Lacking access to parks limits one’s ability for exercise, relaxing in nature, and other activities that promote a mentally and physically healthy lifestyle. To increase access, Land Use meeting participants suggested building several pocket parks. Pocket parks are very small parks (typically the size of one or two lots) and can be designed for a variety of recreational activities, like yoga, tether ball, and playing in the sand.

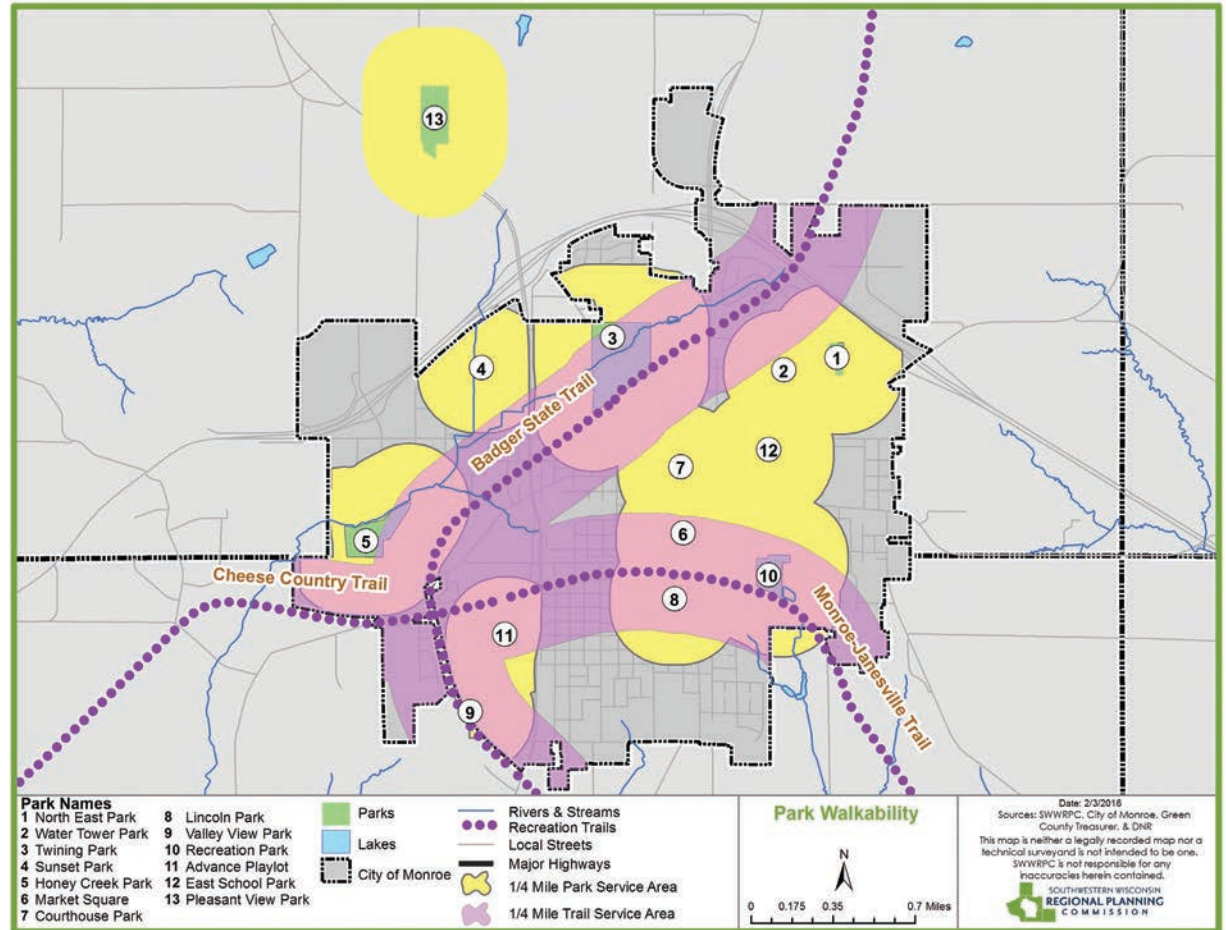


<sup>16</sup> City of Monroe 2015





Figure 10: Map of Parks and Trails in Monroe and a ¼ Mile Park Service Area (Typically a 5 Minute Walk), 2015.



Additionally, another method of increasing the accessibility of Parks and Recreation is to create more dog-friendly parks. As of 2015, no dogs are allowed on any parks within the City of Monroe (however, there is a 90 acre dog park outside of Monroe). To change this, 47% of Community Survey respondents would like most of the existing City parks to allow dogs, while keeping a few of the parks dog free. This desire for allowing dogs in parks was also stated in several public meetings during the Monroe Comprehensive Planning Process.



## Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

**GOAL: Maintain, and when needed increase, the inclusivity of recreational activities.**

 **Objective: Improve existing recreational infrastructure to become fully accessible.**

**Strategy:** Evaluate the existing facilities to locate any potential accessibility issues.

**Strategy:** Calculate the parking needs at all recreational facilities.

 **Objective: Continue to offer a wide variety of options for all skill and age levels.**

**Objective: Provide financial support when necessary to ensure that all can participate, such as a voucher program for families in need.**

**Objective: Determine the type and quantity of additional athletic fields necessary.**

**Strategy:** Conduct a needs assessment to understand park demand in the city, and identify where these may be located.

 **Strategy:** Explore using athletic fields in nearby communities.

**Strategy:** Identify funding sources for athletic fields, including new public-private partnerships.

**Objective: Increase the number of dog-friendly parks.**

**Strategy:** Select a series of existing parks to allow leashed dogs.

**Strategy:** Repurpose existing land to create a fenced-in dog park within City limits.

**GOAL: Use parks and recreation to improve overall community health and wellness.**

 **Objective: Use parks to support mental, behavioral, and spiritual well-being of city residents.**

**Strategy:** Construct or dedicate space for more gardens.

**Strategy:** Incorporate community art into gardens and parks.

**Strategy:** Market, inform, and communicate the many different functions of city parks.

 **Strategy:** Use park space and natural areas for outdoor classrooms.

**GOAL: Increase recreational trail usability and connectivity.**

 **Objective: Increase safety at trail crossings and major intersections.**

**Strategy:** Determine which intersections pose the most danger to users and what factors make them dangerous.

**Strategy:** Explore new crossing options at dangerous intersections, such as lighted crosswalk signage, a tunnel, or a bridge.

**Objective: Ensure that the public is aware of the existing bike trails.**

**Strategy:** Develop a map that identifies where the bike trails are.

### COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT!



**48%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Signs showing bike routes and trail connections.”

**47%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Parks that Allow Leashed Dogs.”

**37%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Parks that allow unleashed dogs (a dog park).”

**67%** of survey respondents wanted the same level of investment in “Athletic fields.”

**45%** of survey respondents would be willing to pay additional taxes and 64% would be willing to pay a user fee for the parks, recreation, and natural resource services that they believe require more investment.





**Strategy:** Improve signage for the bike trails on city streets.

**Strategy:** Market the trails as economic development and tourism assets.

**Strategy:** Host programs or events with the specific intent of bringing awareness to parks and recreational opportunities, such as an annual scavenger hunt.

**Strategy:** Create a program where new employees receive information about the parks and recreation activities available to them.

**Objective:** Improve trail-to-trail connectivity.

**Strategy:** Identify and map where trails should connect if no connection currently exists.

**Strategy:** Determine the particular parcels of land that are needed in order to create connectivity, and explore methods for purchasing or using that land.



*Photo credit: Marc Kohlbauer*



# CULTURE, CREATIVITY, AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

**VISION STATEMENT:** A culturally diverse, caring, and forward thinking community that is committed to public and private support for the arts, entrepreneurship, and multi-generational community resources.

## Public Meeting Participants

**Aaron Phillips** • Green County Family YMCA

**Sue Barret** • Monroe Arts Center and Monroe Woman's Club

**Elaine Brukwicki** • Behring Senior Center

**Mike Brukwiki** • Community Member

**Cara Carper** • Monroe Main Street

**Carol Clay** • Green County Family YMCA

**Jack Clevesy** • Green County Family YMCA

**Richard Daniels** • Monroe Arts Center

**Mary Deininger** • Community Member

**Tammy Derrickson** • Behring Senior Center

**Kay Fazel** • Community Member

**Eric Gebhart** • Green County Human Services

**Barb Grabow** • Community Member

**Mary Jane Grenzow** • Monroe Times

**Shannon Kaszuba** • Big Brothers Big Sisters  
Green County

**Bonita Loeffel** • Community Member

**Barb Moser** • City of Monroe

**Bridget Mouchon-Humphry** • Green County  
UW-Extension

**Dawn Mulligan** • Green County Family YMCA

**Ashley Nedeau-Owen** • Southwestern Wisconsin  
Community Action Program

**Tom Nelson** • Local Foods Advocate and Artist

**Vinny Ortiz** • Community Member

**Noreen Rueckert** • Green County Tourism

**Jerry Schwaiger** • Behring Senior Center

**Robin Schwaiger** • Community Member

**Matt Skibba** • City of Monroe

**Mary Soddy** • Monroe Arts Center

**Victoria Solomon** • Green County UW-Extension

**Elizabeth Sorn** • Behring Senior Center

**Susie Speer** • United Way of Green County

**Ron Spielman** • Monroe Clinic

**Holly Storck-Post** • Monroe Public Library

**Doni Thomas** • Green County Family YMCA





## POP QUIZ!

**Q.** Which of these family-friendly annual programs is held by the Monroe Arts Center?

- A. Hip-hop Dance Show
- B. Showcase of Talent
- C. Henna Tattooing Event
- D. Tap Dancing Ball

Please find the answer on page 44.

From the Sky Vu Drive-In Movie Theater to the Monroe Arts Center to the Behring Senior Center, Monroe has an abundance of engaging and unique community resources. These assets host a variety of family-friendly events and programs year-round. Some popular events in Monroe are the July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration at Twining Park, the Farmers Market in the summer, the Green County Fair, and the Green County Cheese Days. The biennial Green County Cheese Days is a highly-anticipated three day event filled with a variety of family-friendly activities including a children’s costume parade, youth talent show, a street dance, carnival, and, of course, plenty of cheese tasting! There are also far ranging organizations like the Monroe Swiss Singers, Yester-Years Auto Club, and the Monroe Theatre Guild for community members to become involved in.

With the many resources in mind, much of the Culture, Creativity, and Community Resources goals for 2035 focus on the amenities that *already* exist.

## Maximizing the Charitable Spirit

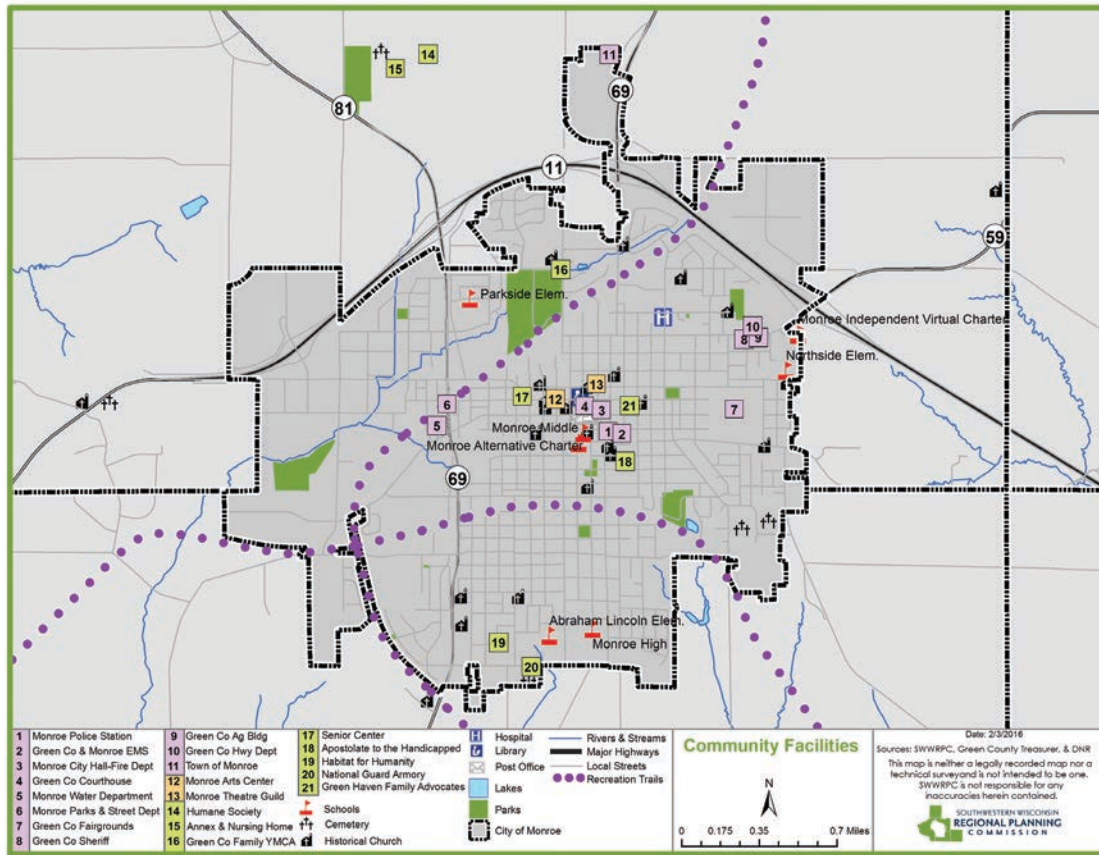
Monroe has a strong charitable spirit and proud volunteer base. Community members recognize the benefit of working together and often donate their time to community events, school programs, and more. Additionally, many individuals, families, businesses and organizations donate funds to complete projects in the community, like the Green County Humane Society and renovations to the Monroe Arts Center – both of which received significant public support. Community members recognized the need to maximize this giving mentality by enhancing the ways that volunteers are organized and funds are donated.

For volunteers, the focus is on pooling volunteers more effectively. Specifically, a Volunteers Skills Bank was suggested. This Skills Bank is a website where people who want to volunteer can sign-up – stating their interests, skills, availability, and contact information. From this, organizations can contact these people when volunteer opportunities arise. For funding, many public meeting participants discussed the importance of increasing Planned Giving through increased education and awareness. Planned Giving is when one donates funds to an entity after they pass away. Additionally, meeting participants suggested speaking with existing foundations and funds to encourage them to donate to programs that help accomplish community goals – leading to coordinated funding efforts.





Figure 11: Map of Community Facilities in Monroe.



## POP QUIZ!

**Q** Which of these community organizations exists in Monroe?

- A. The Cyclists of Wisconsin
- B. Hopscotch Lovers
- C. Cheese Tasting Club
- D. Alpine Curling Club

Please find the answer on page 53.

## Life on the Square

The Square is known to be the center of Monroe and a major attraction for visitors and residents. It is here that events like the Green County Cheese Days, Farmers Market, and others take place. Additionally, the Square has many unique stores and restaurants in a highly walkable environment. For this reason, Monroe community members stressed the need to maintain and enhance this great asset. In particular, there is a need for “third spaces” near the Square, which are places other than one’s home or work where one can socialize with other people. Some examples of “third spaces” are a coffee shop, a park, or weekly community events. Additionally, many stores are not open on the weekends or close in the early evening. Many people suggested that these stores lengthen their hours to meet the demands of visitors who often travel to Monroe on the weekends and explore the Square in the evening.



## COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT!



**72%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Developing a community that attracts young professionals.” This was the top development and service that community members would like to see more investment in, out of all topics.



**54%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Informational material announcing local events.”



**46%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Coordination of volunteer base among organizations.”



**62%** would be willing to pay a user fee for the culture, creativity, and community resource services that they believe require more investment.

## Adapting to Demographic Changes

While there are many fantastic community resources, participants of the Monroe public meetings stated that resources geared towards Latinos and seniors must increase dramatically to keep up with the changing demographics of Monroe. Printing more materials in Spanish and encouraging language learning are two ways to increase resources for the Latino community. Meeting participants also suggested analyzing and altering critical resources (like grocery stores and medical facilities) to ensure that they are accessible to mobility impaired community members. Additionally, the Behring Senior Center is a major resource for seniors that must prepare for the growing senior population. One method of doing so is analyzing the current staffing levels and programs of the center and determining if changes are necessary.

## Culture, Creativity, and Community Resources Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

**GOAL: Sustain current funding, and identify ways to increase and diversify funding for existing local community resources.**

**Objective: Encourage funders to take into consideration community goals when determining where to invest.**

**Strategy:** Identify an established organization with strong communication links with businesses to facilitate coordinated communication regarding community resources in need of funding.

**Strategy:** Create a centralized database of organizations looking for funding, organized by mission and purpose, with specific projects needing funding -- to build awareness around community needs and connect donors with organizations.

**Strategy:** Coordinate the city’s various Community Funds and Foundations to prioritize publicly adopted and recognized needs, working to make public giving more deliberate and targeted.

**Strategy:** Identify programs, materials, and expenses that fall to existing funding sources (such as schools and cities), and identify those non-funded assets in need of new sources of revenue.

**Objective: Increase planned giving and coordinate annual donation campaigns.**

**Strategy:** Coordinate educational outreach to businesses, financial planners, accountants, and other key stakeholders regarding the benefits of estate planning to both the giver and receiving organization.

**Strategy:** Explore ways to expand and build awareness about the city’s various Community Funds.

**Objective: Institutionalize and grow a culture of support for local businesses.**

**Strategy:** Develop procurement processes within public and private organizations that prioritize, or set quotas for, procurement of goods and materials from local businesses.



## GOAL: Adapt resources to accommodate the anticipated demographic shifts.

### Objective: Prepare community resources for the growing senior population.

**Strategy:** Analyze staffing levels of organizations and businesses focused on seniors to determine if/where staffing changes are necessary.

**Strategy:** Prioritize access to critical community infrastructure, such as grocery stores and medical facilities, for senior and mobility impaired community members.

### Objective: Increase community resources for the Latino community.

**Strategy:** Increase the amount of print materials written in Spanish within the community.

**Strategy:** Encourage language learning by connecting community members with the language learning resources in Monroe, including the Monroe High School, Black Hawk Technical College, and UW-Extension.

### Objective: Prepare policies and the overall community culture for the projected future population.

**Strategy:** Identify and analyze existing policies and/or ordinances that potentially hinder changing demographics and determine if they need to be adapted to create a community that will attract a variety of demographics.

### Objective: Utilize resources available to increase overall community health and wellness.

**Strategy:** Leverage the arts in juvenile justice programs.

**Strategy:** Leverage the arts to improve mental health in the community.

**Strategy:** Prioritize financial support for current and future Human Services that focus on all age groups.

## GOAL: Maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of available community resources.

### Objective: Encourage more volunteerism throughout the community.

**Strategy:** Pool volunteer resources more efficiently through coordination of the volunteer agencies and local organizations.

**Strategy:** Establish a volunteer skills bank where people complete a skills assessment survey listing skills that might be beneficial to the community.

**Strategy:** Promote volunteer opportunities through the use of marketing materials targeting all age demographics, such as flyers, radio announcements, social media, and other options.

### Objective: Promote diversity among future leaders.

**Strategy:** Support, and look to further develop, existing leadership courses.

### Strategy: Encourage more businesses to enroll participants in Green County Leaders.

**Strategy:** Encourage diversity and inclusiveness in employment and training participation.

**Strategy:** Promote succession planning for businesses.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Monroe High School offered 26 different art classes in the 2014-2015 school year, ranging from graphic design to introduction to guitar.

*Source: School District of Monroe*





**Objective:** Promote education and lifelong learning for all generations through the creation of new opportunities for skills exchanges among community members.

**Strategy:** Hold events and classes for community members to share skills with one another, including crafting, home improvement, sport skills, and others.

**GOAL: Improve the cultural and business environment on the Square.**

**Objective:** Meet the demand of both residents and visitors.

**Strategy:** Encourage businesses to extend their hours and be open on the weekends.

**Strategy:** Increase community gathering places for all age groups, especially younger adults.

**Strategy:** Install 24-hour public restrooms on the Square.

**Strategy:** Complete a First Impressions program, run by UW-Extension, to learn new ways to improve the Square from other communities.

**Objective:** Connect the streetscape of the Square to Turner Hall, the Monroe Arts Center and other nearby, but off-Square, attractions.

**ANSWER!** Pop Quiz!

Question on page 40.

**B. Showcase of Talent**

Don't miss this popular event that includes music, comedy, and other unique performances!



# UTILITIES AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT

**VISION STATEMENT:** A resilient utility system prepared for the future of Monroe.



## Public Meeting Participants

**Cara Carper** • Monroe Chamber of Commerce

**Mary Jane Grenzow** • Monroe Times

**Erik Huschitt** • Badger State Ethanol

**Mike Kennison** • City of Monroe

**Nikki Matley** • Woodford State Bank

**Tanna McKeon** • Green County Emergency Management

**Tom Miller** • City of Monroe

**Nate Osterberger** • Monroe Clinic

**Troy Pittz** • Alliant Energy

**Daryl Rausch** • City of Monroe

**Phil Rath** • City of Monroe

**Bill Ross** • City of Monroe

**Colin Simpson** • City of Monroe

**Victoria Solomon** • Green County UW-Extension

**Ron Spielman** • Monroe Clinic

**Mark Tollakson** • Saputo Cheese

**Phil Vosberg** • International Ingredient Corporation



*Photo credit: Marc Kohlbauer*



Utilities are often reactive to local, regional, and national needs and requirements, including meeting EPA standards for phosphorus levels, accommodating the desired economic and population growth in Monroe, and distributing utility and emergency related information to community members. However, there are ways in which Monroe is looking to be proactive in their utility services, as well, including creating energy from high-strength waste entering the Wastewater Treatment Facility and developing a sustainable utility rate increase model.

*Table 4: Utility Services and Providers in Monroe, 2015*

Utility Services and Providers in Monroe	
Utility Service	Provider
Water and Wastewater	City of Monroe
Solid Waste (garbage, recycling, yard and bulky waste)	City of Monroe
Electric	Alliant Energy
Natural Gas	We Energies
Cable, Internet, and Fiber	Telephone and Data Systems, Inc. (TDS Telecom) and Charter
Cellular Services	Sprint, US Cellular, and Verizon

## Water

Finding efficiencies in water services through technology was brought up frequently by community members during the Utility and Energy Management public meetings. An example of an efficiency that saved money is the City of Monroe’s upgraded automated meter reading system. With this system, the City is capable of reading all 4,500 customers remotely from a single location – eliminating the need to physically visit a site to read a meter. Doing so provides real time accurate data and increases the likelihood for leaks to be found quickly.

Additionally, participants discussed the desire for predictable water and wastewater utility rates in the years to come. A predictable rate increase will allow residents and businesses to budget for increases and not be surprised by unanticipated bills. This is especially important for the many major employers in Monroe that must use large quantities of water for their operations, like cheese making and medical facilities shown in Table 6. These industries will be largely impacted by rate changes and, therefore, have a particular interest in predictable rates. Likewise, the City of Monroe will be able to establish consistency in capital improvement spending and budgeting. Researching the rate increases of other similar sized cities and holding a public meeting were both suggestions in order to agree on a consistent rate increase.

*Table 5: Overview of the Water Distribution System in Monroe, 2015.*

Water Distribution System Overview, 2015
70 miles of piping
Over 4,500 water meters and service valves
1,000 mainline valves
550 fire hydrants
3 water storage facilities

Source: City of Monroe



Table 6: Monroe's Highest Water Consumers by Industry Type, 2014.

Monroe's Highest Water Consumers, 2014	
Industry Type	Total Usage (Gallons)
Cheese Making Facilities	19,105,856
Breweries	5,516,620
Medical Facilities/Retirement Facilities	4,238,677
Livestock Feed Manufacturing	958,089
Trailer Parks	730,674
Warehouses	665,028
Manufacturing/Automobiles	416,098
Motels	413,667
Packaging Facilities	385,027
Bakeries	320,465
Printing Companies	316,862
Car Washes	274,148
Concrete Manufacturing	253,700
Monroe High School	210,209

Source: City of Monroe

## Wastewater

Major upgrades in technology were also completed at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. In 2015, a \$25 million project to upgrade the infrastructure and equipment, and increase the capacity of the Monroe Wastewater Treatment Facility was completed. The new treatment facility can process up to 3.7 million gallons of wastewater each day, treat 15,000 pounds of bio-chemical Oxygen demand, and 7,600 pounds of total suspended solids. Additionally, it has the capability of taking high-strength waste, including home food waste, and turning it into energy. "Monroe has a number of industries like milk, cheese, whey drying, brewery, and corn ethanol production which are all wet-type industries", which comprises the bulk of the influent loading coming into the treatment facility. These wet-type industries create high strength waste. Therefore, there is a large potential for the city to capitalize on these wet industries for energy production in the next 20 years. No other upgrades are necessary for the Wastewater Treatment Facility in the foreseeable future.



Photo credit: Marc Kohlbauer

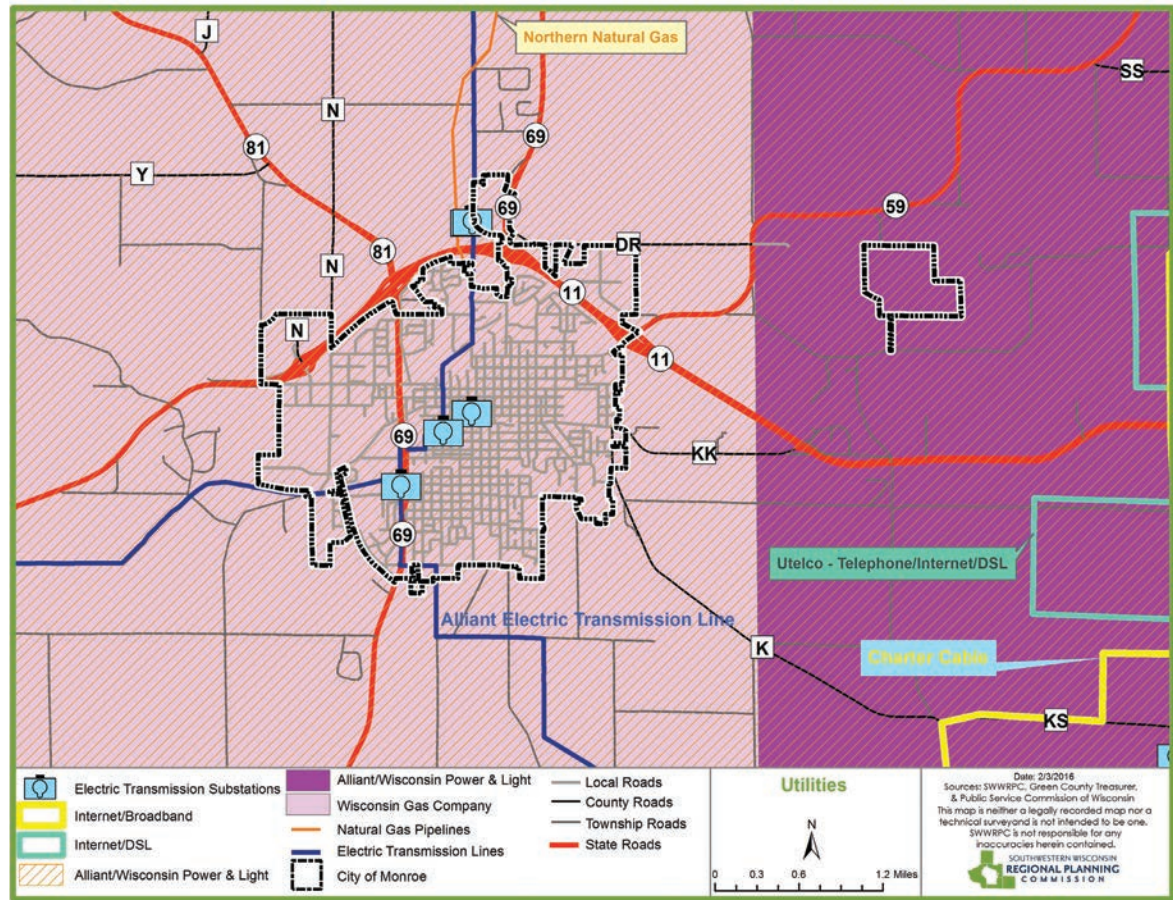
Table 7: Customers of Monroe's Sewer Services by Customer Type in 2015.

Customers of City Sewer Services, 2015	
Type of Customer	Number of Customers
Commercial	591
Industrial	26
Public Authority	37
Residential	3,697

Source: City of Monroe



Figure 12: Map of Utilities Services and Boundaries in Monroe, 2015.



## Emergency Services

The City of Monroe is provided emergency response and public safety services from the Monroe Police Department, Monroe Fire Department, and the Green County Emergency Medical Services (EMS). An overview of these organizations is shown in Table 8. As with other utility services, up-to-date technology is paramount for the success of emergency services. Building redundancy in technology was frequently stated by public meeting participants as a top priority. In particular, participants discussed the need for two new T1 lines to create a loop for emergency dispatch. Additionally, EMS stated a desire to upgrade their radio system and to build additional communication towers to ensure that all of Green County is covered for EMS staff communication.





There is also a need to spread emergency related information quickly throughout Monroe. Currently, the city uses Nixle, which is a program that the public signs up for, to receive emails and text messages when an emergency occurs. It was suggested that Nixle continues to be used, but that greater outreach on the program should take place to increase the portion of the public that is signed up for the service.

Table 8: Overview of Monroe’s Emergency Services, 2015.

Monroe Emergency Services Overview	
Monroe Police Department	The Patrol Bureau is staffed by 19 uniformed patrol officers and a canine unit, they combine to cover three districts of the city (West, East, and Central). The Police Department provides many additional programs and services around the community <sup>17</sup> .
Monroe Fire Department	The Monroe Fire Department has 47 paid on call firefighters and two full time employees. It responds to over 250 calls a year <sup>18</sup> .
Green County Emergency Medical Services (EMS)	The Green County EMS is a private, non-profit, volunteer community service organization with 55 regular volunteers and 15 associate/affiliate members. It is the primary “911” ambulance service for Monroe and a large part of Green County and responds to over 1500 calls per year <sup>19</sup> .



## DID YOU KNOW?

The Monroe Fire Department is in the top 4% of fire departments nationwide, due to being designated as an Insurance Service Office (ISO) Class 3 department. ISO is a rating completed by a group of trained evaluators who analyze and test nearly all aspects of a department to determine effectiveness, safety, and preparedness.

Source: Monroe Fire Department

## Utilities and Energy Management Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

**GOAL: Improve communication with the public on utility and public safety issues.**

- Objective:** Increase community awareness of, and input in, large utility decisions and investments.
- Strategy:** Investigate hiring a Public Relations Specialist for the City who focuses on disseminating City-related information.
- Strategy:** Partner with non-city existing lines of communication, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to spread utility information.
- Strategy:** In recognition of the city’s demographics, ensure that all messaging be mixed-media and multi-generational, including the newsletters, listservs, social media sites, and flyers.

<sup>17</sup> Monroe Police Department 2015

<sup>18</sup> Monroe Fire Department 2015

<sup>19</sup> Green County Emergency Management Services 2015



**Objective: Quickly and accurately spread emergency information throughout the community.**

**Strategy:** Encourage community members to sign up for Nixle to receive emergency related emails and texts.

**Strategy:** Design information sharing networks with private partners.

**Strategy:** Send emergency notifications to the Monroe schools and other large community organizations, which have internal processes for dispersing information to students, parents, and staff.

### **✦ GOAL: Meet the EPA standards for phosphorus levels.**

**Objective: Reduce the discharge of phosphorus by businesses and the community at large into the treatment facility.**

**Strategy:** Create a Phosphorus Reduction Working Group to come to an agreement on how phosphorus will be treated for by industry.

**Strategy:** Analyze business operations to determine simple changes that industries can take to reduce their phosphorus use.

**Strategy:** Meet with farmers within Monroe's watershed to discuss methods to reduce phosphorus use while farming, and to explore opportunities for nutrient trading.

### **GOAL: Capitalize on the ability of the Wastewater Treatment Facility to use high strength waste to create energy.**

**Objective: Increase the amount of high strength waste from wet industries coming to the treatment facility for use in energy production.**

**Strategy:** Identify the needs and concerns of surrounding businesses regarding transferring more high strength waste.

**Strategy:** Analyze the amount of high strength waste available in relation to the capacity of the Wastewater Treatment Facility, to determine energy production potential and financial considerations.

**Objective: Promote the use of food waste from residential and commercial facilities for energy production.**

**Strategy:** Analyze the feasibility for the City to begin regularly collecting separated food waste, in addition to garbage and recycling.

**Strategy:** Start a pilot program to collect food waste from a particular residential neighborhood.



**GOAL: Improve emergency management technology systems.**

**Objective: Modernize and develop redundancy in technology infrastructure and services.**

**Strategy:** Install two new T1 lines to create a loop for emergency dispatch.

 **Strategy:** Build additional communication towers within Green County to ensure county-wide coverage.

**Strategy:** Upgrade the emergency management radio system.

**GOAL: Determine a predictable and sustainable utilities rate model.**

**Objective: Reduce the likelihood of unanticipated rate increases for businesses and residents, and establish consistency in capital improvements spending and budgeting.**

 **Strategy:** Research and meet with other communities that have implemented a small rate increase annually to learn from their experiences.

**Strategy:** Hold a public Meeting to discuss annual small rate increases with businesses and residents.

**Strategy:** Implement an annual or semi-annual small-scale rate increase that is both fiscally sustainable and which reduces large impacts to city residents.

COMMUNITY SURVEY  
**SNAPSHOT!**



**50%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Power generation by the Wastewater Treatment Facility.”



**49%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Fiscally sustainable utility rates.”



**50%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Communication between the City and the public for emergency situations.”





# LAND USE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

**VISION STATEMENT:** A land use plan proactively working to maintain Monroe's character through simplicity and flexibility.

## Public Meeting Participants

**Burleigh Bartlett** • Town of Clarno

**Paul Beach** • Town of Clarno

**Cara Carper** • Monroe Chamber of Commerce

**Mike Furgal** • Green County Board of Supervisors

**Nathan Hartwig** • Town of Clarno

**Joe Hillary** • Colony Brands, Inc.

**Aaron Holverson** • Holverson Design

**Mike Johnson** • Green County Development Corporation

**Nikki Matley** • Woodford State Bank

**Jordan Nodby** • Main Street Monroe

**Phil Rath** • City of Monroe

**Martin Shanks** • City of Monroe

**Kevin Visel** • Lighthouse Commercial Real Estate

**Phil Vosberg** • Town of Monroe

**Ed White** • Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

**Adam Wiegel** • Green County Land Use and Zoning

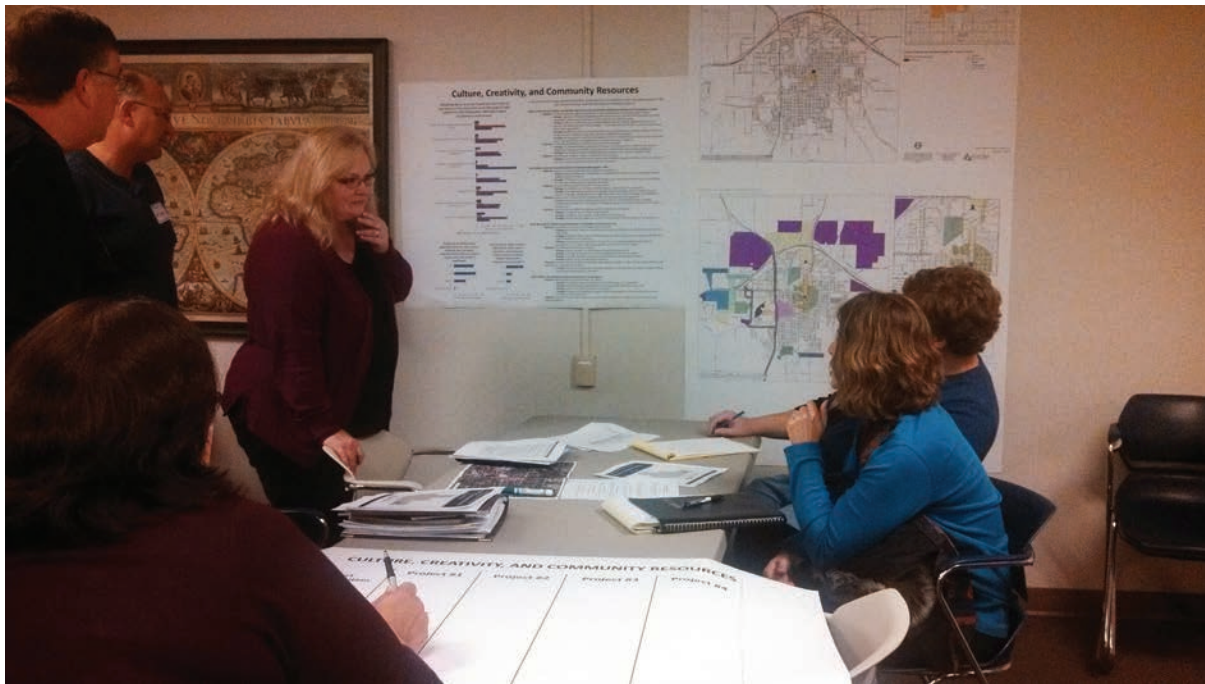
**Ryan Ziltner** • Century 21 Real Estate



Land use impacts all aspects of life in Monroe. Some aspects of life impacted by land use are fairly obvious like housing, economic development, and transportation. However, land use also impacts more nuanced aspects of life like health, youth retention, and education. Due to its all-encompassing nature, community members determined Land Use Goals that cover far-ranging topics like a zoning ordinance rewrite, infill development, the atmosphere on the Square, and entrances into the city – all with the common thread of how land is used.

## Existing Zoning

The City of Monroe has historically used traditional zoning code, which allows development based on particular uses (like a grocery store, or a restaurant). Single-Family Residential makes up the highest percentage of the land (24%) in Monroe, followed by Duplex Residential (22%) -- Multi-Family Residential only accounts for 7% of the land in Monroe. The City of Monroe does not currently have Mixed-Use zoning, which allows developments to have multiple purposes – for example, a development that is primarily commercial with some housing. The full Zoning Map of Monroe is shown in Figure 17.



**ANSWER!** POP QUIZ!

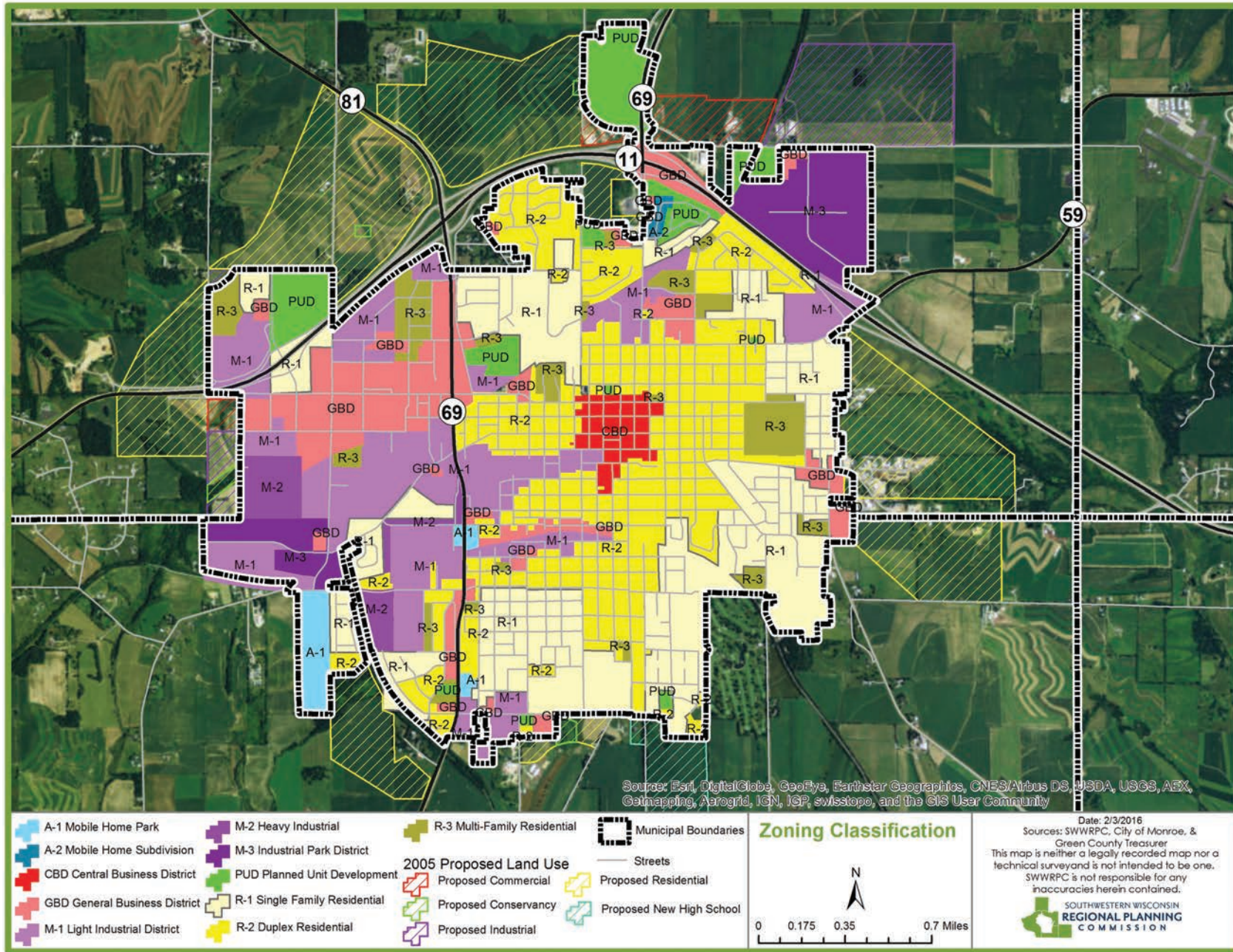
Question on page 41.

### **D. Alpine Curling Club**

Visit [AlpineCurlingClub.com](http://AlpineCurlingClub.com) to join and show off your sweeping skills!



Figure 13: Map of Zoning in Monroe in 2015, and the Proposed Land Uses from 2005.



## High-Density, Mixed-Use Development

Among public meeting participants, there was a near consensus that Monroe needs high-density, mixed-use, infill development in the next 20 years – especially near the Square. This type of development is trending nationwide as it creates a more walkable and engaging urban environment, which is highly desired by young professionals, seniors, and families. In particular, a high-density downtown is often desired by millennials who are looking to live in locations where they can easily walk to their work, dining, and other recreational places. Furthermore, as seniors age they may not be able to drive or travel far distances – making a walkable neighborhood with amenities close to one-another ideal. This type of development also inhibits suburban sprawl, protecting the rural environment that surrounds Monroe from unnecessary development.

To accomplish this, community members feel that the zoning ordinances in Monroe must be rewritten. Specifically, participants throughout the planning process suggested that the City change to Form-Based code, which is a type of code that focuses on the physical form of a development (like the size of the building and landscaping) instead of its use. Doing so will allow greater flexibility in the types of developments permitted while still creating aesthetic guidelines, with the hopes of creating cohesion in the overall look and feel of the city. The desire to update Monroe’s zoning ordinances was also discussed during Economic Development and Housing public meetings. Participants noted that re-writing the zoning ordinance to allow greater density and mixed-use development would naturally permit more housing and businesses near the Square and other high-demand areas of Monroe.

## Beautification

The beauty of Monroe is of importance to increase the quality of life for residents and to attract visitors. In particular, meeting participants felt that the entrances into Monroe (8<sup>th</sup> Street, Highway 69, and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue) are not enticing and may limit the amount of people that choose to enter. Landscaping along these roadways, including trees, bushes, and flowers, was suggested to match the attractive parks and natural amenities in Monroe. Additionally, the city could place eye-catching signs and sculptures (along with greenery) at the entrances.

## Future Land Use Maps

During the Land Use and the Built Environment public meetings, participants drew on maps of Monroe to indicate where they would like these particular types of development and aesthetic changes over the next 20 years. These ideas for change were informed by the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies from all other topics within the plan, and the results from the Monroe Community Survey. Figure 19 and 20 are digitized versions of these drawings.

*Future Land Use Maps drawn by community members during the Land Use and the Built Environment public meetings.*

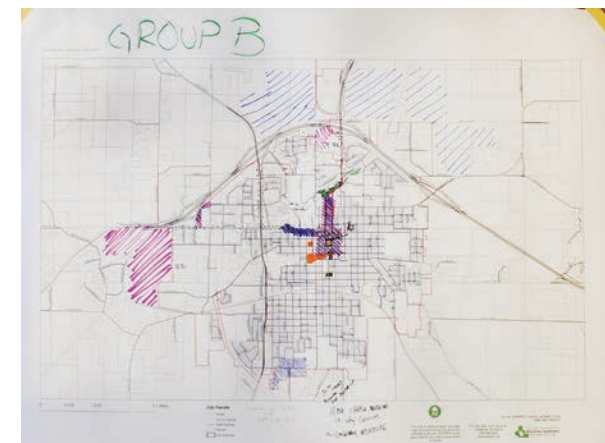
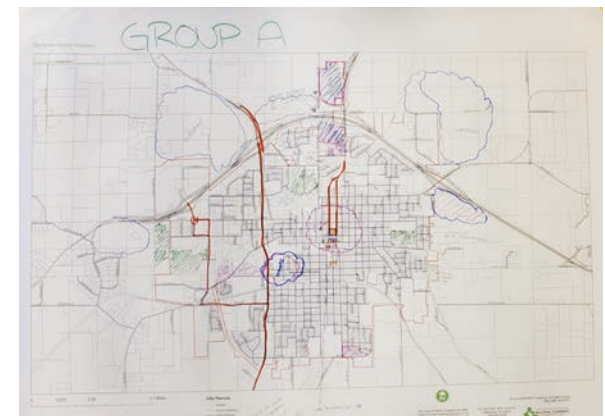


Figure 14: Map of Future Land Use Created by Community Members during the Land Use Public Meeting.

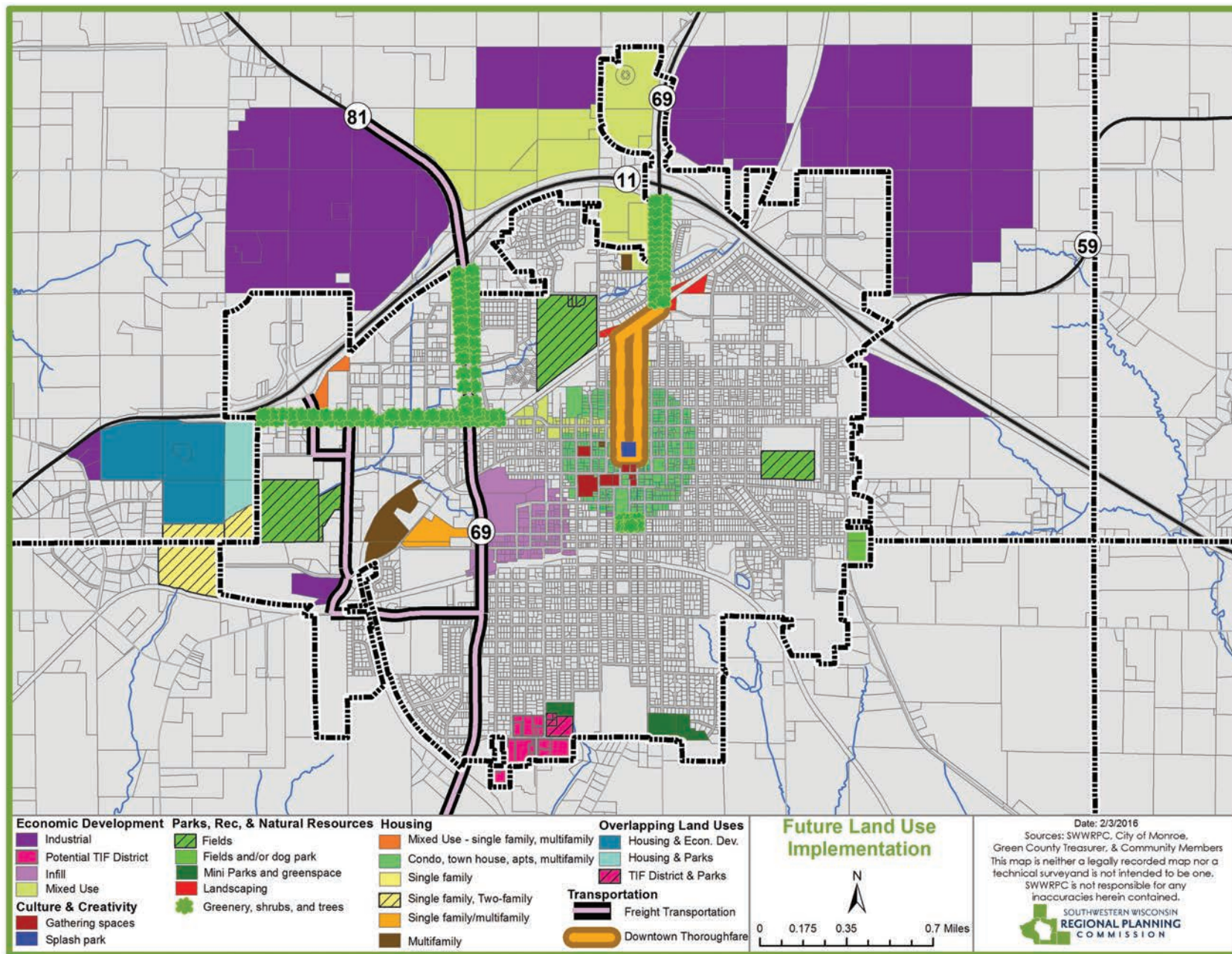
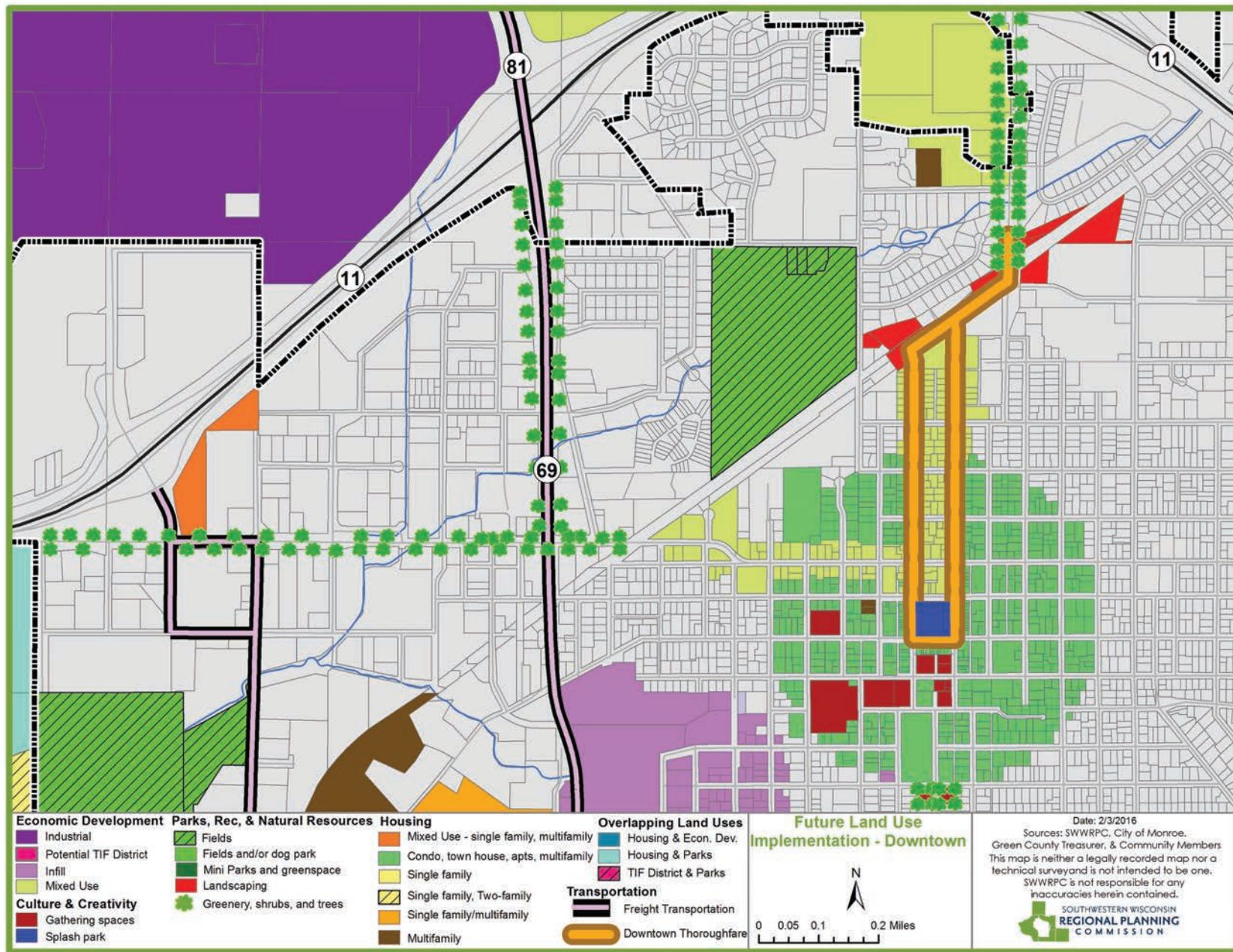




Figure 15: Map of Future Land Use Created by Community Members during the Land Use Public Meeting, Zoomed into Downtown.



COMMUNITY SURVEY  
**SNAPSHOT!**



**57%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Community gathering places near the Square.”



**49%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Landscaping along roadways and city entrances.”



**49%** of survey respondents wanted more investment in “Commercial and residential development near the Square.”



**62%** of survey respondents would be willing to pay a user fee for the land use and the built environment services that they believe require more investment.

## Land Use and the Built Environment Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

**GOAL: Allow development with higher densities and a greater range of uses throughout Monroe while maintaining an attractive aesthetic.**

**Objective: Rewrite and modernize the City’s zoning ordinance.**

**Strategy:** Revise the City’s traditional ordinance to a form-based ordinance.

**Strategy:** Incorporate additional uses to increase flexible development, such as mixed-use development and accessory dwelling units.

**Strategy:** Hire a consultant or organization to complete an ordinance re-write.

**GOAL: Repurpose existing land to increase the number of parks and athletic fields to meet current demand.**

**Objective: Create dog-friendly parks and a dog park within city limits.**

**Strategy:** Create a dog park within or adjacent to Honey Creek Park.

**Strategy:** Make existing parks throughout the city dog-friendly.

**Objective: Create pocket-parks throughout the community.**

**Strategy:** Require new multi-unit developments outside of the central business district to provide open space for the residents.

**Strategy:** Add landscaping and open space along the sides of the Badger State Trail between 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave. and 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. leading to Twining Park.

**Strategy:** Repurpose the city-owned land around the bike path, east of 18<sup>th</sup> Ave. as a park.

**☆ Objective: Use existing under-used land as practice and recreational athletic fields.**

**Strategy:** Investigate the potential to use the Green County Fair Grounds during the off-season for recreational athletic fields.

**Strategy:** Use a portion of Twining Park for a permanent athletic field.

**Strategy:** Determine the parking and other amenities required for new athletic fields.

**GOAL: Take advantage of the culture and activity on the Square.**

**Objective: Create public spaces near the Square on underused or vacant lots.**

**Strategy:** Investigate the potential for eliminating parking on one side of the inner circle of the Square, making a splash park and/or pedestrian-only area for the community to meet.

**Strategy:** Determine a public use for the two lots south of the middle school, currently owned by the City.



**Objective: Create business corridors extending the downtown environment further into the community.**

**Strategy:** Encourage high-density mixed-use development along 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Ave. extending north from the Square, and along 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> St. extending west from the Square.

 **Objective: Create a walking path connecting the Square to the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC).**

**Strategy:** Investigate the potential to put a sidewalk on the Highway 81 overpass to cross Highway 11.

### **Goal: Enhance the aesthetics of the main entrances into Monroe.**

**Objective: Create easily navigable corridors into the city.**

**Strategy:** Investigate ways to make the route connecting Highway 11 to W. 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. (heading north/south) easy to navigate for freight.


**Objective: Add landscaping and open space around city entrances.**

**Strategy:** Add trees and landscaping along 8<sup>th</sup> St., 18<sup>th</sup> Ave., and Highway 69 between Highway 11 and the Square.

**Strategy:** Build partnerships with civic organizations to assist with installing and maintaining landscaping and city beautification.

### **GOAL: Promote a culture of growth in Monroe.**

**Objective: Acquire land for future industrial development.**

 **Strategy:** Work collaboratively with Townships to find mutual gains and identify future areas for development.

**Strategy:** Analyze the potential to add an industrial park northwest or northeast of the city next to Highway 11, County Rd DR, or the farmland northwest of Hwy 69 and 17<sup>th</sup> St.

**Objective: Increase the diversity and availability of housing stock.**

**Strategy:** Prioritize and incentivize multi-family, high-density, and mixed-use housing developments near the Square.

**Strategy:** Encourage mixed-use, multi-family, or single family developments near the intersection of Highway 11 and Highway 69/18<sup>th</sup> Ave.

**Strategy:** Encourage single family housing on the west and east side of the high school, and just outside of the city on the west side.





# IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation marks the transition from “planning” to “doing” to ensure that the Monroe Comprehensive Plan is not a just a document, but a guide for action and change. From the start, it was determined that this is a *Community Plan* and, therefore, would be completed by the community as a whole – not solely by the City government. This presents the necessity for a structured private/public partnership in order to see the desires and needs of the community come to fruition. Additionally, while the plan is comprised of important Goals, Objectives, and Strategies, these are often broad or conceptual in nature. Therefore, the plan requires identification of projects that are concrete, clearly described, and linked to the Goals of the plan.

Implementable project ideas and the funding sources, stakeholders, and partnerships that could help these projects succeed were determined by the public during the first Implementation Meeting. These projects align with the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies of the Monroe Comprehensive Plan Update, but differ in that they are highly tangible and not conceptual. The following are a few of the projects determined by community members, and whether they’re most effectively implemented by public (City, County, State, and schools), private (businesses), or other entities (community members, non-profits, and other community groups). The diversity of who will implement these projects highlights the true collaborative nature of accomplishing this community plan.

*Table 9: Project Ideas and the Implementing Entity*



Topic	Project Idea	Public, Private, or Other Entity to Implement
	Bike lanes and pedestrian lanes.	Public
	Establish major thoroughfare on 16th/17th Ave. including: a north gateway bike path/bridge with a welcome arch over the road.	Public and Private
	Paint bike lanes and calming stripes on major roadways (8th/9th St., 13th Ave., 13th St.)	Public
	Assess the sidewalk network to determine problem areas that need improvement.	Public
	Bus service to Madison and Rockford.	Private and Other
	Extend 10th Ave. west and south to 17th St.	Public, Private, and Other
	Extend 30th St. east to 17th Ave.	Public, Private, and Other
	Expand sidewalk systems.	Public
	New access from north: “downtown thoroughfare”.	Public



	Expand and publicize existing shuttle services.	Public, Private, and Other
	Improve the quality of existing roads.	Public
	Develop truck accessible routes and accommodate the roads appropriately.	Public and Private
	Railway loading station.	Public and Private
	Revitalize Monroe by: removing vehicles from city center (parking on periphery) and providing small electric transit shuttles.	Public, Private, and Other
	Wayfinding	Public and Other
	Identify, designate, and promote a group of safe bike routes surrounding the city.	Public and Other
	Senior housing development that is socio-economically diverse, including housing near the square and multi-level with elevators.	Public, Private, and Other
	Multi-unit housing, co-housing development.	Private
	Update, review, and enforce existing housing codes.	Public
	Zoning overhaul.	Public
	Housing improvement program.	Public, Private, and Other
	Additional, affordable quality rental properties.	Private
	Conduct a Housing Study - "Take stock of housing."	Public
	Build condos.	Private
	Single family housing.	Private
	A dog park for unleashed dogs. Potential sites: Fair Grounds, Humane Society, and some existing City parks.	Public and Other
	Dog-friendly parks for leashed dogs, using existing City parks.	Public and Other
	Additional community gardens.	Public, Private, and Other
	Connect Badger State Trail to Cheese Country Trail.	Public and Other
	Identify connected bike routes, create signage, and publicize.	Public and Other
	Plant trees and increase green infrastructure.	Public, Private, and Other
	Wayfinding (a lot of signs, helps tourists)	Public and Other
	Replace Ash Trees.	Public
	Art fair	Private
	Tourist/Information Center with internet/social media.	Public and Other
	Close off one side of the square for a splash park and walkability (north side).	Public
	'Third spaces' open at night.	Private
	Create a volunteer clearing house.	Other
	Cheese CentriCity (Monroe Cheese Palace) (use real cream)	Private





	Public restrooms.	Public
	Identify more events and gatherings for young professionals/millennials to enjoy and network.	Private and Other
	Ensure proper facility staffing of Senior Center and mental health resources for seniors.	Public
	Attract and retain young professionals.	Public, Private, and Other
	Create better awareness and communicate all the Senior Center has to offer to clear up misperceptions.	Public
	One common location for all entities to advertise informational issues.	Public and Private
	Complete overhaul of zoning ordinances (Amend TIF 7).	Public
	Business Incubator (boot camps).	Public, Private, and Other
	Job shadowing - career and job opportunities.	Public, Private, and Other
	Work collaboratively with Green County to create an industrial park by Pleasant View (200 acres).	Public and Private
	School sponsored job fair.	Public
	Create a pool of interns and coordinate opportunities with local businesses and organizations.	Public, Private, and Other
	Promote small business employee wellness grant opportunities.	Private
	Resources for businesses to improve employee health and wellness.	Private and Other
	Employment opportunities	Public, Private, and Other
	Continue/speed up the process of Business Retention and Expansion programs to see how we can help current businesses.	Public and Private
	Business succession planning.	Private
	Apprenticeship programs.	Public and Private
	Staggered utility rate increase, with more regular intervals – adjust annually and allow for funds to accrue for improved infrastructure.	Public
	Automated emergency situation communication (Nixle).	Public
	Compost program, to prevent installing phosphorus equipment.	Public
	Public education for project/utility cost awareness.	Public
	Develop local energy production - low emissions.	Public and Private



To ensure that these projects are completed, community members within Monroe agreed to explore the creation of an organized partnership that includes a diverse group of people from public and private entities. Doing so guarantees that the plan is completed by the community, as intended, while also having buy-in from the City of Monroe. Monroe community members emphasized the need for this partnership to be empowered by having the authority to make decisions and distribute funds on their own.

The governance principles of this partnership were discussed in the second Implementation Forum. This discussion covered how members will be selected, how often they will meet, how projects will be selected to receive funding, and how the success of projects will be measured and reported to the community – among other governance principles. This discussion was founded on four pillars of the public/private partnership. They are:

- The partnership is created to ensure the implementation of the Monroe Comprehensive Plan.
- The partnership is a diverse and inclusive, from membership to project selection.
- The partnership disperses funds to projects that align with the plan and evaluates success of implementation efforts.
- The partnership is in charge of renewal and revision of the plan Goals.

As the pillars allude, the public/private partnership will be the entity charged with ensuring the completion of the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies within the plan over the next 20 years. Particularly, they will focus on the reoccurring themes: Zoning Updates, Communication and Coordination, Infill Development, and Increased Housing. They will also prioritize the critical lenses of plan that include Health, Education, Inter/Intra-Governmental Coordination, and Youth Retention and Aging in Place. Working collaboratively with individuals, families, businesses, and other entities, this partnership will lead to a vibrant, thriving, and resilient Monroe that community members can continue to be proud calling “home”.



Photo credit: Marc Kohlbauer



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