

1 Issues and Opportunities

1.1 Introduction

The general purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to guide and accomplish coordinated, adjusted, harmonious development within Town of Neenah. The *Town of Neenah 2045 Comprehensive Plan* positions the town to guide future land development over the next 20 plus years in a way that preserves the character of the town, protects natural resources, enhances economic and housing opportunities, and provides for efficient service delivery.



More specifically, this document recommends how lands within the town should be utilized. The recommendations in this document are based on town trends and public input. Town plan recommendations are also based on and consistent with plan goals, objectives, and policies. The recommendations should be used for specific actions and development decisions in the town. Wisconsin Statutes, Section 66.1001, further defines a comprehensive plan and a local unit of government's responsibilities. This legislation requires a local government that enacts land use regulations develop and adopt a comprehensive plan. The plan must contain nine elements as specified in the statutes. It also requires that local subdivision and zoning ordinances be consistent with the community's comprehensive plan. This document will meet the requirements of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law, Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning legislation identifies nine elements that must be addressed in order for the plan to be in conformance with the law. The elements include:

1. Issues and Opportunities
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Utilities and Community Facilities
5. Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
6. Economic Development
7. Intergovernmental Cooperation
8. Land Use
9. Implementation

Planning for the Town of Neenah’s future begins with a basic understanding of the town’s current situation. Each element provides a detailed inventory and analysis, which is then used to help create recommendations for future actions. All nine elements contain a list of goals, objectives, policies, recommendations and programs that will be used to guide the future use and development of land within the town for a 20-year planning period.

Goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations stated in this document reflect the deliberations of the Town of Neenah Plan Commission, Town of Neenah Board, and Town of Neenah staff, based on the comments and opinions expressed by the people who reside, or own land, within Town of Neenah. References made to specific state, county, and other governmental programs do not imply endorsement of such programs, but are presented for background and reference only.

The location of Town of Neenah within Winnebago County heavily influences the trends and changes that are expected during the next twenty years. The town is strategically located along the Interstate 41 corridor on the southern and western edges of the Fox Cities metropolitan area and contains a considerable amount of shoreline along Lake Winnebago. As urbanization continues, people are likely to be attracted to the area based on its proximity to the City of Neenah, easy access to the remainder of the Fox Cities, as well as to the City of Oshkosh. Ample amenities exist within and nearby the town which make it conducive to attracting additional development. Communities that border the Town of Neenah include the City of Neenah, Village of Fox Crossing and the Towns of Clayton and Vinland. See Map 1-1 for a regional map showing the location of Town of Neenah.

History of the Town of Neenah

The Town of Neenah sits on lands originally occupied by the Menomonee Indians which were ceded to the United States by the treaty at Cedar Rapids in 1836. The Town of Neenah was created from this territory in February, 1847 by an act of the territorial legislature and consisted of an expansive land area. In 1849 the town was reduced by the subsequent organization of the Towns of Clayton and Vinland. In 1855, the Town of Menasha (now Village of Fox Crossing) was organized and took additional lands from its limits. The City of Neenah was then incorporated along the waterways of the Fox River from within the town in 1873.

The Town was originally covered by a heavy growth of hardwood timber consisting of oak, hard maple, ironwood, hickory, elm, basswood, ash, and butternut with a variety of oak openings in the northwest. Many lands were cleared of the timber and agricultural operations focused on the production of wheat, rye, oats, barley and hops, as well as fruit orchards and grazing. Easy access to limestone and good quality clay for brickmaking helped to build many of the town’s initial buildings.

Upon organization in 1847, the Town of Neenah elected its first Town Chairman, Cornelius Northrup. D.M. Montgomery was elected as the first Town Clerk with the election of Town officers following shortly thereafter.

Source: History of Winnebago County, Wisconsin, Harney, Richard J., 1880.

1.2 Planning Process

The Town of Neenah’s Plan Commission and Town Board are assigned the task of maintaining and updating the Town of Neenah Comprehensive Plan. The update of the current *Town of Neenah 2009-2029 Comprehensive Plan* (adopted in 2009) began in the fall of 2025.

The comprehensive planning process used to prepare the updated *Town of Neenah 2045 Comprehensive Plan* involved numerous public meetings and the statutorily required public hearing to direct and react to the work on the Comprehensive Plan update.

In general, the comprehensive planning process follows an iterative cycle of activities (Figure 1-1) which are then repeated every 10 years to meet the requirements of Wisconsin Statutes, Section 66.1001.

Figure 1-1: Comprehensive Planning Process



1.3 Public Participation Efforts

Town of Neenah adopted an updated Public Participation Plan on October 27, 2025 (Appendix A) to guide the development of the *Town of Neenah 2045 Comprehensive Plan*. The Public Participation Plan is intended to foster resident engagement throughout every step of the planning process.

The following core efforts were identified to foster public participation in accordance with the statutory requirements of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning law:

- All meetings will be open to the public;
- The process will be guided by the Plan Commission who will make broad recommendations to the Town Board on the plan's content.
- Notices and press releases will be sent to local media outlets identifying the time and location for any public informational meetings, workshops, and any public hearings;
- Information about meetings, the Comprehensive Plan, and related materials were available on a separate Project Hub which is linked to the Town of Neenah website's homepage. Appendix B contains a summary of overall Project Hub usage during the planning process, as well as a summary of any comments and feedback received through the Project Hub.

In addition, several other forms of outreach were used to obtain thoughts and comments on current issues and opportunities facing the town over the next twenty years. This included two Public Involvement Meetings (November 18, 2025 and [INSERT DATE]) (See Appendix C), and an on-line survey addressing park, recreation, and trail needs (See 2027-2031 CORP). Information obtained from these efforts have been incorporated into the *Town of Neenah 2045 Comprehensive Plan* and was used to help develop the updated goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations found in this document.

The *Town of Neenah 2045 Comprehensive Plan* was adopted by the Town Board on [INSERT DATE] after the Plan Commission held the required public hearing on [INSERT DATE]. Plan approval documentation is contained in Appendix A.

1.4 Population & Household Characteristics

Population change is the primary component in tracking a community's past growth as well as predicting future trends. Population characteristics relate directly to the town's housing, transportation, educational, utility, community service, and recreational facility needs, as well as its future regarding economic development.

Historic Population

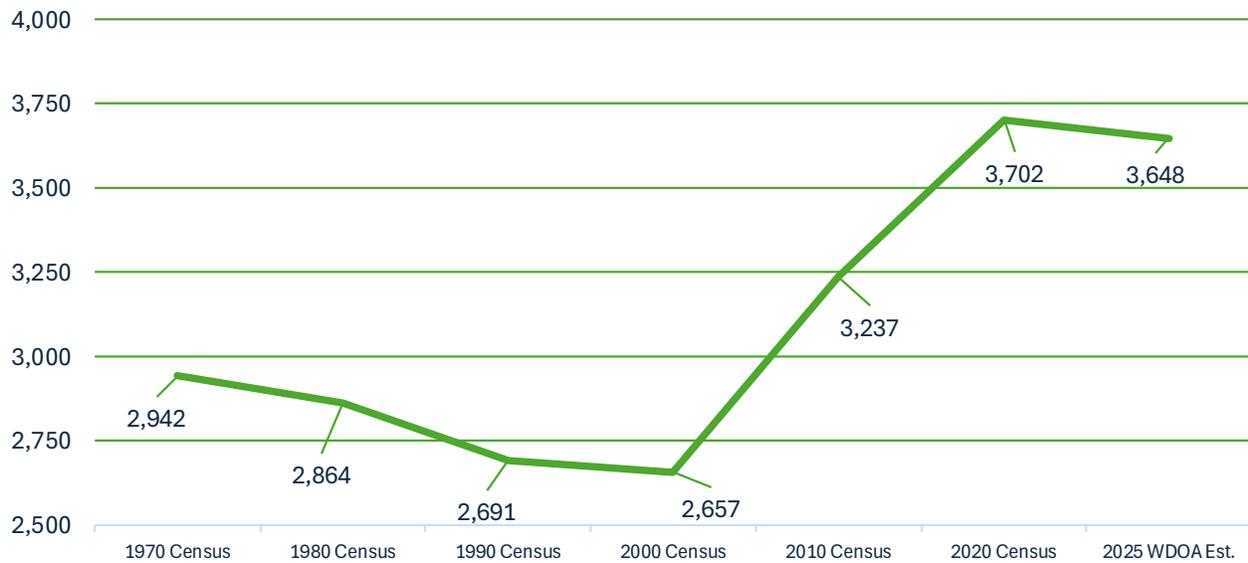
As shown in Table 1-1 and Figure 1-1, from 1970 through 2000, Town of Neenah saw a series of population declines, many of which are related to the annexation of lands to the City of Neenah. In the 20 years between 2000 and 2020, population increases were steady resulting in a net gain of just over 1,000 persons. However, since the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic, these rates of growth have not been seen and a small decline of about 54 person was seen in the past five years.

Table 1-1: Town of Neenah Historic Population, 1970-2020

Geography	Year							Total Change 1970-2020	Percent Change 1970-2020
	1970 Census	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Census	2025 WDOA Estimate		
Town of Neenah	2,942	2,864	2,691	2,657	3,237	3,702	3,648	760	25.83%
Change from Previous Period - Number	n/a	-78	-173	-34	580	465	-54	n/a	n/a
Change from Previous Period - Percent		-2.7%	-6.0%	-1.3%	21.8%	14.4%	-1.5%	n/a	n/a

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2020.

Figure 1-1: Town of Neenah Historic Population, 1970-2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2020.

Population Projections

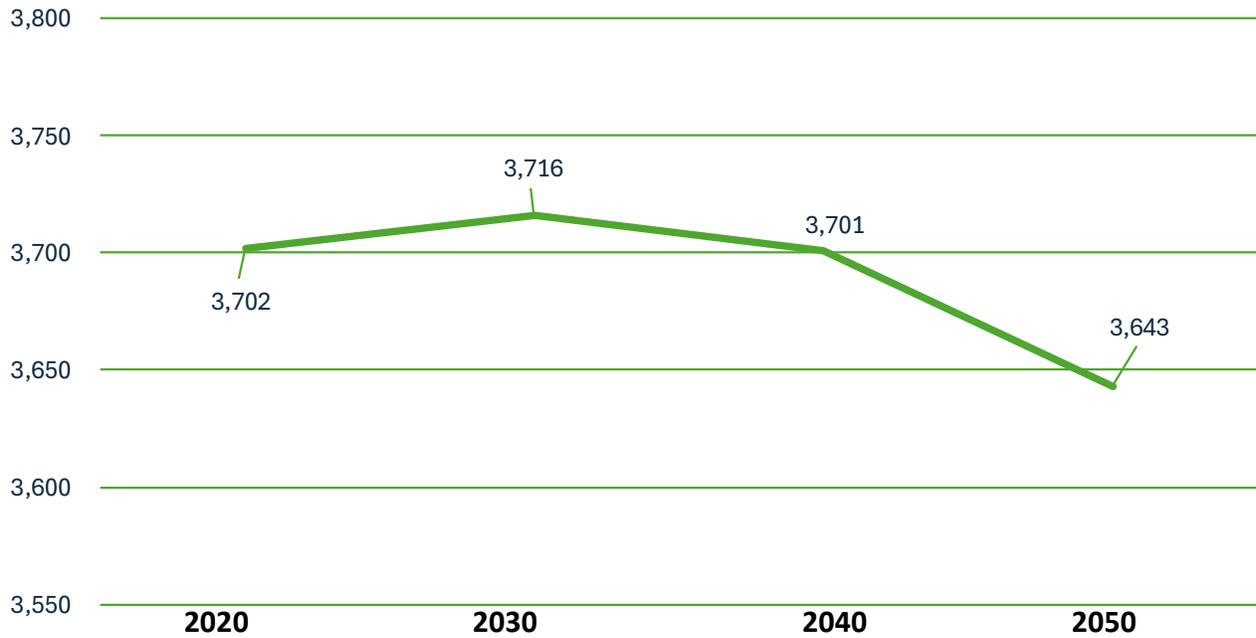
A review of the most current (December 2024) Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) county and municipal-level population projections show a steep downward trend in expected population levels for the Town of Neenah (Table 1-2 and Figure 1-2). This data is in drastic contrast to the previously issued projections by WDOA which were completed about 10 years earlier (2013). Based on the new projections, the Town of Neenah’s total population is now expected to decline by 59 persons, or -1.6% between 2020 and 2050.

Figure 1-2: Town of Neenah Projected Population, 2030-2050

Place Name	2020 Population	2030 Projection	2040 Projection	2050 Projection	Number Change 2020-2050	Percent Change 2020-2050
T Algoma	6,866	6,913	6,904	6,814	(52)	-0.8%
T Black Wolf	2,429	2,360	2,277	2,174	(255)	-10.5%
T Clayton	4,329	4,505	4,637	4,704	375	8.7%
T Neenah	3,702	3,716	3,701	3,643	(59)	-1.6%
T Nekimi	1,337	1,242	1,144	1,039	(298)	-22.3%
T Nepeuskun	724	700	673	639	(85)	-11.7%
T Omro	2,293	2,480	2,637	2,752	459	20.0%
T Oshkosh	2,439	2,351	2,250	2,130	(309)	-12.7%
T Poygan	1,261	1,287	1,302	1,301	40	3.2%
T Rushford	1,623	1,671	1,703	1,713	90	5.5%
T Utica	1,364	1,344	1,315	1,272	(92)	-6.7%
T Vinland	1,769	1,700	1,623	1,531	(238)	-13.5%
T Winchester	1,794	1,739	1,674	1,594	(200)	-11.1%
T Winneconne	2,590	2,718	2,818	2,878	288	11.1%
T Wolf River	1,203	1,193	1,175	1,144	(59)	-4.9%
V Fox Crossing	18,974	18,980	18,841	18,488	(486)	-2.6%
V Winneconne	2,544	2,488	2,416	2,321	(223)	-8.8%
C Appleton	1,441	1,347	1,249	1,142	(299)	-20.7%
C Menasha	15,261	14,723	14,103	13,360	(1,901)	-12.5%
C Neenah	27,319	27,849	28,137	28,069	750	2.7%
C Omro	3,652	3,563	3,451	3,306	(346)	-9.5%
C Oshkosh	66,816	65,746	64,230	62,066	(4,750)	-7.1%
Winnebago County Total	171,730	170,615	168,260	164,080	(7,650)	-4.5%

Source: WDOA, 2024.

Figure 1-2: Town of Neenah Projected Population, 2030-2050

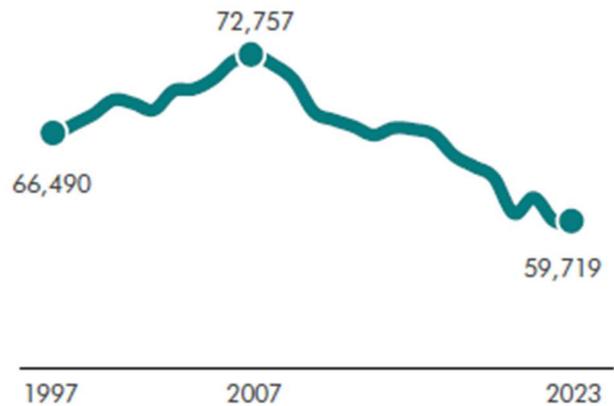


Source: WDOA, 2024.

As shown in Table 1-2, nearly every community in Winnebago County is expected to decline with a few exceptions. Demographers have identified several causes for these declines in projected population levels based on recent statewide trends, including:

- **An aging population.** By 2050, the trailing edge of baby-boomers (1964) will be 86 years old and those on the leading edge (born in 1946) would be 104 years old. Therefore many persons within this generation will have passed on, contributing to the overall reduction in population.
- **Lower birth rates.** A decline in residents, particularly young residents and families, contributed to the state’s overall waning growth due to declining births since 2007 (Figure 1-3). These low birth rates, combined with higher death rates means that the current population is not even being replaced.
- **Lower in-migration levels.** While migration slowed the decline in the youth population segment, it still contributed to the state’s overall declining growth. The state added fewer than 54,000 people due to net migration between 2010 and 2020.

Figure 1-3: Wisconsin Births, 1997-2023



Source: Forward Analytics, Jan. 2025

Age Characteristics

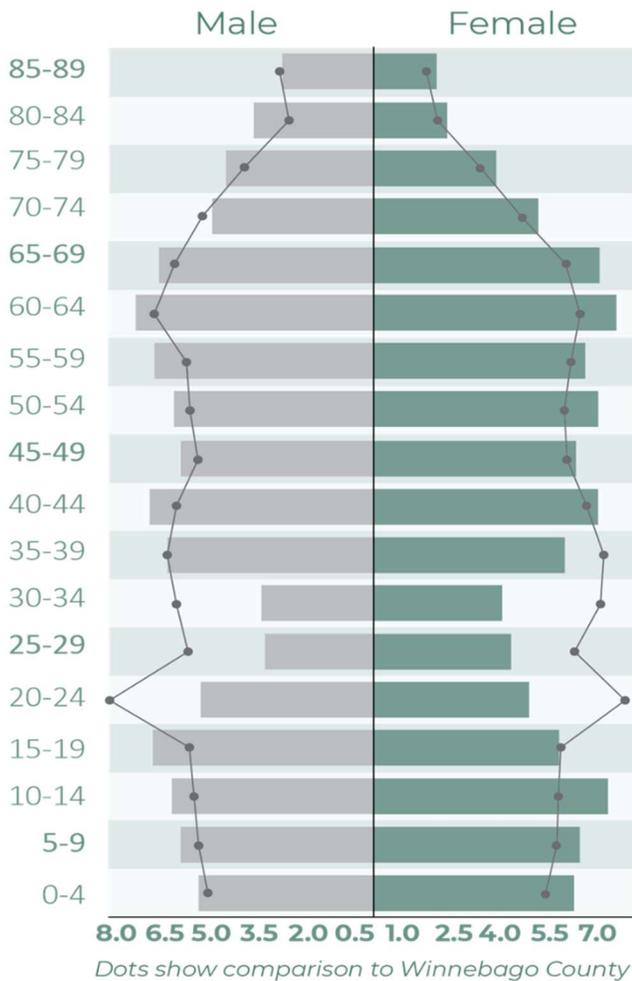
A shifting age structure affects a variety of services and needs within the town. Wisconsin, and most of its communities, have an aging population, which is consistent with the national trend. As shown in Table 1-3 and Figure 1-4, the town’s age cohorts are fairly evenly distributed, with the exception of the 20-34 year old group which only comprise 6.7% of the total population. The 35-59 year age group being the largest at 41.4%.

Table 1-3: Town of Neenah, Age Distribution

Age Category	Number of Persons	Percent of Total	
Under 5 years	101	2.71%	29.6%
5 to 9 years	373	10.02%	
10 to 14 years	342	9.19%	
15 to 19 years	287	7.71%	
20 to 24 years	42	1.13%	6.7%
25 to 34 years	209	5.62%	
35 to 44 years	660	17.74%	41.4%
45 to 54 years	567	15.24%	
55 to 59 years	315	8.47%	
60 to 64 years	200	5.37%	22.2%
65 to 74 years	445	11.96%	
75 to 84 years	110	2.96%	
85 years and over	70	1.88%	
Median age (years)	44.4	n/a	
Male	2,039	54.8%	
Female	1,682	45.2%	

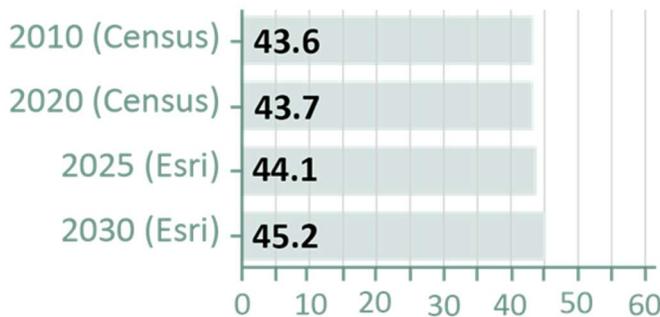
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 1-4: Town of Neenah, Age Distribution



Source: ESRI, 2025.

Figure 1-5: Town of Neenah, Median Age



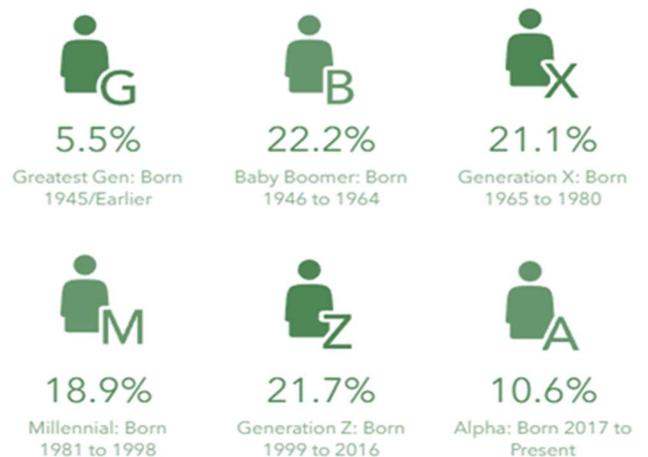
Source: ESRI, 2025.

Figure 1-5 shows that the Town’s population is getting older overall. In 2010, the median age was 43.6. That figure increased to 43.7 in 2020, and is projected to increase to 45.2 by 2030.

From a generational perspective, the baby-boomer generation (Figure 1-6) is the largest segment of the overall population (22.2%). As this age group gets older, the demands for services such as health care and transportation will increase and a younger workforce will need to take the place of retirees. It is important to recognize these trends and determine how to deal with the effects.

This data also shows that Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Y populations are nearly as large as the Baby Boomer generation. In order to continue an age distribution similar to what exists now, the town will need to focus on attracting younger families with children.

Figure 1-6: Town of Neenah, Generational Age Distribution



Source: ESRI, 2025.

Race

The vast majority of Town of Neenah’s population is white, with Some Other Race being the largest minority group at 2.5% of the population (Table 1-5). Based on population growth rate trends for these differing segments, it is likely that the town will continue to see some minor shifts in these proportions.

Table 1-5: Population by Race, Town of Neenah, 2019-2023

Race	Number of Persons	Percent of Total
Total population	3,721	100.0%
White	3,416	91.8%
Black or African American	54	1.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native	21	0.6%
Asian	47	1.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Some Other Race	93	2.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Households & Household Projections

Over 59% of the Town of Neenah is comprised of one and two-person households (Table 1-6). This figure is expected to increase in the future based on local, statewide, and national trends. The formation of new one and two-person households is the highest it’s ever been and is due to several factors, but mainly the aging of the population (more widows/widowers), and the cultural aspects of younger couples who are choosing to wait to have children, or have decided not to have children at all. As a result, this trend will impact the type and amount of housing which is needed in the town.

Table 1-6: Households and Household Size, Town of Neenah 2019-2023

Household Size	Number of Households	Percent of Total
1-person household	239	17.3%
2-person household	582	42.1%
3-person household	191	13.8%
4-or-more-person household	372	26.9%
Total Households	1,384	100.0%
Average household size	2.67	
Average family size	3.11	

Source: ESRI 2025 / U.S. Census, 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Summary

Figure 1-7 shows that a majority of the households in the town are comprised of married couples (69%), however 25% consist of non-married individuals.

In terms of household projections, this plan will need to rely on older data sources as the WDOA has not yet completed nor released their updated projection figures which correspond with their 2024 population projections. Therefore, WDOA’s vintage 2013 household projections are shown in Table 1-7. This data showed an expected increase of approximately 315 new households between 2020 and 2040, or approximately 15 new households per year.

Figure 1-7: Town of Neenah Household Composition

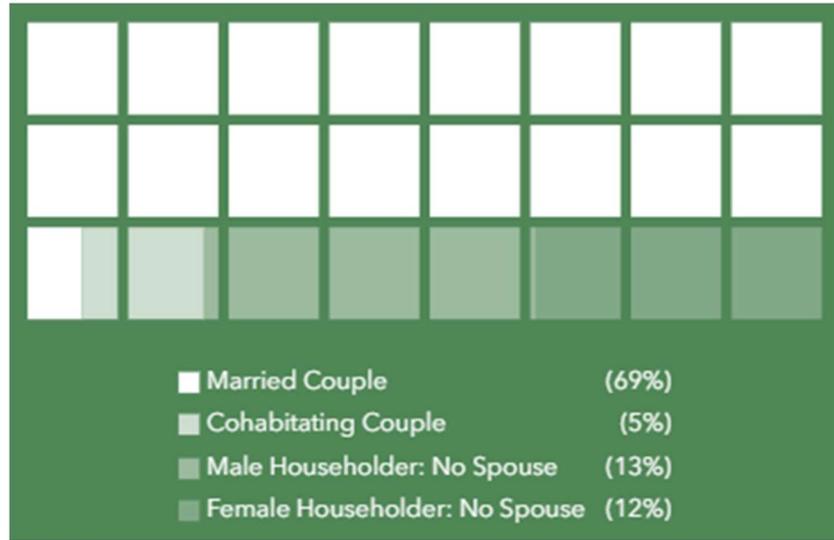


Table 1-7: Household Projections, Town of Neenah, 2020-2040

Households	2020 Census (Actual)	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection	2035 Projection	2040 Projection	Change 2025 to 2040
Total Households	1,389	1,469	1,595	1,719	1,826	1,910	315
# Change	-	-	126	124	107	84	- 42
% Change	-	-	8.6%	7.8%	6.2%	4.6%	21.4%
Person/HH	2.67	2.59	2.57	2.55	2.53	2.52	- 0.07

Source: US Census 2020, 2019-2023 5 Year ACS & WDOA, 2013.

1.5 Issues and Opportunities Trends & Key Findings

Below are important factors, trends and predicted changes for the population and households of Town of Neenah.

Population Growth

- Population growth has been historically strong and steady in the Town of Neenah, with an approximate increase of 1,000 persons between 2000 and 2020. However; the most recent WDOA projections are showing a decrease from 3,702 (2020 Census) to 3,643 in 2050, a reduction of 59 persons, or -1.6%.
- The projected population decline is a result of three main factors: an aging population, lower birth rates, and lower in-migration levels at the State.

Population Age

- The largest age group in the town was the 35 to 59-year olds, comprising 41.4% of the population (2019-2023 ACS 5-Year). The second largest group is comprised of those who are 19-years or less, with 29.6% of the population.
- The Town of Neenah's population is almost evenly divided into the various generational categories with the exception of the Greatest Generation (5.5%) and Generation Alpha (10.6%). This means the Baby Boomer, Generation X, Millennial, and Generation Z populations comprised about 20% each of the population.
- The 2010 median age was 43.7 years and increased to 44.1 years of age by 2020. This is expected to increase to 43.2 years by 2030.

Household Characteristics

- A majority of the town's households (59%) are comprised of only one or two persons.
- Nearly 70% of households in the town are married couples.
- Household growth is projected to increase by 315 by the year 2040, an increase of about 15 households per year (based on vintage 2013 projection data from the WDOA). This is primarily driven by the trend of fewer people living in each household (more 1-2 person households) versus increases in population growth.

1.6 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Recommendations

Each element of the comprehensive plan includes a specific set of goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations that the town will use as a guide to future land use, development and preservation decisions over the next 20 years. Goals, objectives, policies and recommendations are defined as follows:

- **Goals** are broad, value-based statements that express general public priorities and preferences about how the town should address issues over the next 20 years and beyond. Goals address key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the town.
- **Objectives** are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to the fulfillment of the goal.
- **Policies** are general rules, principles, strategies or courses of action used to guide decision making and actions as necessary to accomplish goals and objectives. Policies are intended to be used by decision-makers on a regular basis.
- **Recommendations** are specific actions, projects or activities that are intended to achieve a particular plan goal, objective, or policy.

Issues and Opportunities Goals and Objectives

Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 requires a statement of overall goals and objectives to guide the future development and redevelopment of the town over a 20-year planning period. The following goals and objectives were developed by the Town of Neenah with regard to the Issues and Opportunities element:

Goals

INSERT UPDATED GOALS

Objectives

INSERT UPDATED OBJECTIVES

Issues and Opportunities Policies and Recommendations

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses and actions to the goals and objectives. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the town should use to aid in making decisions. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the town should be prepared to complete within the 20-year planning period. The completion of these actions and projects are consistent with the policies, and therefore will help fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives. The following policies and recommendations have been developed by Town of Neenah with regard to the Issues and Opportunities element and serve to support the goals and objectives:

Policies

INSERT UPDATED POLICIES

Recommendations

INSERT UPDATED RECOMMENDATIONS

1.7 Issues and Opportunities Programs

See Appendix D for a complete listing of programs which pertain to this element of the Comprehensive Plan.

1.8 Maps

Map 1-1: Regional Setting contained on next page.

INSERT MAP 1-1: TOWN OF NEENAH LOCATION

2 Housing

2.1 Introduction

The lack of affordable housing is a nationwide problem. Counties and communities, including the Town of Neenah, are experiencing shortages of housing that meet the physical and economic needs of residents. These shortages have generally resulted in higher rents and homes that are selling higher than assessed values, but even more so, housing is the single biggest factor impacting economic mobility for most Americans. When residents have stable living conditions, the benefits are apparent — students do better in school, health outcomes improve, and personal wealth grows. Communities benefit as a whole from this stability.

While there is no single reason for the decline of affordable housing, several factors and trends have emerged that have affected housing costs since the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. These are mainly national-level trends, however; many of them can be seen to one degree or another at the county and local levels:

- Housing supply decreased significantly due to lack of construction and lot creation over the last ten to twenty years.
- Housing market shortages have enabled sellers to price homes higher.
- Incomes have not kept up with rents and home values.
- Interest rates have increased, making the costs of borrowing more prohibitive, which further contributes to slowing the turnover rate.
- People are staying in their homes longer, partly due to the desire for aging in place, and partly due to having longer life-spans, which in turn slows the turnover rate.
- Due to technology and ‘work from home’ policies, people are moving to locations based on quality of life, not based on where their job is.
- There is a labor shortage in the new home construction sector.
- The cost of construction materials has risen greatly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated supply chain issues.
- There is less profit made on entry-level or starter homes as demand for market rate homes continues.
- There is a higher demand for rental housing.
- Multi-family housing and denser development continues to have a negative image.

Elected officials at every level of government are hearing from constituents that housing is a major problem where they live. In response, cities and states are pursuing a wide range of different, and sometimes contentious, solutions. Local leaders are pushing the boundaries of what's possible for local governments to meet demand for housing. Communities are experimenting with zoning and code reforms and, lacking other alternatives, some are building housing on their own.

Since housing is inextricably linked to the town’s and broader regional workforce, addressing the housing issues laid out in this Chapter will be key to maintaining or improving the Town of Neenah’s economic future.

2.2 Housing Characteristics

Housing Supply

The U.S. Census Bureau classifies housing units as a house, apartment, mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other individuals in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall.

Table 2-1 displays the number of housing units found in the Town of Neenah in 2010, 2020, and 2023, as well as their occupancy status. The American Community Survey (ACS) information is derived from a sample of the town and is subject to sampling variability. However, the survey provides the most recent data available and provides necessary background information for this report. In 2020, Town of Neenah had 1,291 housing units, an increase of 281 units (28%) from 2010. This figure increased to 1,425 housing units according to the 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year data. This represents a 10% increase from 2020.

Table 2-1: Total Housing Units, Town of Neenah

Occupancy Status	2010 Census	Percent	2020 Census	Percent	2023 ACS Estimate	Percent
Total housing units	1,010	100.0%	1,291	100.0%	1,425	100.0%
Occupied housing units	976	96.6%	1,276	98.8%	1,389	93.3%
Vacant housing units	34	3.4%	15	1.2%	36	6.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010, 2020 and 2019-2023 5-Year ACS.

The 2023 ACS data also shows a high level of housing occupancy – just over 93% - but represents a decrease from 2010 and 2020 Census figures. Some of this is likely due to the ACS data methodology which does have a certain margin of error. A “healthy” vacancy rate is considered to be in the 5-7% range, and for several decades now, vacancies have gotten tighter as demands have increased and supplies have decreased. This is indicative of the current nation-wide housing shortage problem.

Structural Characteristics

Units in Structure

Table 2-2 and Figure 2-1 display the most recent data on the number of housing units within a structure for the Town of Neenah as reported in the 2023 ACS. Detached housing units are defined as one-unit structures detached from any other house, with open space on four sides. Structures are considered detached even if they have an attached garage or contain a business unit.

Table 2-2: Number of Units in Structure, Town of Neenah

Units in Structure	Estimate	Percent
Total housing units	1,425	100.0%
1-unit, detached	1,405	98.6%
1-unit, attached	0	0.0%
2 units	0	0.0%
3 or 4 units	0	0.0%
5 to 9 units	20	1.4%
10 to 19 units	0	0.0%
20 or more units	0	0.0%
Mobile home	0	0.0%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019-2023 5-Year ACS.

The majority of the housing structures in the town are one-unit detached structures, comprising over 98% of all housing structures. Structures with 5 to 9 units come in a distant second at only 1.4% which clearly illustrates that past (and to some degree, current) preferences of the community have been geared toward low-density single-family housing styles. These ratios may change during the planning period due to changes in market conditions and demands.

Age of Housing

An examination of the age of the town’s housing stock provides an indication of its overall condition. The age of the housing stock is an important element to be analyzed when planning for future housing supply. If there is a significant amount of older housing units within the housing supply, they will most likely need to be replaced, rehabilitated, or abandoned for new development within the planning period. Allowing for a newer housing supply also requires planning regarding infrastructure, land availability, community utilities, transportation routes, emergency services, and a variety of other things which are affected by new housing development.

Table 2-3: Age of Housing, Town of Neenah

Year Structure Built	Estimate	Percent
Total housing units	1,425	100.0%
Built 2020 or later	22	1.5%
Built 2010 to 2019	156	10.9%
Built 2000 to 2009	251	17.6%
Built 1990 to 1999	261	18.3%
Built 1980 to 1989	156	10.9%
Built 1970 to 1979	146	10.2%
Built 1960 to 1969	142	10.0%
Built 1950 to 1959	180	12.6%
Built 1940 to 1949	25	1.8%
Built 1939 or earlier	86	6.0%

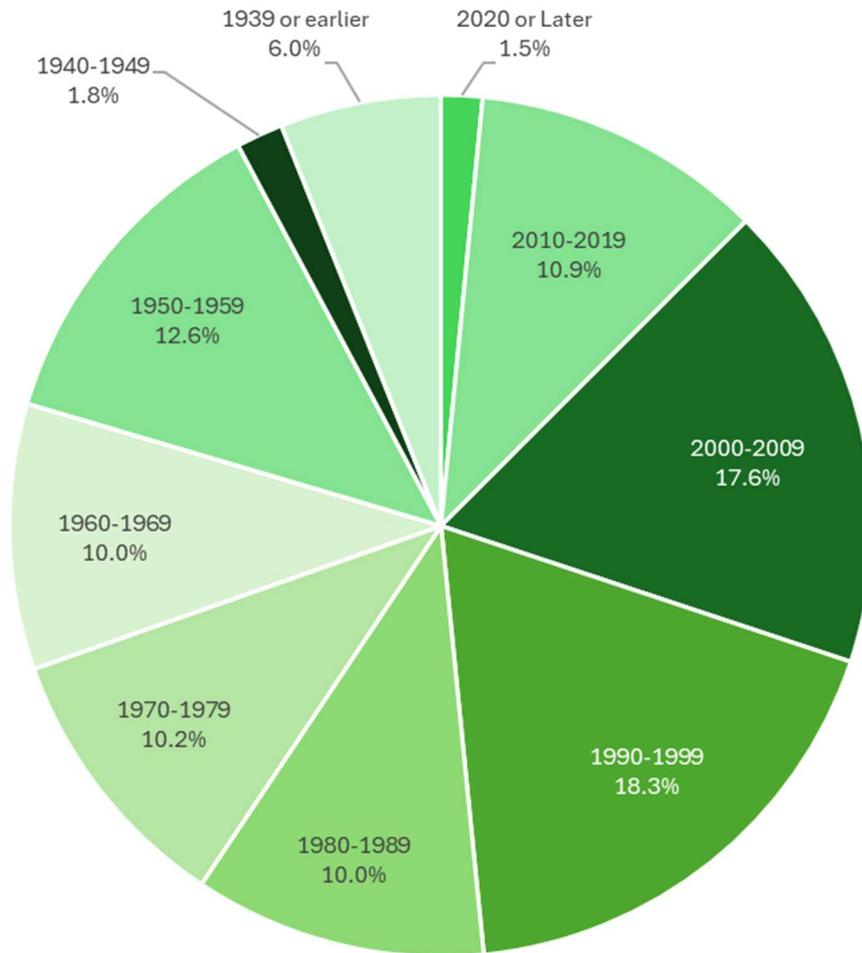
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019-2023 5-Year ACS.

Table 2-3 and Figure 2-1 display the most recent information for the year structures were built in the Town of Neenah as reported by the 2023 ACS. Homes built between 1990 and 1999 comprised the largest group at 18.3% (261 homes built). The second largest group was the decade after, 2000-2009, with 17.6% (251 homes built). These two decades represent a period of major housing and population growth for the entire Fox Cities.

These high growth rates then diminished the following decade due to the 2008 Great Recession and housing market collapse, as only 156 homes were built in the town between 2010 and 2019. The market further declined during the pandemic, with only 22 homes being built between 2020-2023.

Regardless of current growth rates, this data also indicates that the town’s overall housing stock is aging. Homes built at the beginning of the 1990’s are already 35 years old. Of the total housing stock, over 40% (579 units) are more than 50 years old now, which may mean that maintenance and rehabilitation needs will increase. Given the tremendous expense associated with new construction at this time, it will be important to ensure that the older housing stock is well maintained for existing and future residents.

Figure 2-1: Age of Housing, Town of Neenah



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2019-2023.

Occupancy Characteristics

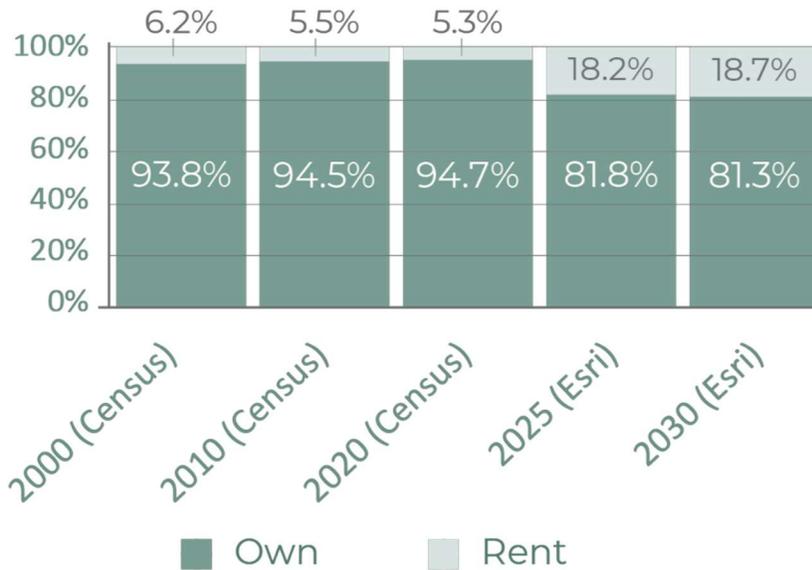
Table 2-3 and Figure 2-2 display occupancy and tenure characteristics of housing units for the Town of Neenah. As indicated by the table, there were 1,389 occupied housing units in the town in 2023. A large majority of these, 1,347 (or 97%) were owner-occupied, while only 42 units (3%) were renter occupied. Projections obtained from ESRI indicate that this proportion could change significantly in the near future. This is not only due to the increased demands for smaller townhome or apartment rentals, but also the increasing phenomenon of whole-house rentals, which were once owner-occupied.

Table 2-3: Owner vs. Renter Occupancy, Town of Neenah

Year Structure Built	Number	Percent of Total
Occupied housing units	1389	100.0%
Owner-occupied	1347	97.0%
Renter-occupied	42	3.0%
Average household size of owner-occupied unit	2.71	n/a
Average household size of renter-occupied unit	1.55	n/a

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019-2023 5-Year ACS.

Figure 2-2: Owner Occupied vs. Renter Occupied Units, Town of Neenah



Source: ESRI, 2025.

Average Household Size

As discussed earlier, Table 1-7 in Chapter 1 illustrates the historic and projected persons per household size for the Town of Neenah. In general, the average size of households have decreased from years ago mainly due to families having fewer children than the large traditional families of the past. In 2000, the average household size in Town of Neenah was 2.72. In 2020 it declined to 2.67 persons per household. Looking forward to 2040, the town is projected to have additional decline, with a persons per household of 2.52. Table 2-3 also shows that the persons per household is often times much lower in rental units than in owner-occupied units. In 2023, it was 2.71 in owner-occupied housing, but only 1.55 in rental housing.

This trend has significant impacts not only on the availability of housing (i.e., it takes more homes to house the same number of people), but also the associated change in the market for more homes which can accommodate one and two-person households (i.e., more small one and two-bedroom homes, townhomes, and apartments).

Value Characteristics

Housing Values

Table 2-4 and Figure 2-3 display the most recent information for housing values of specified owner-occupied units for the Town of Neenah as reported by the 2023 ACS. A housing unit is owner-occupied if the owner or co-owner lives in the unit even if it is mortgaged or not fully paid for. The Census determines value by the respondent’s estimate of how much the property (house and lot, mobile home and lot, or condominium unit) would sell for if it were for sale.

In 2023, approximately two-thirds (66.4%) of all homes in the Town of Neenah were valued between \$200,000 and \$499,000. Another 12.2% were valued at \$500,000 and above, while the remaining 21.4% were valued a \$199,000 or less. The town’s median housing value was \$327,700 which was significantly higher than Wisconsin’s median housing value of \$272,500.

Table 2-4: Housing Values, Town of Neenah

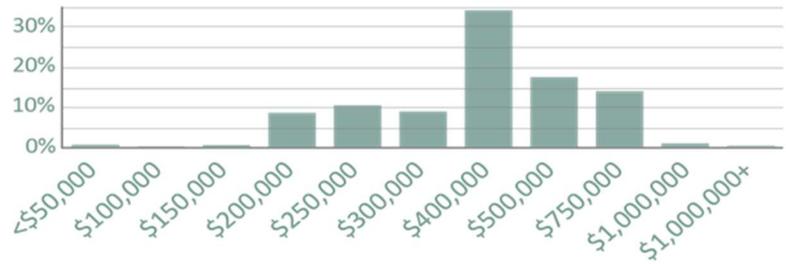
Value	Number of Units	Percent of Units
Owner-occupied units	1,347	100.0%
Less than \$50,000	0	0.0%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	20	1.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	0	0.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	268	19.9%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	264	19.6%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	631	46.8%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	156	11.6%
\$1,000,000 or more	8	0.6%
Median Housing Value		\$327,700

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019-2023 5-Year ACS.

Even though only a few years have passed since this data was released, continued increases in home values have likely shifted all of these figures upward.

According to the Wisconsin Realtor’s Association, the median home sales price has risen 39.5% in the past five years, from \$223,000 in November 2020, to \$325,000 in November 2025. Meanwhile, median household income in Wisconsin has increased only 18.6% over this period (Wisconsin Dept. of Revenue).

Figure 2-3: Housing Values, Town of Neenah



Source: U.S. Census 2019-2023 ACS.

Rent Values

According to the 2023 ACS, the median gross rent in the Town of Neenah was \$1,227 per month. This is higher than the median rent level for Wisconsin which was \$1,045 per month. Given the dynamics of the recent housing shortage and rapid housing cost increases, these figures may be lower than the current market rate rents. A quick review of available two-bedroom rental apartments on Zillow.com, of which all were in the City of Neenah (note there are few if any comparable available units in the Town of Neenah) showed rents ranged from \$899 to \$2,500 per month depending on location, size, and age of unit, as well as provided amenities.

Table 2-5: Gross Rents, Town of Neenah

Value	Number of Units	Percent of Units
Occupied units paying rent	42	100.0%
Less than \$500	0	0.0%
\$500 to \$999	11	26.2%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	31	73.8%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	0	0.0%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	0	0.0%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0	0.0%
\$3,000 or more	0	0.0%
Median Rent		\$1,227

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019-2023 5-Year ACS.

2.3 Housing Affordability

Affordability Defined

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has a standard definition for affordability: households should pay no more than 30% of their gross income for housing and related costs (property taxes, utilities, maintenance, etc.), which would leave 70% of a household’s income for food, clothing, transportation, and other necessities.

If a household spends more than 30% of its income on housing and related costs, then the household is considered burdened. These housing related costs are then measured against the income levels of the typical ‘workforce’ using a range of 60%-120% (green shade) of the Winnebago County median household income (Table 2-6).

Table 2-6: 2025 Winnebago County Median Household Income (CMI) Limits, Town of Neenah

Income Limits	1 Person	2 People	3 People	4 People	5 People	6 People	7 People	8 People
30% CMI <small>Very Low Income</small>	\$21,800	\$24,900	\$28,000	\$32,150	\$37,650	\$43,150	\$48,650	\$54,150
50% CMI <small>Low Income</small>	\$36,300	\$41,450	\$46,650	\$51,800	\$55,950	\$60,100	\$64,250	\$68,400
60% CMI	\$43,560	\$49,740	\$55,980	\$62,160	\$67,140	\$72,120	\$77,100	\$82,080
80% CMI	\$58,050	\$66,350	\$74,650	\$82,900	\$89,550	\$96,200	\$102,800	\$109,450
100% CMI	\$72,600	\$82,900	\$93,300	\$103,600	\$111,900	\$120,200	\$128,500	\$136,800
120% CMI	\$87,120	\$99,480	\$111,960	\$124,320	\$134,280	\$144,240	\$154,200	\$164,160
150% CMI	\$108,900	\$124,350	\$139,950	\$155,400	\$167,850	\$180,300	\$192,750	\$205,200
180% CMI	\$130,680	\$149,220	\$167,940	\$186,480	\$201,420	\$216,360	\$231,300	\$246,240

Source: HUD, 2025

Housing Cost Burden

Housing cost burden is essentially a measurement of how much gross income is being spent by households for their housing costs, whether they are owners or renters. A household that spends more than 30% of their income on housing costs is considered 'Cost Burdened'. Households that spend more than 50% of their income on housing are considered 'Severely Cost Burdened'. As shown on Table 2-7 for those households in the town with a mortgage, 14.9% were cost burdened (paying more than 30% of gross income). For renters in the town, 73.8% were cost burdened.

Table 2-7: Housing Cost Burden, Town of Neenah

Selected Monthly Costs	Estimate	Percent
Total Housing Units	1,425	100.0%
Owned Units with a Mortgage	905	100.0%
Less than 30 Percent	770	85.1%
30 Percent or More	135	14.9%
Owned Units without a Mortgage	442	100.0%
Less than 30 Percent	349	79.0%
30 Percent or More	93	21.0%
Rented	42	100.0%
Less than 30 Percent	11	26.2%
30 Percent or More	31	73.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019-2023 5-Year ACS.

Home Affordability Examples

In further examining the housing cost issues within the Town of Neenah, it is possible to generate some rough examples of how housing prices can affect the ability of the average family when it comes to seeking out a new home. Table 2-8 illustrates the relative affordability of homes at different prices for a two-person household who is making 100% of the Winnebago County median income (as derived from Table 2-6).

As an example, an “affordable” home for 2-person household at 100% of the median income (\$82,900) would be priced around \$175,000 based on current mortgage rates and various assumptions regarding other housing costs as shown. While there may be a few existing older homes for sale in the town in the \$175,000 area, this household certainly could not stay within these affordability limits for a newly constructed home costing nearly \$300,000 or more to build.

Table 2-8: Affordable Housing Income Need Examples, Town of Neenah

Home Ownership Costs	Home Value Range / Income Needed				
Home Value/Sales Price	\$ 165,000	\$ 210,000	\$ 275,000	\$ 310,000	\$ 360,000
Down Payment (@ 10%)	\$ 16,500	\$ 21,000	\$ 27,500	\$ 31,000	\$ 36,000
Loan Value	\$ 148,500	\$ 189,000	\$ 247,500	\$ 279,000	\$ 324,000
30-Yr. Mortgage Rate	6.89%	6.89%	6.89%	6.89%	6.89%
Monthly Payment (w/PMI)	\$ 1,413	\$ 1,697	\$ 2,107	\$ 2,327	\$ 2,641
Monthly Taxes (@ 2%)	\$ 275	\$ 350	\$ 458	\$ 517	\$ 600
Monthly Insurance (@ 0.75%)	\$ 103	\$ 131	\$ 172	\$ 194	\$ 225
Monthly Utilities (@ 1.5%)	\$ 206	\$ 263	\$ 344	\$ 388	\$ 450
Total Monthly Costs	\$ 1,997	\$ 2,441	\$ 3,081	\$ 3,425	\$ 3,916
Total Annual Cost	\$ 23,969	\$ 29,289	\$ 36,972	\$ 41,099	\$ 46,992
Annual Household Income Required to Achieve 30% Standard	\$ 79,895	\$ 97,630	\$ 123,238	\$ 136,997	\$ 156,640

Source: Cedar Corporation, 2025

NOTE: 2025 winnebago County Median HH Income is \$82,900 for a 2-Person Household per HUD.

Mortgage Rate Impacts

The rate on the average 30-year mortgage rose to a high of nearly 8% in the fall of 2023, nearly three times the 2.65% rate which existed in early 2021 (Figure 2-6). Rates have since settled and are currently hovering just above 6%. Borrowing against these higher interest rates substantially lessens the ability of a home-buyer to achieve the “less than 30%” standard noted earlier.

Additionally, according to the Journal of Finance, most U.S. mortgage borrowers have a rate below 4% and are reluctant to take on a new mortgage with a higher rate, effectively locking them into their current home. This further contributes to the shortage of existing homes on the market and further drives up prices, particularly on more affordable units.

Figure 2-6: Average 30-Year Fixed Mortgage Interest Rates



Source: Freddie Mac and Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, June 3, 2025.

2.4 Housing Unit Growth & Projections

Housing Unit Projections

Housing unit projections are an important element in preparing the comprehensive plan. Specifically, they are used as a guide to estimate required acreage to accommodate future residential development, as well as prepare for future demands growth places on public facilities and services throughout the planning period. Similar to population projections, it is important to note that housing projections are based on past and current trends, and therefore should only be used as a guide for planning.

In 2013, the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) developed household projections (Table 1-7), which essentially indicates how many new homes will be needed in the Town of Neenah as a whole. These projections showed a need for about 315 additional housing units between 2020 and 2040. This equates to a rate of approximately 15 new housing units per year. If these projections hold true, and the rate stays consistent, about 300 new housing units will be needed in the town over the next 20 years.

As mentioned previously, while the WDOA did issue updated population projections in 2024, they have not yet finalized the updated household projections. This information should be reviewed by the town once released to identify any potential impacts it may have on this plan.

Residential Building Permit Data

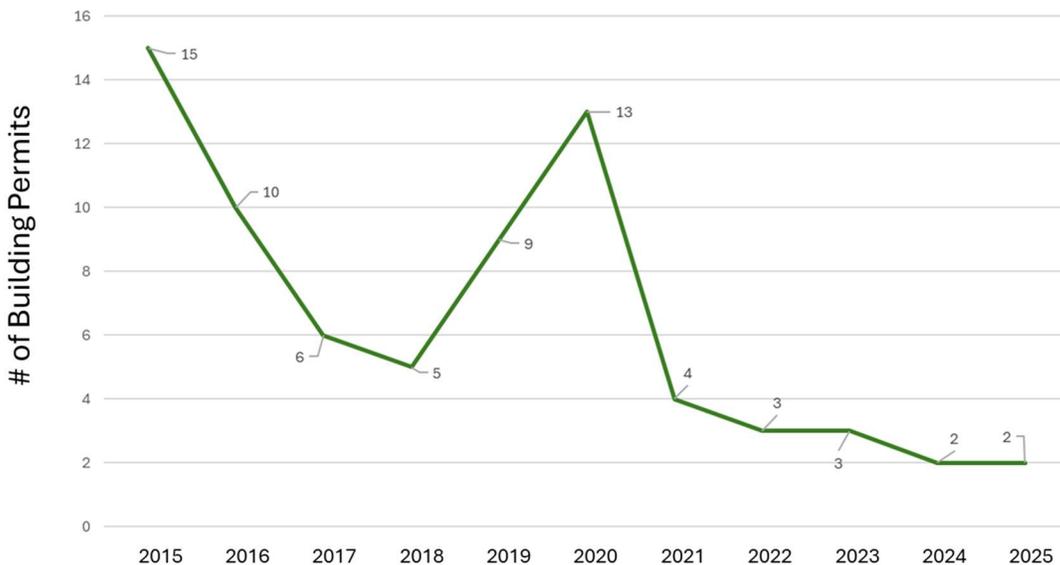
A review of the Town of Neenah’s residential building permit data for the past ten years (2015 to 2025) reveals a total of 72 permits for new homes were issued over this time period (Table 2-9 and Figure 2-7). A large majority of these permits were for single-family homes, with only seven permits being issued for multi-family units (in this case, the conversion of a motel). These figures account for the reduction in housing units through razing permits which were issued. The data illustrates the steep decline in permits issued after the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic for which the Town of Neenah has not yet recovered from. Over the 10 year period, the average number of building permits issued per year was 7.2.

Table 2-9: Town of Neenah Residential Building Permits, 2015-2025

Year	SFR Building Permits	SFR Razing Permits Issued	MF Permits Issued	Net Building Permits
2015	16	1		15
2016	10			10
2017	7	1		6
2018	7	2		5
2019	9			9
2020	6		7	13
2021	5	1		4
2022	3			3
2023	3			3
2024	2			2
2025	2			2
Total	70	5	7	72
Annual Average	7.0	0.5	0.7	7.2

Source: Town of Neenah and Cedar Corporation, 2026.

Figure 2-7: Town of Neenah New Home Permits, 2015-2025



Source: Town of Neenah, 2026.

2.5 Housing for All Age Groups and Persons with Special Needs

As the general population ages, affordability, security, accessibility, proximity to services, transportation, and medical facilities will all become increasingly important. Many of these issues are already important to those with disabilities or other special needs. As new residents move into the area and the population ages, other types of housing must be considered to meet all resident needs. This is particularly true in communities where a large proportion of the population has been long-time residents, where there is a desire for these residents to remain in the area during their retirement years.

The population structure of the Town of Neenah is shifting to older age groups. In 2023, a large portion of the Town of Neenah's population was in the two age categories of 35-44 (17.7%) and 45-54 (15.2%). The 65-74 age group ranked third at nearly 12%. It is anticipated that there will be continued upward shifts in the age of the town's population, which will likely result in the creation of additional one and two-person households. The town intends on providing housing for all age groups by providing opportunities for a variety of housing types to be built.

2.6 Promoting Availability of Land for Development/Redevelopment of Low-Income and Moderate-Income Housing

Promoting the availability of underdeveloped or underused land is one way to meet the needs of low and moderate income individuals. The town does not have a significant amount of lands which fit the categories of being underdeveloped, or underutilized and therefore, opportunities to utilize such lands for low-to-moderate income housing are limited. That being said, the town should still use its Comprehensive Plan in coordination with developed goals, objectives, and policies to promote the availability of such housing in areas that are appropriate.

2.7 Maintaining and Rehabilitating the Existing Housing Stock

The maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock within the town is one of the most effective ways to ensure safe and generally affordable housing while not sacrificing land to development. Over the course of the planning period, the town should continually monitor local housing stock characteristics including, but not limited to, price, aesthetics, safety, cleanliness, and overall suitability with community character. The monitoring process will become important to ensure that steps are taken to preserve the current housing supply before allowing for new development, which has far greater impacts on community resources.

The Town of Neenah has not created any of its own housing programs, however; they do have access to programs offered by the [Northeastern Wisconsin CDBG Housing Program](#) which has been administered by Brown County since 2014. Qualified low- and moderate- income (LMI) owner-occupied household applicants can take advantage of their zero-percent deferred loan payment housing rehabilitation loans. These loans can fund projects such as replacement of private onsite wastewater treatment systems, new electrical or plumbing systems, lead paint or asbestos abatement, roof replacement, accessibility improvements, or any other rehabilitation deemed necessary to meet housing quality standard (HQS) inspection. Low percentage rate deferred and/or installment housing rehabilitation loans are also available to owners of LMI renter-occupied units.

Additionally, homebuyer assistance for down payment and eligible closing costs exists, as well as small-scale neighborhood oriented public facilities improvements that support affordable housing initiatives such as sewer and water lateral extensions to property lines, streets, sidewalks, curb-cuts, and demolition of dilapidated structures. More information on this and other housing-related programs are listed in Appendix D.

2.8 Housing Trends & Key Findings

A variety of trends and projections lay out the future for housing within the Town of Neenah. Some of the important items to consider when developing this plan's goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations include:

- Of the estimated 1,425 occupied housing units in 2023, the vast majority of those (1,405 units or 98.6%) were detached single-family dwellings.
- The Town of Neenah's housing stock is aging, with just over 40% of units being more than 50 years old. Another 7.8% of the total units were built prior to 1940.
- The majority of homes (97%) within the Town of Neenah are owner-occupied, with only 3% being rental units. It is projected that rental units will increase over the planning period.
- The average household size has, and will continue to, decrease over the planning period. In 2020, the town had 2.67 persons per household and is projected to decline to 2.52 persons per household by 2040. This will increase demands for the number of smaller housing units.
- The majority of homes in the Town of Neenah are valued in the \$200,000 - \$499,000 bracket (66.4% of housing stock) with the median home value being \$327,700.
- Monthly gross rents across the Town of Neenah had a median value of \$1,227 per month. This was higher than the median rent level for Wisconsin which was \$1,045 per month.
- For those households with a mortgage, nearly 15% were cost burdened (paying more than 30% of gross income). For renters, 73.8% were cost burdened.
- It is projected that 315 additional housing units will be needed between 2025 and 2040 according to WDOA estimate. This averages out to about 15 housing units per year.

2.9 Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies & Recommendations

Each element of the comprehensive plan includes a specific set of goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations that the town will use as a guide to future land use, development and preservation decisions over the next 20 years. Goals, objectives, policies and recommendations are defined as follows:

- **Goals** are broad, value-based statements that express general public priorities and preferences about how the town should address issues over the next 20 years and beyond. Goals address key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the town.
- **Objectives** are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to the fulfillment of the goal.
- **Policies** are general rules, principles, strategies or courses of action used to guide decision making and actions as necessary to accomplish goals and objectives. Policies are intended to be used by decision-makers on a regular basis.
- **Recommendations** are specific actions, projects or activities that are intended to achieve a particular plan goal, objective, or policy.

Housing Goals and Objectives

Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 requires a statement of overall goals and objectives to guide the future development and redevelopment of the town over a 20-year planning period. The following goals and objectives were developed by the Town of Neenah with regard to the Housing element:

Goals

INSERT UPDATED GOALS

Objectives

INSERT UPDATED OBJECTIVES

Housing Policies and Recommendations

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses and actions to the goals and objectives. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the town should use to aid in making decisions. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the town should be prepared to complete within the 20-year planning period. The completion of these actions and projects are consistent with the policies, and therefore will help fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives. The following policies and recommendations have been developed by the Town of Neenah with regard to the Housing element and serve to support the goals and objectives:

Policies

INSERT UPDATED POLICIES

Recommendations

INSERT UPDATED RECOMMENDATIONS

2.10 Housing Programs

See Appendix D for a complete listing of programs which pertain to this element of the Comprehensive Plan.

2.11 Maps

None.

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3 Economic Development

3.1 Introduction

Economic development planning is the process by which a community organizes, analyzes, plans, and then applies its energies to the tasks of improving the economic well-being and quality of life for those in the community. This can be done by addressing issues ranging from enhancing a community’s competitiveness, establishing industrial policy, encouraging sustainable development, creating jobs, increasing wages and enhancing worker training, and improving overall quality of life. All of these issues affect residents within a community and are addressed directly or indirectly in this comprehensive plan.

Economic development expenditures are a community investment. They leverage new growth and redevelopment to improve an area. Influencing and investing in the process of economic development allows community members to determine future direction and guide appropriate types of development according to their values. The reason to plan for economic development is straight-forward - economic development helps pay the bills and builds wealth. It requires working together to maintain a strong economy by creating and retaining desirable jobs which provide a good standard of living for individuals. Increased personal income and wealth increases the tax base, so a community, county, or state can provide the level of services residents expect. A balanced, healthy economy is essential for community well-being.

There are a variety of economic development plans, but successful communities tend to have one thing in common – an articulated, shared vision of where they want to go and of what things residents and businesses value in their community. Times have changed on how economic development is “practiced”, but successful communities have blended successful

Figure 3-1: Economic Development “Waves” and Best Practices



Adapted from Steve Deller, University of Wisconsin - Division of Extension 2025, and; Brigid Tuck, University of Minnesota Extension, 2025.

past methods with newer trends based on a collective understanding of the economy and sociology of its environs. Recent work by UW-Extension’s Steve Deller, discusses the newer “4th Wave” of economic development focus – that being the attraction of people. As shown in Figure 3.1, the previous three “waves” and their typical components are still relevant in terms of practices used to achieve a community’s vision.

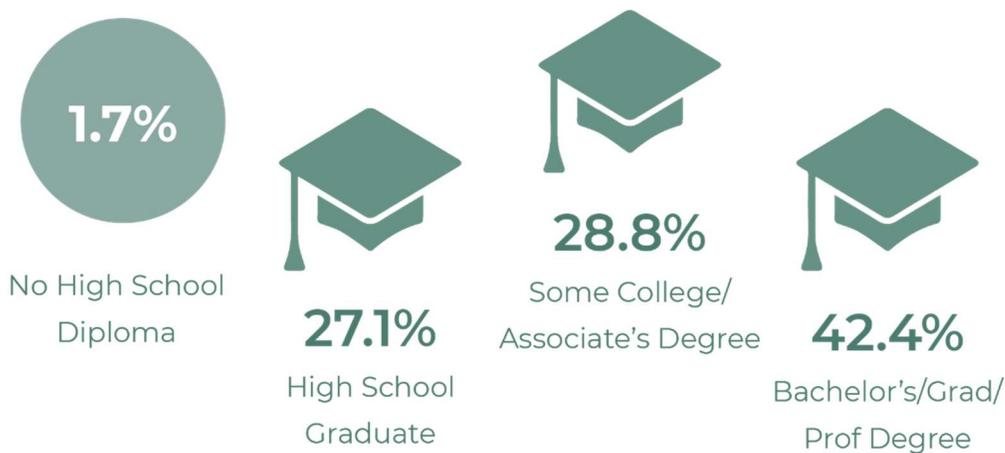
For the reasons cited, it is important to the planning process to identify the Town of Neenah’s economic characteristics or resources. These characteristics include: education characteristics, income and poverty characteristics, labor force statistics, and industry base descriptions. The assessment of these characteristics and resources provides insight into the historical and current economic situation in the town, thereby providing direction for planning the future of the economic base.

Furthermore, economic development is an element of the Comprehensive Plan which should not be segregated by municipal boundaries. The Town of Neenah needs to take a lead role in promoting regional economies and its’ benefits to attract future workers and housing. Although individuals may choose a specific community to live in, when it comes to employment, typically the best job wins regardless of its location. This element identifies those economic characteristics and trends in the Town of Neenah which will help identify deficiencies and opportunities related to the economic base in order to promote the stabilization, retention, and expansion of quality employment opportunities.

3.2 Education Levels

The Town of Neenah has a well-educated population and workforce with over 42% having a 4-year (or more) college degree, and an additional 28.8% having at least some college or an associate’s degree (Figure 3-2). Those with no high school diploma comprise only about 1.7% of the population which is a lower percentage as compared to the rest of the State.

Figure 3-2: Education Levels, Town of Neenah



Source: ESRI, 2025.

3.3 Income Levels

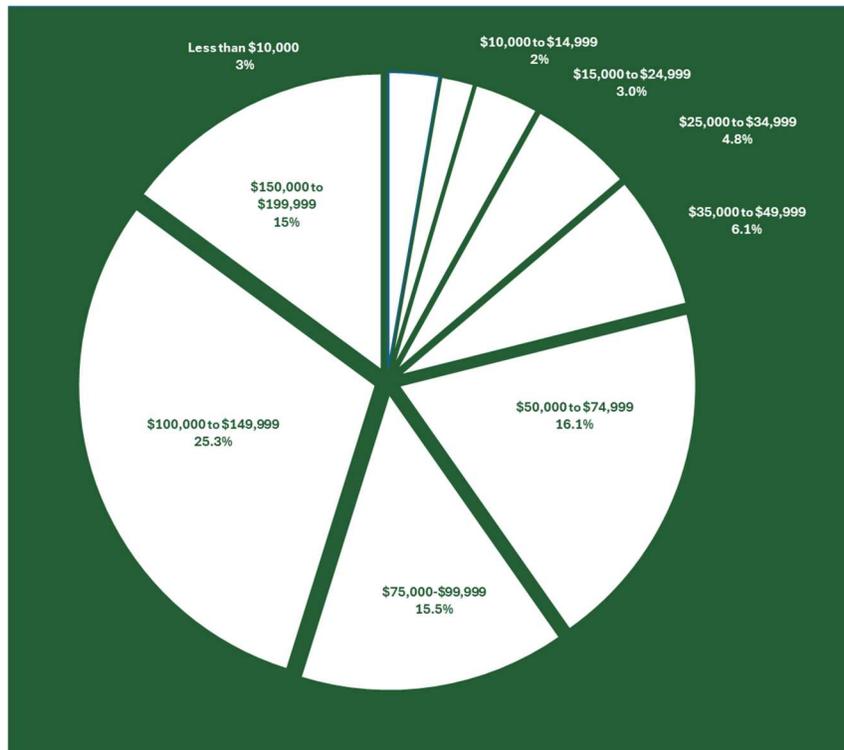
Table 3-1 and Figure 3-3 display the household incomes for the Town of Neenah as reported in the 2019-2023 5-Year ACS. The median household income for town was \$111,482 which is significantly higher than the State’s reported median income of \$75,670. The highest percentage (25.3.7%) of residents in the town had a household income between \$100,000 and \$149,000. The next largest percentage (16.3%) of household income was \$200,000 or more, followed by \$50,000 to \$74,999 (16.1%).

Table 3-1: Annual Household Income, Town of Neenah, 2019-2023

Income Range	Number of Households	% of Total Households
Less than \$10,000	32	2.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	21	1.5%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	41	3.0%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	66	4.8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	85	6.1%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	223	16.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	169	12.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	352	25.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	173	12.5%
\$200,000 or more	227	16.3%
Median Household Income	\$111,482	

Source: U.S. Census, 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Summary

Figure 3-3: Annual Household Income, Town of Neenah, 2019-2023



While household incomes are substantially high within the town, there are still a significant number of households with lesser incomes. About 160 households, or 11.5%, had incomes of \$34,999 or less. In Wisconsin, to be at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (or under the poverty line) a family of four would need to make \$30,000 per year in 2023. Approximately 11% of Wisconsin residents currently live below the poverty line (at or below 100% FPL). Within the Town of Neenah, about 4.7% of households are below the poverty line according to the 2019-2023 ACS data.

3.4 Labor Force and Employment Status

According to a 2023 report by the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Wisconsin experienced a significant labor shortage, with more job openings than job seekers. This shortage, coupled with a declining labor force participation rate, created a barrier to economic growth. There are four solutions to the macroeconomic labor quantity challenge: 1) offshoring production, 2) immigration, 3) mitigating barriers to employment of the chronically unemployed, and 4) technological advancement (DWD, 2023).

Table 3-2 shows the labor force in the Town of Neenah for the 2019-2023 time period based on American Community Survey 5-year Estimates. The town’s total labor force was approximately 1,837 persons giving it a labor participation rate of approximately 64.6%. The Town of Neenah’s unemployment rate at that time was 1.5%, although recently these rates have been trending upward. In December, 2025, the Statewide unemployment rate was 3.1%.

Table 3-2: Employment Status of Population 16 Years and Older, Town of Neenah, 2023

Employment Status	Number of Persons
Population 16 years and over	2,845
In labor force	1,837
Civilian labor force	1,837
Employed	1,793
Unemployed	44
Armed Forces	0
Not in labor force	1,008
Civilian labor force	1,837
Females 16 years and over	1,243
In labor force	702
Civilian labor force	702
Employed	702

Source: U.S. Census, 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Summary

Place of Employment and Commuting Patterns

Job commuting patterns can vary over time based on a number of factors such as gas prices, housing availability and costs, as well as personal preference. In addition, COVID-19 pandemic changed the entire workforce and employment landscape with respect to the number of people working from home. Data showed that during the initial stages of the pandemic in 2020, about 70% of people across the nation worked from home.

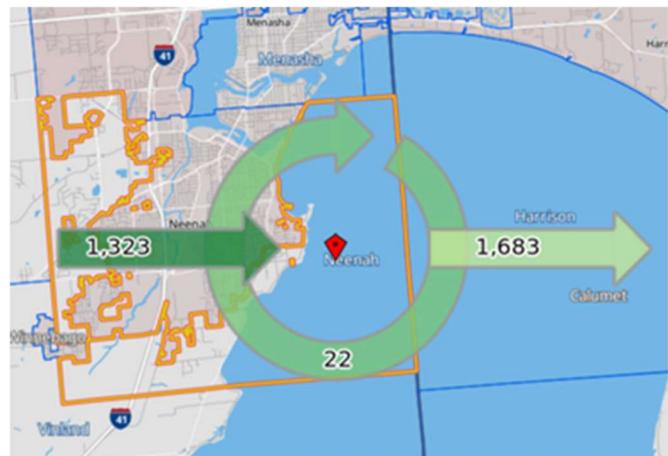
This has since declined but has held steady at about 30% and is expected to continue at or near this rate for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, while the Town of Neenah offers some local jobs for its residents, the reality is that many residents work outside of the town. Conversely, quite a few of the Town of Neenah’s workers reside in other nearby communities. These trends and patterns must be considered when planning for the future of the town.

Figure 3-4: Worker Inflow/Outflow, Town of Neenah, 2022

Worker Inflow/Outflow

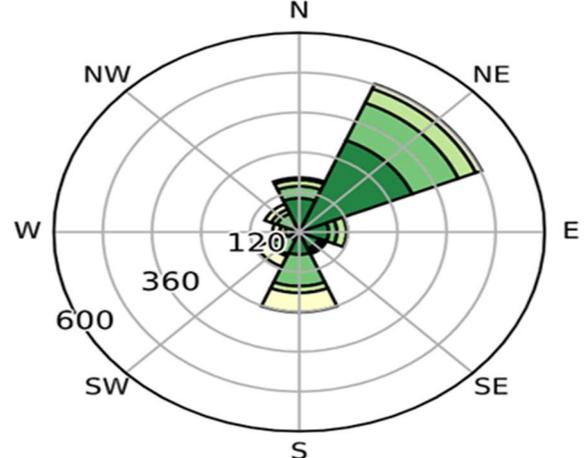
When evaluating commuter patterns, it is helpful to understand the amounts and general locations that workers commute to and from. 2022 data (Figure 3-4) obtained from the U.S. Census’s “On The Map” program shows that:

- Of the 1,705 workers in the Town of Neenah, nearly all (99%) left the town for employment in other nearby communities.
- Conversely, 1,323 workers who reside in other communities came into the Town of Neenah for employment.
- Only 22 workers both lived in and worked in the Town of Neenah.



This data shows that while some of the existing industries within the Town of Neenah are a draw for regional employment, the town is also losing a significant percentage of its residents to jobs in other nearby communities, particularly the City of Neenah, City of Appleton, and City of Oshkosh which collectively account for about 30% of those jobs.

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2023 All Workers



Source: U.S. Census, On The Map, 2023.

Barriers to Employment

Barriers to employment encompass various obstacles individuals face when seeking or maintaining a job, ranging from personal attributes to external factors. These can include a criminal record, disability, lack of education or skills, employment gaps, childcare needs, mental health challenges, age, and biases. Additionally, socioeconomic factors like poverty, lack of transportation, and cultural barriers can also impede employment. Three of the largest employment barriers in the Town of Neenah are discussed below.

Transportation

Lack of affordable and reliable transportation can significantly impede employment opportunities, especially for low-income individuals and those in rural areas. This barrier can make it difficult to access jobs, education, healthcare, and other essential services, hindering individuals' ability to find and maintain employment.

Broadband

The lack of broadband internet access can pose a significant employment barrier, particularly in rural areas, making it harder to find and apply for jobs, access online training, and engage in digital job-seeking activities. This is because broadband is crucial for modern job searching, including utilizing online job boards, creating resumes, and applying for positions electronically, not to mention having the ability to work from home.

Childcare

Under Wisconsin law, no person may, for compensation, provide care and supervision for four or more children under the age of seven for less than 24 hours a day unless that person obtains a license to operate a child care center from the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. This does not include a relative or guardian of a child who provides care and supervision for the child; a public or parochial school; a person employed to come to the home of the child's parent or guardian for less than 24 hours a day; or a county, city, village, town, school district or library that provides programs primarily intended for recreational or social purposes. There are two different categories of state licensed child care; they depend upon the number of children in care:

1. *Licensed Family Child Care Centers* provide care for up to 8 children. This care is usually in the provider's home, but it is not required to be located in a residence.
2. *Licensed Group Child Care Centers* provide care for 9 or more children. These centers are usually located somewhere other than a residence and may be small or large in size.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) tracks and collects data from all regulated childcare facilities within the State. According to their database, as of April, 2025, the Town of Neenah has zero child care providers within its boundaries. However, there are approximately 15 regulated childcare facilities in the nearby City of Neenah.

Due to its high cost, child care is a significant barrier to employment for families across Wisconsin. Child care remains expensive with weekly costs for Group Child Care in the Fox Cities area averages \$250 for 4-year-olds to \$296 for infants (Child Care Resource & Referral, Inc., 2025).

Even families that have and can afford child care struggle with disruptions to access. Easing the cost and access burden would allow parents to more fully participate in the labor market. A newer “WisconSays” Survey conducted in 2025 found that 90 percent of Wisconsinites, including those without kids, state that finding affordable, high-quality child care in Wisconsin is a problem, and over three-quarters of Wisconsinites support an increase in state funding to fix it. Meanwhile, for families currently using child care, the survey found approximately half reported missing work or school due to lack of child care and a shocking over 12 percent reported leaving the workforce entirely.

3.5 Economic Base Analysis

Employment by industry within an area illustrates the structure of the economy. Historically, the Town of Neenah has had a high concentration of employment in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors of the economy. Recent state and national trends indicate an increasing concentration of employment in the manufacturing sector and the services sector. This trend is partly attributed to the aging of the population.

Existing Business Inventory

As shown in Table 3-3 and Figure 3-5, in 2025, the Town of Neenah had approximately 123 existing businesses with 1,781 employees based on ESRI's Business Analyst which is sourced from Data Axle. The top five largest businesses based on total employees are: N&M Transfer (800), United Plastics Fabricating (120), LYCON, Inc. (65), Apricity (60), and Pack Air, Inc. (55). About eight additional businesses exist with 20 or more employees. That being said, the vast majority of businesses in the town have less than ten employees, with a number of them being home-based businesses. Automotive, trucking/transport, warehousing/storage, and construction businesses are the most common business types based on NICS codes.

Table 3-3: Existing Businesses, Town of Neenah, 2025

Map ID	Company/Business Name	Primary SIC	Primary NAICS	NAICS Industry Sector	Employee Count
1	3rd Gen Deck Builders	999977	99999004	Unclassified Establishments	NA
2	Above & Beyond Auto	552198	44112003	Retail Trade	2
3	Affordable Security Storage	422601	49319002	Transportation & Warehousing	1
4	American Colloid Co	149901	21239010	Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	10
5	American Grand Assisted Living Suites	836105	62331206	Health Care & Social Assistance	8
6	American Legion	864102	81341003	Other Services Except Public Admin	2
7	American Paper Converters Inc	508475	42383063	Wholesale Trade	7
8	Amy Bourbois	628206	52394008	Finance & Insurance	3
9	Anderson Heating & Sheet Metal Inc	171102	23822020	Construction	3
10	Apricity	839998	81331908	Other Services Except Public Admin	60
11	ATM	602103	52211001	Finance & Insurance	0
12	ATM	602103	52211001	Finance & Insurance	0
13	ATW Lodging Group LLC	701103	72111001	Accommodation & Food Services	3
14	Auto Clinic	753801	81111104	Other Services Except Public Admin	3
15	Autobody Hayes	753801	81111104	Other Services Except Public Admin	3
16	Aves Wildlife Alliance Inc	999977	99999004	Unclassified Establishments	NA
17	Barker's Painting & Sandblasting	347904	33281203	Manufacturing	3
18	Bezier Consulting LLC	874899	54161830	Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	2
19	Brown Dan & Nancy	999977	99999004	Unclassified Establishments	NA
20	Checker Logistics	874266	54161125	Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	3
21	Checker Logistics, Inc	874266	54161125	Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	5
22	Childrens Products LLC	539901	45521908	Retail Trade	3
23	Chris Cowling Construction	152144	23611512	Construction	2
24	Clarissa Lynn Beauty LLC	723106	81211202	Other Services Except Public Admin	2
25	CNK Cabinetry LLC	175103	23835002	Construction	10
26	Coraggio LLC	999977	99999004	Unclassified Establishments	NA
27	Country View Animal Hospital	74203	54194002	Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	17
28	Country View Clippers	75204	81291021	Other Services Except Public Admin	3
29	Cranked Bike Studio	594141	45911006	Retail Trade	3
30	Deerwood Mini Storage Neenah	422503	53113001	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	1
31	Depot Connect International	769934	81131035	Other Services Except Public Admin	6
32	Doro's Wrenches and Rides	753801	81111104	Other Services Except Public Admin	2
33	Dr James Amstadt Consulting, LLC	999977	99999004	Unclassified Establishments	NA
34	Ed Mueller Builder	152112	23611506	Construction	2
35	Ezer Counseling & Coaching LLC	832201	62411004	Health Care & Social Assistance	4
36	Financially Speaking LLC	628203	52394006	Finance & Insurance	1
37	Fleming Group LLC	179921	23622040	Construction	3
38	Forefront Dermatology Neenah, WI	801119	62111102	Health Care & Social Assistance	12
39	Fox Cities Dermatology & Skin Cancer Center, SC	801101	62111107	Health Care & Social Assistance	5
40	Fox Valley Exteriors LLC	176109	23816014	Construction	4
41	Fox Valley Islamic Society	866114	81311015	Other Services Except Public Admin	4
42	Fox Valley Stone & Brick	571908	44912972	Retail Trade	9
43	Garage Door Specialists	521101	44418018	Retail Trade	10
44	Gary L Klinka Building Inspection, Inc	653122	53139008	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	2
45	Gear 'n Up Bicycle Shop	769974	45911008	Retail Trade	6
46	Gibson Iron & Metal	371302	33621101	Manufacturing	8
47	Green Valley Investments LLC	621111	52391001	Finance & Insurance	3
48	Greenlawn Memorial Park	655302	81222002	Other Services Except Public Admin	2
49	Hoheisel Painting & Decorating	172101	23832003	Construction	20
50	Horse Information Center	738959	51929010	Information	3
51	Hortonville Football Club Inc	869905	81399005	Other Services Except Public Admin	2
52	Iconic	999977	99999004	Unclassified Establishments	NA
53	Intoxalock Ignition Interlock	753834	81111127	Other Services Except Public Admin	3
54	J D Ogden Plumbing & Heating	171105	23822025	Construction	2
55	Jehovah Witnesses	866107	81311008	Other Services Except Public Admin	1
56	Johal Gas & Food Mart LLC	541103	44513101	Retail Trade	7
57	Junio's Fireworks LLC	509202	42392010	Wholesale Trade	2
58	Kerry Construction Fox Valley	152112	23611506	Construction	3
59	Kiwanis International Inc	839998	81331908	Other Services Except Public Admin	2
60	Kuehnl Farms Inc	11598	11115001	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	3
61	Lance Hayes Stables	799968	71399050	Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	1
62	Landmark Building Restoration	174101	23814006	Construction	4

Bolded lines indicate businesses with 20 or more employees.

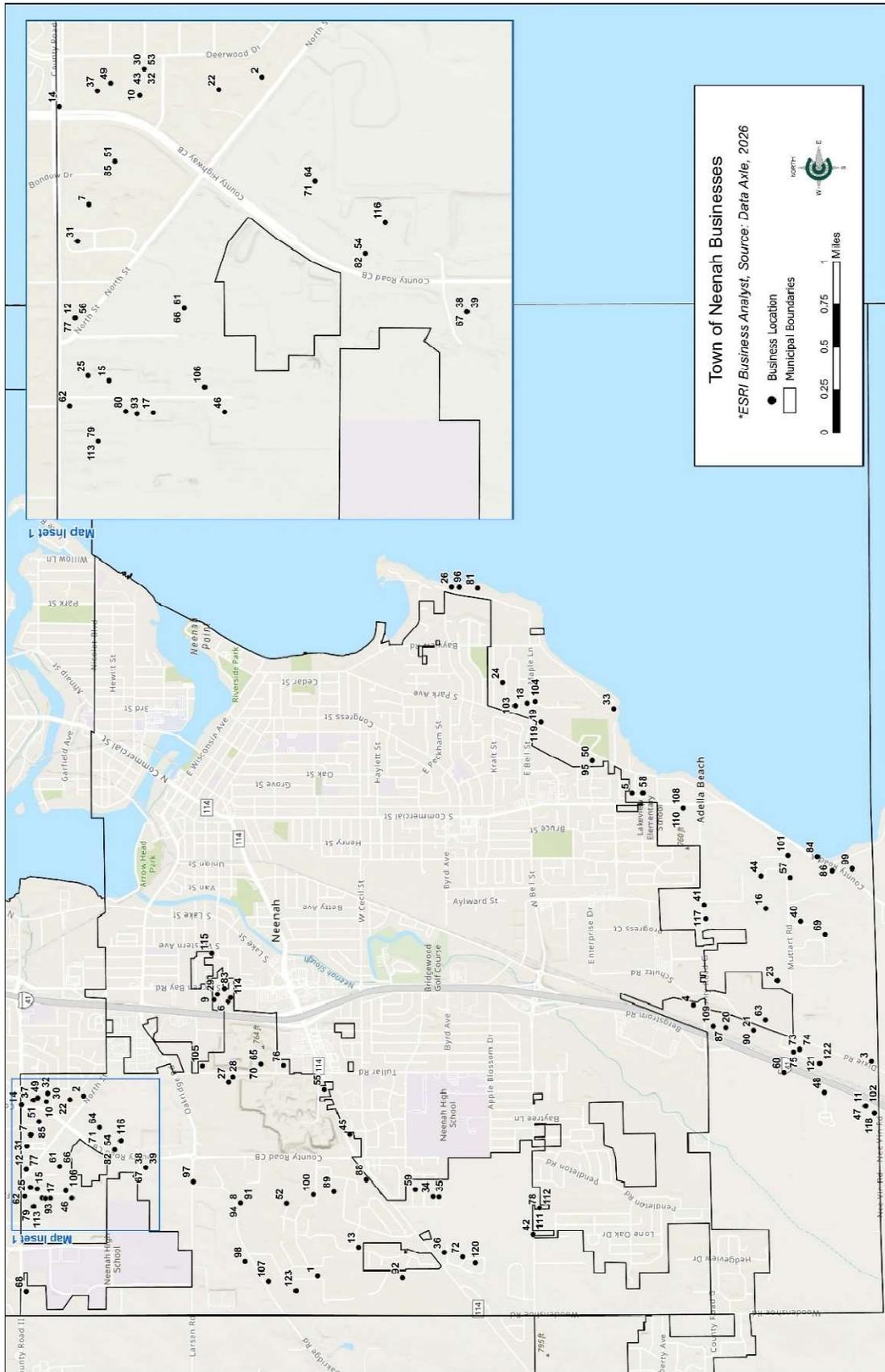
Table 3-3: Existing Businesses, Town of Neenah, 2025, continued

Map ID	Company/Business Name	Primary SIC	Primary NAICS	NAICS Industry Sector	Employee Count
64	Lube Tech	299202	32419105	Manufacturing	9
65	LYCON Inc	521128	44418012	Retail Trade	65
66	Maefield Equestrian Center	75225	81291008	Other Services Except Public Admin	2
67	Margaret Maxi, MD, Faad	801101	62111107	Health Care & Social Assistance	15
68	Match Grade Medical LLC	801104	62111129	Health Care & Social Assistance	8
69	McClone Properties LLC	653108	53121005	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	2
70	Michels Corp	503211	42332036	Wholesale Trade	6
71	Mighty Auto Parts	501313	42312015	Wholesale Trade	5
72	Mosquito Squad	495906	56171007	Administrative, Support & Waste Mgmt	7
73	N & M Expedited	421304	48423013	Transportation & Warehousing	3
74	N & M Nationwide Inc	421304	48423013	Transportation & Warehousing	10
75	N & M Transfer	421304	48423013	Transportation & Warehousing	800
76	Napuck Salvage & Supply Inc	509313	42393019	Wholesale Trade	17
77	Neenah QTGO	554101	45712003	Retail Trade	2
78	Neenah Sanitary District	951104	92411001	Public Administration	1
79	Neenah Storage	422503	53113001	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	2
80	Nuisance Pro	734201	56171009	Administrative, Support & Waste Mgmt	3
81	Nyla Group LLC	653118	53121003	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	1
82	Ogden Plumbing	171105	23822025	Construction	14
83	Pack Air Inc	353501	33392204	Manufacturing	55
84	Paynes Point Hook & Spear Fishing Club	864108	81341004	Other Services Except Public Admin	4
85	Pheifer Brothers Construction	152103	23611505	Construction	25
86	Pnuma Health Care	836105	62331206	Health Care & Social Assistance	6
87	R G L-Neenah Office	999977	99999004	Unclassified Establishments	NA
88	Racing Electronics LLC	762202	81121013	Other Services Except Public Admin	1
89	Racing Hearts Day Ltd	835101	62441003	Health Care & Social Assistance	9
90	RGL	421309	48423017	Transportation & Warehousing	25
91	Ridge Top Exteriors	176109	23816014	Construction	5
92	RNH Homes LLC	999977	99999004	Unclassified Establishments	NA
93	Rosenow Customs	521107	44418066	Retail Trade	10
94	Rosenow Customs LLC	176117	23816005	Construction	2
95	Russell Meerdink Co Limited	594201	45921005	Retail Trade	4
96	S & D Masonry	174101	23814006	Construction	20
97	Schmit Electric LLC	173101	23821007	Construction	2
98	Schultz Lawn Care	78206	56173011	Administrative, Support & Waste Mgmt	2
99	SF Snow Plowing & Excavating	179403	23891006	Construction	1
100	Skyline Outdoors LLC	999977	99999004	Unclassified Establishments	NA
101	Smedmarks Inc	506319	42361047	Wholesale Trade	1
102	Stars Cabaret	864126	81341015	Other Services Except Public Admin	2
103	Stellar Blue Technologies	738959	51929010	Information	21
104	Stellar Blue Web Design LLC	737416	51821012	Information	6
105	Stor-It Neenah (Tullar Rd)	422501	49311002	Transportation & Warehousing	4
106	Tecc Security Systems Inc	738202	56162104	Administrative, Support & Waste Mgmt	12
107	The Market Place	738981	54135002	Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	6
108	Tia Maria Pizzas LLC	581208	72251117	Accommodation & Food Services	12
109	Tom's Concrete LLC	177105	23811001	Construction	5
110	Top Industries LLC	359903	33271002	Manufacturing	16
111	Town of Neenah	919904	92119001	Public Administration	4
112	Town of Neenah Fire Department	922404	92216003	Public Administration	30
113	Tuckaway Storage	422503	53113001	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	4
114	U-Haul Storage of Neenah	751303	53212016	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	2
115	U-Haul Storage of Neenah South	751303	53212016	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	2
116	United Plastics Fabricating	599963	45521968	Retail Trade	120
117	Valley Cats Inc	839999	81331909	Other Services Except Public Admin	2
118	Valley Diesel Injection	753807	81111110	Other Services Except Public Admin	6
119	Windy Willow Farm Saddlery	594113	45911055	Retail Trade	1
120	Wisconsin Cast Metals Association	861102	81391002	Other Services Except Public Admin	10
121	Wisconsin Paper Group Inc	539901	45521908	Retail Trade	51
122	WPG Shippers Association	421309	48423017	Transportation & Warehousing	20
123	Zarda Electric	173101	23821007	Construction	4

Source: ESRI Business Analyst / Data Axel, 2025

* Bolded lines indicate businesses with 20+ employees

Figure 3-5: Existing Businesses, Town of Neenah, 2025



Employees by Industry Type

Table 3-4 displays the number and percent of employed persons by industry group in the Town of Neenah as reported by the 2019-2013 ACS. The ACS information is a sample of the town and is subject to sampling variability. However, the survey provides the most recent data available and provides necessary background information.

Table 3-4: Employees by Industry Type, Town of Neenah, 2019-2023

Industry	Wisconsin (#)	Wisconsin (%)	Town of Neenah (#)	Town of Neenah (%)
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	3,018,918	100.0%	1,793	100.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	62,644	2.1%	31	1.7%
Construction	188,476	6.2%	108	6.0%
Manufacturing	544,544	18.0%	461	25.7%
Wholesale trade	74,745	2.5%	74	4.1%
Retail trade	331,673	11.0%	234	13.1%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	148,248	4.9%	23	1.3%
Information	43,417	1.4%	0	0.0%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	184,973	6.1%	231	12.9%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	274,289	9.1%	89	5.0%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	703,648	23.3%	412	23.0%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	227,255	7.5%	41	2.3%
Other services, except public administration	127,591	4.2%	34	1.9%
Public administration	107,415	3.6%	55	3.1%

Source: U.S. Census, 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Summary

In the 2019-2023 ACS time period, the greatest percentage of employment for the town was in the manufacturing sector (25.7%), which is nearly eight percentage points above the statewide figure. Educational, health and social services had the second largest percentage of employment (23.0%), also slightly higher than the State. Retail Trade came in third at 13.1% of the workforce, which was also slightly higher than the State. The Town of Neenah also surpasses the statewide percentages in several other industries, including: Wholesale Trade and in the Finance and Insurance sectors.

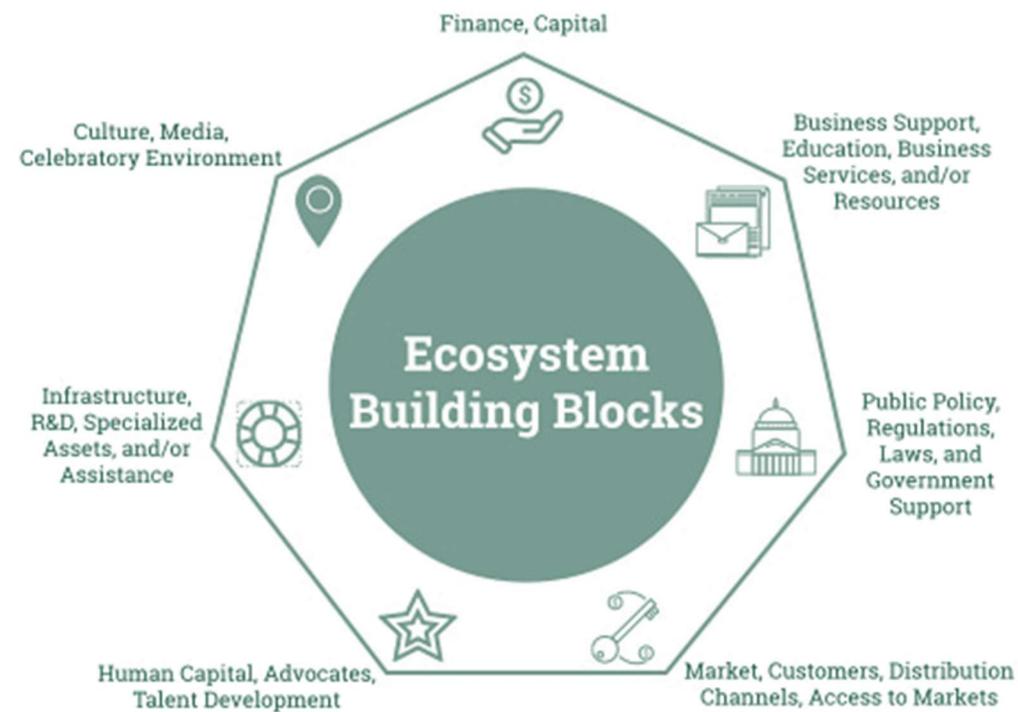
3.6 Desired Business and Industry

Based on local and regional studies, Manufacturing, Machining, Agricultural, and Food Processing types of industries would be the most successful in the town. Certain types of businesses, such as large grocery stores or shopping complexes, may be desired by residents, however such businesses would most likely not locate in the more rural areas of the Town of Neenah nor would they be successful. Most local residents are also very loyal to local business owners and establishments. Overall, the basic services and products that are needed by residents are adequately being supplied by current businesses. Desired improvements may include providing more retail options, larger facilities, lower prices, and more convenient locations.

Due to the rural nature of the Town of Neenah, desired businesses and industry should include light manufacturing as well as continued support for small retail providers and basic services providers throughout the town.

Rather than spending significant time and energy trying to attract these businesses, the town may wish to place more efforts into the local entrepreneurial ecosystem (Figure 3-6) in order to facilitate the growth of new businesses, some of which may ultimately operate within the town. Connecting local entrepreneurs to the resources which are available to support their efforts will be critical to advancing the local economy.

Figure 3-6: Entrepreneurial Ecosystem



3.7 Attraction of New Business and Industry

New business and industry attraction typically relies on a combination of key components designed to draw businesses to a community, county, or region. These include strong infrastructure such as transportation networks, utilities, and digital connectivity; a skilled and available workforce; and access to raw materials or supply chains.

Competitive advantages like favorable tax policies, financial incentives, and streamlined permitting processes also play a role. In addition, quality of life factors—such as housing, education, healthcare, and cultural amenities—help make a location more appealing to both companies and employees, ensuring long-term growth and retention (Fig. 3-7).

While the town does not spend significant time marketing the community for economic development, there are other entities who work on local and regional business and talent attraction, businesses support, and workforce development, including New North, Inc., Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce, Greater Oshkosh Economic Development Corporation, Winnebago County Industrial Development Board, and the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board. Additional information about these entities and other programs are contained in Appendix D.

Figure 3-7: Industry Site Selection Process



From a business attraction standpoint, the Town of Neenah has easy access to the state and interstate highway system, offers two sanitary districts which provide municipal wastewater collection services, as well as a natural gas supplier which are capable of providing their services to some commercially zoned properties in the town. Electric and telephone service is available throughout the town as well.

3.8 Sites for Business and Industrial Development

New industrial development usually occurs in urban areas to take advantage of utility and transportation services found there. Some fringe areas around traditional urban centers have recently seen development of open land for industrial uses due to the expansion of utilities and transportation networks and the desire for clean (“green field”) locations on which to build.

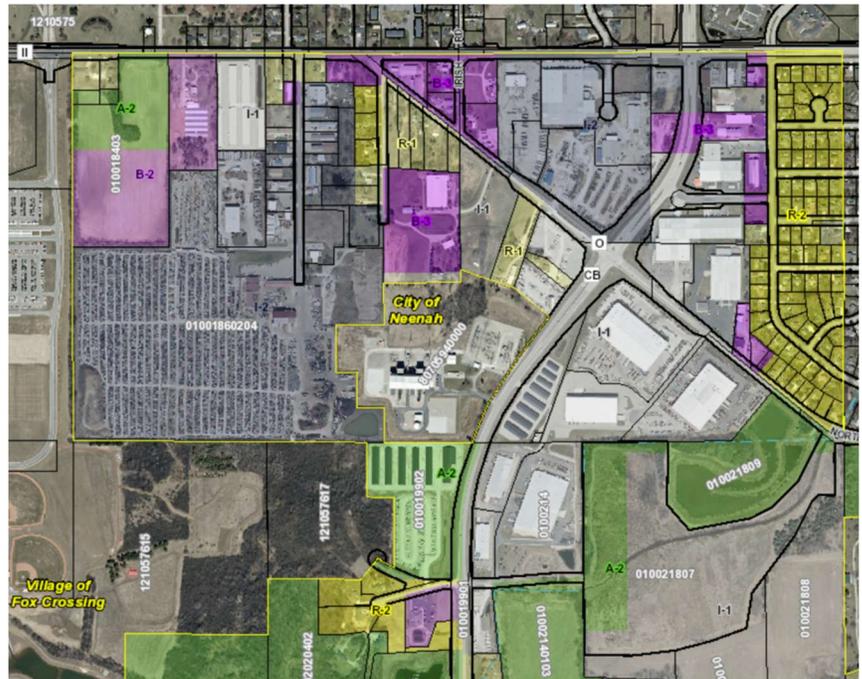
Industrial Parks

There are no formal industrial parks within the Town of Neenah but it does have a concentration of vibrant and growing businesses in the northwestern area of the town near the intersection of County Road CB and County Road II. Other business locations are scattered throughout the remainder of the town.

Available Buildings & Sites

The Town of Neenah does not have any land holdings available for commercial or industrial development, however private sector entities and landowners can promote available buildings and sites in one of several manners.

Figure 3-8: CTH CB/CTH II Business Zoning



Source: Winnebago County GIS / Grey = Industrial / Purple = Commercial

One important marketing tool is the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's on-line [Locate in Wisconsin](#) inventory of buildings and sites. No buildings are listed within the Town of Neenah, but two sites are shown as being available, including ones at: 1475 Green Valley Rd (35 acres) and 1850 Dixie Road (79 acres). Although being marketed for commercial or industrial uses, these two properties currently have A2 zoning which does not allow for such activities.

Brownfield Sites

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) encourage the clean-up and use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial and industrial use. The WDNR has created the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) which identifies environmentally contaminated sites for communities in Wisconsin. According to the BRRTS database, there no existing "open" sites with known environmental contamination within the Town of Neenah. There are a handful of "closed" sites within the town and these sites have completed all clean up requirements and have received a case closure letter from the DNR.

Redevelopment Sites

In addition to any potentially environmentally contaminated sites, vacant or under-utilized buildings and vacant lots represent opportunities for redevelopment. There may be some isolated commercial or industrial structures which could utilize rehabilitation; however, no significant concentrations exist to warrant larger scale redevelopment activities.

3.9 Economic Development Trends & Key Findings

A variety of trends and projections lay out the future for economic development within Town of Neenah. Some of the important items to consider when developing this plan's goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations include:

- The Town of Neenah has a well-educated population and workforce with over 42% having a 4-year (or more) college degree, and an additional 28.8% having at least some college or an associate's degree.
- The median household income for the Town of Neenah was \$111,482 which is significantly higher than the State's reported median income of \$75,670. The highest percentage (25.3.7%) of residents in the town had a household income between \$100,000 and \$149,000.
- Within the Town of Neenah, about 4.7% of households are below the poverty line according to the 2019-2023 ACS data.
- The town's total labor force was approximately 1,837 persons giving it a labor participation rate of approximately 64.6%. The Town of Neenah's unemployment rate at that time based on this data was 1.5%.
- Of the 1,705 workers in the Town of Neenah, nearly all (99%) left the town for employment in other nearby communities. Conversely, 1,323 workers who reside in other communities came into the Town of Neenah for employment.
- The composition of the labor force will change due to continued decreases in family size and the continued aging of the population, as well as due to increases in automation and technology in agriculture, production, processing, and manufacturing.
- Barriers to employment include transportation options, broadband accessibility, housing availability and cost, and child-care availability and cost.
- In 2025, the Town of Neenah had approximately 123 existing businesses with 1,781 employees. Of these businesses, only about 12 have 20 or more employees, with the largest having 800 employees (N&M Transfer).
- The greatest percentage of employment for the town was in the manufacturing sector (25.7%), which is nearly eight percentage points above the statewide figure. The Town of Neenah will likely continue to depend heavily on the manufacturing sector of the economy, but international and national economic trends will continue to affect those manufacturers.
- Educational, health and social services had the second largest percentage of employment (23.0%), also slightly higher than the State. This sector will continue to increase in importance as the population ages.
- No brownfield sites currently exist within the town, nor are there any significant areas which need redevelopment. There are a few available privately-owned sites within the Town of Neenah to accommodate new businesses or industries; however, no designated industrial parks exist.

3.10 Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Recommendations

Each element of the comprehensive plan includes a specific set of goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations that the town will use as a guide to future land use, development and preservation decisions over the next 20 years. Goals, objectives, policies and recommendations are defined as follows:

- **Goals** are broad, value-based statements that express general public priorities and preferences about how the town should address issues over the next 20 years and beyond. Goals address key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the town.
- **Objectives** are more specific than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to the fulfillment of the goal.
- **Policies** are general rules, principles, strategies or courses of action used to guide decision making and actions as necessary to accomplish goals and objectives. Policies are intended to be used by decision-makers on a regular basis.
- **Recommendations** are specific actions, projects or activities that are intended to achieve a particular plan goal, objective, or policy.

Economic Development Goals and Objectives

Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 requires a statement of overall goals and objectives to guide the future development and redevelopment of the town over a 20-year planning period. The following goals and objectives were developed by Town of Neenah with regard to the Economic Development element:

Goals

INSERT UPDATED GOALS

Objectives

INSERT UPDATED OBJECTIVES

Economic Development Policies and Recommendations

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses and actions to the goals and objectives. Policies and recommendations become the tools that the town should use to aid in making decisions. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the word “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the town should be prepared to complete within the 20-year planning period. The completion of these actions and projects are consistent with the policies, and therefore will help fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives. The following policies and recommendations have been developed by the Town of Neenah with regard to the Economic Development element and serve to support the goals and objectives:

Policies

INSERT UPDATED POLICIES

Recommendations

INSERT UPDATED RECOMMENDATIONS

3.11 Economic Development Programs

See Appendix D for a complete listing of programs which pertain to this element of the Comprehensive Plan.

3.12 Maps

None.

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