



Town of Rome
Nekoosa, WI 54457
www.romewi.gov

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

3:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Certify Posting of Meeting
4. Approve the Agenda
5. Citizen Comments – During the Citizen Comment period of the agenda the Comprehensive Plan Sub-Committee welcomes comments from any town resident, not a member of the Sub-Committee, on any item not on the agenda. Please know that pursuant to State law the Sub-Committee cannot engage in conversation with you but may ask questions. The Sub-Committee may refer the item to staff, a standing committee or a future agenda for discussion and action. Each person wishing to speak will have up to 3 minutes to speak. Speakers are asked to submit an orange card to the Sub-Committee secretary providing their name, address and topic for discussion.
 - a. The Sub-Committee will also take comment from the public on agenda items as called by the facilitator, but not during Citizen Comments. Please note that once the Sub-Committee begins discussion on an agenda item no further comment will be allowed from the public on that issue.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

6. Discussion and possible action – Approval of the August 20, 2026 meeting minutes
7. Discussion and possible action – Review of 2016 Comprehensive Plan
8. Discussion and possible action – Review updates of next chapters of the Comprehensive Plan

DATES AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/MEETINGS

9. Next agenda items
10. Next meeting date and time

ADJOURNMENT

“Speak Your Peace” Commitment – A reminder that the town has adopted the Nine Tools of Civility which commits the Sub-Committee Members and the Public to be mindful of how we treat each other at meetings. Notification of this meeting has been posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Laws of the State of Wisconsin. The Comprehensive Plan Sub-Committee may take action on any item on the agenda. It is possible that the members of and possibly a quorum of members of other governmental bodies of the municipality may be in attendance at the above-stated meeting to gather information; no action will be taken by any governmental body at the above-stated meeting other than the Comprehensive Plan Sub-Committee. Please note that, upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information or to request this service, contact Wendy Newson, Town Clerk, at 1156 Alpine Drive, Nekoosa, WI 54457, ph. 715-325-8046.

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strengthen our community and promote prosperity.*



Town of Rome
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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2026

3:00 PM

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lake at 3:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Committee members present: Mark Lake, Gary Schlosser and Cyndee Lewis

Committee members absent/excused: Jerry Wiessinger, Bruce Hoepfner

Also present: Zoning Administrator, Emily Arndt and Deputy Clerk/Treasurer, Taylor Owczynsky

3. Certify Posting of Meeting

Owczynsky certified that on, Friday, August 14, 2026, the Agenda for the Town of Rome Comprehensive Plan Sub-Committee meeting for Thursday, August 20, 2026 was posted at:

Posted at the Rome Town Hall 11:00 a.m.

Posted at Kwik Trip, LLC 4:05 p.m.

Posted at Nekoosa Port Edwards State Bank 1:35 p.m.

Emailed to the Wisconsin Rapids Tribune 1:09 p.m.

4. Approve the Agenda

Motion by Lewis/Schlosser to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

5. Citizen Comments – During the Citizen Comment period of the agenda the Comprehensive Plan Sub-Committee welcomes comments from any town resident, not a member of the Sub-Committee, on any item not on the agenda. Please know that pursuant to State law the Sub-Committee cannot engage in conversation with you but may ask questions. The Sub-Committee may refer the item to staff, a standing committee or a future agenda for discussion and action. Each person wishing to speak will have up to 3 minutes to speak. Speakers are asked to submit an orange card to the Sub-Committee secretary providing their name, address and topic for discussion.

- a. The Sub-Committee will also take comment from the public on agenda items as called by the facilitator, but not during Citizen Comments. Please note that once the Sub-Committee begins discussion on an agenda item no further comment will be allowed from the public on that issue.

No citizen comments received.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

6. Discussion and possible action – Approval of the July 23, 2026 and August 3, 2026 meeting minutes

Motion by Lewis/Schlosser to approve the meeting minutes from July 23 and August 3, 2026. Motion carried.

7. Discussion and possible action – Review of 2016 Comprehensive Plan

Discussion regarding the 2016 Comprehensive Plan and the planned updates.

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8. Discussion and possible action – Review updates of next chapters of the Comprehensive Plan

Discussion regarding the Comprehensive Plan proposed updates to Chapters 1 and 2.

DATES AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA/MEETINGS

9. Next agenda items

**Review of next chapters*

10. Next meeting date and time

September 17, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Lewis/Schlosser to adjourn at 3:35 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Taylor Owczynsky

Taylor Owczynsky
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

CHAPTER 3

Housing

Town of Rome Comprehensive Plan Amendment

WORKING DRAFT | SEPTEMBER 2026

*This chapter intentionally omits photographs and maps.
Graphics will be added during plan assembly.*

Policy review note: The Town-supplied goal, objective, and policy edits are preserved as tracked changes in Section 3.8.

3.1 Purpose and Planning Context

Housing shapes community character, household stability, the local workforce, tax base, transportation needs, and demand for public services. In Rome, housing policy must also respond to a distinctive mix of year-round residences, seasonal and recreational homes, short-term rentals, rural development patterns, lakes and other sensitive resources, and a rapidly aging permanent population.

The Town's objective is not simply to increase the number of units. It is to maintain safe and high-quality neighborhoods while expanding practical choices for residents at different ages, incomes, household sizes, and levels of mobility. New housing should be directed to suitable locations, make efficient use of existing roads and services, respect rural and natural character, and avoid transferring long-term infrastructure or environmental costs to the community.

Current Housing Issues

- A housing supply dominated by detached homes, with limited duplex, townhouse, apartment, accessible, and smaller-unit choices.
- A large seasonal-housing component that strengthens the recreation economy but creates different service, infrastructure, and neighborhood-management needs than year-round occupancy.
- An aging population and increased need for homes that support aging in place, universal design, reduced maintenance, and proximity to daily services.
- Workforce-housing needs for employees in tourism, hospitality, health care, construction, education, public service, and other local and regional sectors.
- Housing costs, insurance, utilities, taxes, maintenance, and transportation expenses that affect affordability beyond the purchase price or monthly rent.
- Continued oversight of short-term rentals so visitor accommodations remain compatible with residential neighborhoods and public-safety expectations.
- Protection of groundwater, surface water, habitat, and rural character where development relies on private wells and onsite wastewater systems.
- Rehabilitation, energy efficiency, weatherization, and resilience needs within the existing housing stock.

3.2 Housing Programs and Partnerships

Housing implementation is shared among property owners, builders, nonprofit organizations, lenders, Adams County, the State of Wisconsin, and federal agencies. The Town's principal role is to maintain an appropriate land-use and regulatory framework, coordinate infrastructure and services, share program information, and support eligible projects that advance adopted housing goals.

Table 3-1. Housing Resources Relevant to Rome

Resource	Potential Role
Wisconsin DOA – Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources	Administers federal and state housing, community-development, weatherization, and homelessness resources, including Wisconsin's Consolidated Plan programs.
WHEDA	Financing and tax-credit programs supporting homeownership, rental housing, workforce housing, preservation, and development.
Adams County	Local coordination for aging, disability, human services, housing rehabilitation, emergency assistance, and code-related needs.
USDA Rural Development	Eligible rural homeownership, repair, rental-housing, and community-facility financing.
Local and regional partners	Developers, lenders, employers, nonprofits, utilities, and service providers can help identify needs and deliver housing or assistance.

Program names, eligibility, funding, and application cycles change. The Town should verify current program requirements when implementing this chapter.

3.3 Housing Supply and Occupancy

The 2020–2024 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates 3,223 housing units in Rome. About 51.3% are occupied and 46.6% are classified as vacant for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. This is a defining housing-market condition: Rome has substantially more housing relative to its year-round household count than a typical Wisconsin community.

Table 3-2. Housing Units, Occupancy, and Seasonal Use, 2020–2024

Geography	Total units	Occupied	Occupied %	Seasonal units	Seasonal %
Rome	3,223	1,655	51.3%	1,502	46.6%
Big Flats	953	570	59.8%	336	35.3%
Leola	209	135	64.6%	72	34.4%
Monroe	595	220	37.0%	359	60.3%
Hancock	427	259	60.7%	132	30.9%
Plainfield	288	241	83.7%	40	13.9%
Port Edwards	525	461	87.8%	30	5.7%
Saratoga	2,431	2,229	91.7%	115	4.7%
Adams County	17,008	9,517	56.0%	6,519	38.3%
Wisconsin	2,778,572	2,479,480	89.2%	172,842	6.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 ACS 5-year estimates, Tables B25001, B25002, and B25004. “Seasonal” means vacant for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Estimates for small towns may have substantial margins of error.

Planning implication. Seasonal housing is an economic asset and an important part of Rome’s identity, but it should not be assumed to meet the needs of year-round workers, older adults, or households seeking rental choices. The Town should monitor both housing production and conversion between seasonal, short-term-rental, and year-round use.

3.4 Housing Type and Tenure

Rome’s housing supply remains predominantly single-unit housing. The ACS estimates that 89.5% of units are in one-unit structures, while only 3.1% are in structures containing two to 19 units. Approximately 7.4% are mobile homes or other nontraditional units. The limited supply of smaller attached and multifamily options can constrain choices for workers, younger households, and older residents who want to remain in Rome with less property maintenance.

Table 3-3. Housing Units by Structure Type, 2020–2024

Geography	1-unit	2–19 units	20+ units	Mobile/other
Rome	89.5%	3.1%	0.0%	7.4%
Big Flats	60.5%	0.5%	0.0%	38.9%
Leola	61.7%	0.0%	0.0%	38.3%
Monroe	86.6%	1.2%	0.0%	12.3%
Hancock	97.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
Plainfield	83.0%	0.0%	0.0%	17.0%
Port Edwards	88.8%	0.2%	0.0%	11.0%
Saratoga	86.8%	0.5%	0.0%	12.8%
Adams County	75.8%	5.3%	0.6%	18.3%
Wisconsin	70.5%	17.9%	8.4%	3.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 ACS 5-year estimates, Table B25024. One-unit includes detached and attached units; mobile/other includes mobile homes, boats, RVs, and vans.

Table 3-4. Tenure of Occupied Housing Units, 2020–2024

Geography	Occupied	Owner	Owner %	Renter	Renter %
Rome	1,655	1,576	95.2%	79	4.8%
Big Flats	570	527	92.5%	43	7.5%
Leola	135	123	91.1%	12	8.9%
Monroe	220	200	90.9%	20	9.1%
Hancock	259	239	92.3%	20	7.7%
Plainfield	241	220	91.3%	21	8.7%
Port Edwards	461	383	83.1%	78	16.9%
Saratoga	2,229	2,172	97.4%	57	2.6%
Adams County	9,517	8,207	86.2%	1,310	13.8%
Wisconsin	2,479,480	1,682,214	67.8%	797,266	32.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 ACS 5-year estimates, Table B25003. Rome’s rental estimate is based on a small sample and should be interpreted with caution.

3.5 Housing Value, Rent, and Affordability

The estimated median value of owner-occupied housing in Rome is \$293,500, compared with \$200,800 in Adams County and \$266,500 statewide. Estimated median gross rent is \$1,453; however, Rome’s small renter sample makes year-to-year comparisons unreliable. Local affordability should be evaluated using multiple measures and direct market evidence, not a single ACS estimate.

Table 3-5. Housing Costs and Cost Burden, 2020–2024

Geography	Median value	Median rent	Owners burdened	Renters burdened
Rome	\$293,500	\$1,453	24.1%	2.4%
Big Flats	\$100,400	\$921	26.2%	31.4%
Leola	\$159,700	\$825	17.5%	37.5%
Monroe	\$210,300	\$850	37.2%	88.9%
Hancock	\$244,500	\$673	36.0%	20.0%
Plainfield	\$176,800	\$686	13.5%	13.3%
Port Edwards	\$167,900	\$767	16.3%	52.0%
Saratoga	\$175,600	\$1,013	12.7%	47.4%
Adams County	\$200,800	\$828	25.1%	39.0%
Wisconsin	\$266,500	\$1,087	18.6%	43.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 ACS 5-year estimates, Tables B25077, B25064, B25091, and B25070. “Burdened” means 30% or more of household income spent on selected owner costs or gross rent; cases where burden was not computed are excluded. Small-sample figures—especially Rome renter burden—should not be treated as precise.

Affordability includes more than mortgage payments or rent. In a rural recreation community, transportation, property insurance, energy, accessibility modifications, well and septic maintenance, association fees, and property taxes can materially affect whether a home remains attainable. Workforce-housing strategies should therefore consider both unit cost and location efficiency.

3.6 Existing Stock, Rehabilitation, and Resilience

An estimated 37.4% of Rome’s housing units were built before 1980. Age alone does not indicate poor condition, but older units are more likely to need reinvestment in roofs, foundations, electrical and plumbing systems, accessibility, insulation, heating and cooling, wells, and onsite wastewater systems.

Table 3-6. Housing Stock Built Before 1980, 2020–2024

Geography	Total units	Built before 1980	Share
Rome	3,223	1,206	37.4%
Big Flats	953	481	50.5%
Leola	209	98	46.9%
Monroe	595	211	35.5%
Hancock	427	256	60.0%
Plainfield	288	197	68.4%
Port Edwards	525	265	50.5%
Saratoga	2,431	1,407	57.9%
Adams County	17,008	7,521	44.2%
Wisconsin	2,778,572	1,583,443	57.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 ACS 5-year estimates, Table B25034. ACS year-built data are survey estimates, not parcel-level condition assessments.

- Connect owners with rehabilitation, accessibility, lead-safe, weatherization, energy-efficiency, and emergency-repair resources.
- Encourage durable construction, efficient building envelopes, heat-pump and renewable-energy readiness, and backup-power planning where appropriate.
- Account for heavier rainfall, extreme heat, drought, wildfire smoke, and power outages in site planning and building design.
- Coordinate housing rehabilitation with private-well testing, septic-system maintenance, stormwater management, and shoreland protection.
- Support adaptive reuse or conversion only where structures can safely meet applicable building, zoning, access, wastewater, and fire-protection requirements.

3.7 Housing Needs and Opportunities

Housing Choice and Aging in Place

Rome’s older population increases the need for single-level living, visitable and accessible homes, smaller units, low-maintenance options, and housing near services and social connections. Accessory dwelling units, cottages, duplexes, townhomes, senior-oriented housing, and appropriately scaled multifamily development can broaden choice when located and designed to fit their surroundings.

Workforce and Year-Round Housing

A healthy local economy depends on workers being able to live within a reasonable distance of employment. The Town should allow practical year-round housing types in locations with suitable access and services, collaborate with employers and developers, and evaluate state financing tools that can close infrastructure or project-feasibility gaps.

Seasonal Housing and Short-Term Rentals

Seasonal and visitor accommodations contribute to Rome’s identity and economy. At the same time, short-term rentals can affect parking, noise, waste collection, emergency response, septic loading, and neighborhood expectations. The Town should maintain clear standards, reliable registration and contact information, proportionate enforcement, and periodic program evaluation using complaint and compliance data.

Manufactured and Modular Housing

Manufactured and modular homes can provide high-quality and attainable housing. Regulations should use current legal definitions, distinguish construction methods from land-use impacts, require appropriate foundations and site improvements where authorized, and apply design and maintenance standards consistently and lawfully.

Location and Environmental Capacity

Housing should be directed toward areas that can safely support the proposed density. Review should consider road access, emergency response, broadband, drainage, groundwater and surface-water protection, soil suitability, onsite wastewater capacity, wildfire exposure, habitat, and compatibility with planned land uses. Conservation design and clustered development can preserve meaningful open space when density and infrastructure conditions support them.

3.8 Goals, Objectives, and Policies — Review Redline

The following section incorporates the Town-supplied edits while retaining them as Word tracked changes. Insertions and deletions are review items and should be accepted, rejected, or further revised through the plan-amendment process.

Goal: ~~To encourage a high quality living environment in all neighborhoods and to assure an adequate supply of decent, safe, affordable, and sanitary housing.~~To encourage a high-quality living environment in all neighborhoods and to assure an adequate supply of quality, safe, affordable, and sanitary housing.

Objective 1 — Efficient and Compatible Development

Encourage additional housing first in areas where housing already exists, while maintaining appropriate densities and making efficient use of Town infrastructure.

Policy 1. Where denser housing is proposed near surface-water resources or other environmentally sensitive areas, evaluate whether community, shared, or municipal-type water, wastewater, and stormwater systems are necessary and feasible.

Policy 2. Administer zoning and land-division regulations to promote compatible land-use patterns and consider both existing conditions and anticipated development.

Policy 3. Encourage larger lot sizes in rural areas.

Objective 2 — Housing for Growth, Aging, and Workforce Needs

Expand housing opportunities to meet year-round and seasonal needs and the needs of an aging population.

Policy 1. Use the zoning ordinance, zoning map, land-division regulations, and other tools to maintain sufficient suitable sites for new housing.

Policy 2. Maintain locations and standards for varied senior-housing and aging-in-place options.

Policy 3. Use the Future Land Use Map to guide the location and intensity of residential development.

Policy 4. Encourage accessible housing designs and options for senior residents and people with disabilities, including choices that allow residents to remain in Rome as household size, income, or mobility changes.

Policy 5. Promote workforce-housing options that allow middle-income households to live in the Town or within a reasonable distance of employment.

Objective 3 — Range of Housing Choices

Encourage a range of housing types, designs, tenure options, and costs, including detached homes, manufactured homes, accessory units, duplexes, townhomes, senior housing, and appropriately located multifamily units.

Policy 1. Maintain land-use controls that allow a range of housing choices while applying compatible siting, dimensional, design, access, and service standards.

Policy 2. Use current statutory definitions and establish lawful siting and design standards for manufactured and modular housing.

Policy 3. Encourage rental housing, including duplexes and other multifamily types, in locations where its scale, design, access, and operation are compatible with neighboring uses.

Policy 4. Maintain zoning districts and standards that allow appropriately scaled multifamily housing, consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

Policy 5. Maintain and periodically evaluate standards for short-term rentals to protect neighborhood compatibility, public health, and safety.

Objective 4 — Natural Resources and Resilience

Preserve environmentally sensitive resources that define Rome and incorporate resilience into housing development.

Policy 1. Use land-use controls and development review to protect water resources, shorelands, wetlands, flood-prone areas, habitat, and other sensitive features.

Policy 2. Use conservation and subdivision design to protect meaningful open space, parks, drainageways, and water resources.

Policy 3. Encourage environmental sustainability and resilience as core elements of housing development, protecting the environment and Rome's rural and natural character while allowing appropriately located housing.

Objective 5 — Housing Rehabilitation

Encourage maintenance and rehabilitation of substandard or aging homes to provide safe living conditions and prevent deterioration and blight.

Policy 1. Participate, when feasible, in state and county programs such as Community Development Block Grant and HOME programs that preserve and rehabilitate housing.

Policy 2. Connect property owners with available housing assistance, accessibility, weatherization, energy-efficiency, home-improvement, and rehabilitation programs.

Objective 6 — Neighborhood Compatibility

Locate and design residential development to minimize conflicts with incompatible land uses.

Policy 1. Maintain zoning standards and apply the Future Land Use Map to provide appropriate separation or transition between incompatible uses.

Policy 2. Minimize conflicts between residential and nonresidential uses through site planning, setbacks, landscaping, screening, access management, and other context-appropriate design measures.

Objective 7 — Balanced Distribution of Housing

Objective 7: Discourage the concentration of rental or multi-family housing in any one part of the community. Encourage rental and multifamily housing to be distributed among suitable locations and integrated at a scale and design compatible with surrounding development.

Policy 1. Maintain zoning districts and standards that allow varied multifamily housing options in locations consistent with the Future Land Use Map, infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints, and neighborhood compatibility.

3.9 Implementation and Monitoring

Table 3-7. Priority Housing Actions

Action	Lead / Partners	Timing	Measure
Complete a housing conditions and needs review using parcel, permit, market, employer, and resident input.	Town; Adams County; regional partners	1–3 years	Baseline completed; priority gaps identified
Review zoning and land-division standards for accessory units, smaller homes, duplexes, manufactured/modular homes, senior housing, and appropriately scaled multifamily housing.	Town	1–3 years	Code amendments considered
Maintain and evaluate short-term-rental standards and enforcement.	Town	Annual	Registrations, complaints, and compliance trends
Create a current housing-resource referral page and partner contact list.	Town; County; WHEDA; USDA	Near term; annual update	Resource page maintained
Evaluate infrastructure and environmental capacity in areas planned for greater housing intensity.	Town; utilities; County; consultants	Ongoing	Capacity findings used in approvals and capital planning
Track housing production and change by type and use.	Town	Annual	Permits, demolitions, conversions, tenure/occupancy indicators
Promote rehabilitation, accessibility, weatherization, and resilience investments.	Town; County; program partners	Ongoing	Referrals, grants/loans, completed projects when data are available

Timing is measured from plan adoption. Measures are intended for periodic plan review and may be refined as data systems improve.

Data Notes and Sources

The comparative geography consists of Rome and seven nearby towns spanning Adams, Waushara, and Wood Counties: Big Flats, Leola, Monroe, Hancock, Plainfield, Port Edwards, and Saratoga. Town geographies—not same-named villages or cities—are used.

Housing estimates are from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, released January 2026. ACS figures are survey estimates and can fluctuate, particularly for small geographies and small populations such as renters. Before adoption, staff should review margins of error and supplement ACS data with building permits, assessor records, short-term-rental registrations, market listings, and local program information.

Policy and program context: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources; Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority; U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development; Adams County; and applicable Town ordinances. Program availability and legal requirements should be verified at implementation.

CHAPTER 4

Transportation

Town of Rome Comprehensive Plan Amendment

WORKING DRAFT | SEPTEMBER 2026

*This chapter intentionally omits photographs and maps.
Graphics will be added during plan assembly.*

Policy review note: The Town-supplied edits are preserved as tracked changes in Section 4.9.

4.1 Purpose and Planning Context

Transportation connects Rome’s neighborhoods, lakes, businesses, recreation destinations, public facilities, and regional employment centers. It also shapes land-use patterns, emergency response, public costs, and access to daily needs. The Town’s system must serve year-round residents, seasonal residents, visitors, workers, freight, farm and maintenance equipment, pedestrians, bicyclists, people with disabilities, and recreational users.

This element emphasizes safety, preservation of existing assets, context-sensitive design, access management, reliable regional connections, and transportation choices appropriate to a rural and recreation-oriented community. Capacity improvements should be targeted to demonstrated needs and coordinated with land use, environmental constraints, and long-term maintenance obligations.

Current Transportation Issues

- Safety and access management along STH 13 and key county and local-road intersections, especially during summer, weekends, holidays, and major events.
- Sustainable funding and lifecycle management for 151 miles of Town-maintained roads, culverts, shoulders, signs, and related assets.
- Safe walking and bicycling connections among Rome Town Center, neighborhoods, lakes, parks, schools, businesses, and regional trails.
- Mobility for older adults, people with disabilities, youth, and households that cannot or choose not to drive.
- Freight, delivery, agricultural, construction, emergency, and recreational-vehicle movements on roads with varied design and surface conditions.
- Stormwater, flooding, freeze-thaw cycles, extreme heat, wildfire response, and other resilience considerations affecting roads and evacuation routes.
- Electric-vehicle charging, broadband-enabled remote work, micromobility, and other changing travel patterns.
- Protection of rural character and natural resources when roads, trails, or parking facilities are constructed or improved.

4.2 Transportation Planning Framework

The 2016 chapter relied on Corridors 2020 and a 2003 regional comprehensive plan. Current implementation should instead be coordinated with WisDOT’s Connect 2050 family of plans, current statewide active-transportation, highway-safety, freight, rail, airport, and asset-management plans, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission work, Adams County plans, and the Town’s capital and road-improvement programming.

Table 4-1. Current Transportation Planning Relationships

Plan or Program	Relevance to Rome
Town road and capital programs	PASER-informed pavement management, road construction and resurfacing, culverts, drainage, winter operations, and budgeting.
WisDOT Connect 2050 and modal plans	Long-range state policy for highways, active transportation, freight, rail, airports, safety, and asset management.
WisDOT TCMAP and crash data	Current and historical AADT, crash patterns, and engineering data for corridor and intersection decisions.
Adams County transportation planning	County highways, specialized transportation, emergency coordination, trails, and intergovernmental projects.
NCWRPC planning and assistance	Regional coordination, bicycle and pedestrian planning, funding assistance, and technical support.
Land-use and development review	Street connectivity, access, right-of-way, traffic studies, multimodal facilities, and fair-share improvements.

Plans and program requirements change. The Town should use the current adopted or published version at the time of implementation.

4.3 Road Network and Functional Roles

The Town Public Works and Highway Department reports maintaining 151 miles of scenic Town roads. STH 13 is the principal north-south corridor and connects Rome with Wisconsin Rapids to the north and USH 82 and Wisconsin Dells to the south. County highways D, Z, and O provide important collector connections. Local roads primarily provide property access and neighborhood circulation.

Table 4-2. Roadway Roles and Management Priorities

Facility Type	Key Rome Facilities	Primary Planning Emphasis
State highway	STH 13	Regional mobility, corridor safety, access management, intersection operations, freight, and coordination with WisDOT.
County highways	CTH D / Alpine Drive, CTH Z, CTH O	Intercommunity movement, seasonal traffic, freight and service access, shoulder and intersection safety, County coordination.
Town collectors	Apache Avenue, Archer Avenue, 8th Avenue, 14th and 15th Avenues, Kings Way / Leisure Lane and other designated collectors	Connections between neighborhoods and major corridors; pavement, shoulders, drainage, speed management, and multimodal needs.
Local roads	Neighborhood and rural roads	Property access, low-speed safety, maintenance, emergency access, drainage, and preservation of context.

Functional classifications and mileage should be reconciled with the current WisDOT/WISLR and Town GIS inventory when the transportation map is updated.

4.4 Traffic Conditions and Safety

WisDOT reports annual average daily traffic (AADT) based on continuous or short-duration counts adjusted for typical annual conditions. Because short-duration sites may be counted on multi-year cycles, the count year is essential. AADT also smooths seasonal peaks; summer weekends, holiday periods, events, and incident conditions can produce materially different operations in Rome.

Table 4-3. Selected Recent WisDOT Traffic Counts in Rome

Count location	Year	AADT
STH 13 Btwn Kings Way & Queens Way Rome Tnshp	2024	6,400
CTH D 0.25 Mi East Of STH 13 Rome Tnshp	2021	2,000
Alpine Rd West Of STH 13 Rome Tnshp	2021	1,400
Apache Ave West Of STH 13 Rome Tnshp	2021	1,200
CTH Z South Of Alpine Dr Rome Tnshp	2021	1,100
CTH Z North Of Alpine Dr Rome Tnshp	2021	960
King'S Way East Of STH 13 Rome Tnshp	2021	500
Apache Ave East Of STH 13 Rome Tnshp	2021	690
CTH D West Of 8Th Ave Rome Tnshp	2021	550
8Th Ave South Of CTH D Rome Tnshp	2021	440
Archer Dr East Of STH 13 Rome Tnshp	2021	180

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation TCMAP / Traffic Counts dataset, accessed September 2026. AADT is annual average daily traffic. These are selected points, not a complete traffic inventory.

The Town should evaluate safety using crash type and severity, speeds, sight distance, turning movements, pedestrian and bicycle exposure, seasonal patterns, and emergency-response experience—not traffic volume alone. A Safe System approach places priority on preventing fatal and serious-injury crashes and recognizes that roadway design, operations, vehicles, speeds, and user behavior share responsibility for safety outcomes.

4.5 Travel Patterns and Access

The 2020–2024 ACS estimates 1,088 Rome workers age 16 and older. Driving remains the primary commute mode, but remote work is now a substantial part of the local travel picture. About 22.7% of Rome workers work from home, compared with 9.8% in Adams County and 13.1% statewide. Among workers who commute away from home, 36.9% have a travel time of at least 30 minutes.

Table 4-4. Journey-to-Work and Vehicle Access, 2020–2024

Geography	Workers	Drive alone	Carpool	Work home	30+ min.*	No vehicle**
Rome	1,088	64.5%	10.5%	22.7%	36.9%	1.1%
Adams County	8,329	78.7%	8.9%	9.8%	44.3%	4.2%
Wisconsin	2,984,569	74.4%	7.3%	13.1%	27.4%	6.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 ACS 5-year estimates, Tables B08301, B08303, and B08201. *Among workers who do not work at home. **Share of households. Small-geography estimates may have substantial margins of error.

Remote work can reduce some commute trips while increasing the importance of reliable broadband and flexible local services. It does not eliminate seasonal traffic, service and delivery trips, school travel, medical trips, or access needs for residents without a vehicle.

4.6 Walking, Bicycling, and Recreational Mobility

Active transportation in Rome serves recreation, health, tourism, and practical local trips. A connected system should be comfortable for people of different ages and abilities and should link Rome Town Center, residential areas, parks, businesses, lakes, and regional facilities. Facility type should respond to speed, traffic volume, available right-of-way, drainage, winter maintenance, and expected users.

- Continue the Link-the-Lakes concept and identify practical phased connections, including safe crossings of STH 13.
- Use sidewalks, shared-use paths, shoulders, low-speed shared streets, crossings, lighting, wayfinding, and bicycle parking where each is contextually appropriate.
- In Rome Town Center, design for short walking trips, accessibility, safe crossings, traffic calming, and year-round maintenance.
- Coordinate trail and roadway decisions with ATV/UTV and snowmobile systems so crossings, signage, speeds, and user expectations are clear.
- Apply accessibility standards and universal-design principles to pedestrian routes, parking, curb ramps, crossings, and public destinations.

4.7 Transit, Specialized Transportation, and Regional Connections

Rome has no fixed-route local transit. Adams County Aging and Disability Services maintains a specialized transportation program and a current Section 85.21 application, making County coordination especially important as Rome's population ages. Private transportation, volunteer-driver, demand-response, shared-ride, and regional shuttle options may complement County service when feasible.

Table 4-5. Transportation Services and Regional Connections

Mode	Current Context / Planning Direction
Specialized transportation	Coordinate with Adams County Aging and Disability Services; publicize reservation, eligibility, accessibility, and reasonable-modification information.
Intercity bus	Nearest practical connections may change; periodically verify service in Stevens Point, Wisconsin Rapids, and other regional hubs.
Passenger rail	Amtrak service is available at Portage, Wisconsin Dells, and Tomah, including the Chicago–Twin Cities corridor.
Freight rail	No rail line serves Rome directly; regional freight connections are available in the Wisconsin Rapids area.
Aviation	General aviation is available at Alexander Field and Adams County Legion Field; Central Wisconsin Airport provides scheduled commercial service.
Water transportation	No commercial water-transportation facilities; lakes primarily support recreation.

Schedules, operators, eligibility, and routes change. Verify current service before publishing public information or making project decisions.

4.8 Asset Management, Technology, and Resilience

Preserving the existing network is generally the Town's highest-value transportation investment. PASER ratings should inform—but not solely determine—capital priorities. Drainage, culvert condition, safety history, traffic and truck loading, emergency access, lifecycle cost, utility work, and opportunities to coordinate bicycle or pedestrian improvements should also be considered.

Table 4-6. Town Road Improvement Program, 2025–2028

Program Year	Published Examples
2025	Kingswood Trail; Apache Avenue; Highland Place; 15th Avenue; Badger Avenue; Long Bow, Moat, and Moor Courts; routine and gravel-road maintenance.
2026	Oxford Court; East Queens Way; Sumac Trail; Campfire Road; Sandy Arbor Road; Valley Trail; Jack Pine Arbor Road; Kingswood-area streets; 9th Avenue; Penhurst Way and Somerset Court; fog sealing and routine maintenance.
2027	13th Drive; Manchester Court; Aspen Avenue; Shimmering Waters Trail; Blue Boar and Fosse Courts; Sterling roads; Regal Forest Trail; 14th and 9th Avenues; crack filling/chip sealing and routine maintenance.
2028	Apache Circle; crack filling/chip sealing on East Court, Lilac Trail, Squire Court, and 9th Drive; routine and gravel-road maintenance.

Source: Town of Rome Public Works & Roads, Road Improvement Plan 2025–2028, accessed September 2026. Scope, timing, and funding may change through annual budgeting and field conditions.

- Maintain an annually updated capital improvement program supported by consistent condition ratings and project-cost estimates.
- Coordinate resurfacing with culvert, drainage, utility, broadband, crossing, shoulder, and safety work to avoid repeated disturbance.
- Use life-cycle cost, risk, and level-of-service considerations when selecting treatment type and timing.
- Plan for intense rainfall, freeze-thaw damage, extreme heat, wildfire evacuation, debris, power loss, and emergency detours.
- Support electric-vehicle charging at suitable public and private destinations without obligating the Town to a technology-specific buildout.
- Use traffic data, speed studies, crash analysis, asset inventories, and public-service data while protecting privacy and cybersecurity.

4.9 Goals, Objectives, and Policies — Review Redline

This section incorporates the Town-supplied markup as tracked changes. Insertions and deletions remain review items and should be accepted, rejected, or further revised through the amendment process. Numbering has been normalized to reflect the proposed deletion of former Objective 2.

Goal 1 — Safe, Integrated, and Cost-Effective Transportation

Develop and maintain a well-integrated and cost-effective transportation system that safely and efficiently moves people and goods to, from, and within Rome.

Objective 1 — Arterial and Collector Safety

Improve safety on arterial and collector routes through access management, traffic controls, engineering, enforcement, and coordinated review.

Policy 1. Work with WisDOT and Adams County to evaluate congestion and hazards on STH 13 and other arterials and to implement appropriate access, traffic-control, engineering, and speed-management strategies.

Policy 2. ~~Work with Adams County and WisDOT to help reduce traffic congestion and hazards and improve safety along arterial and collector routes within the Town. Conduct biennial reviews of Town-road condition and safety, including access at high-volume locations, and coordinate with Adams County and WisDOT on congestion reduction, crash prevention, and corridor safety.~~

Former Objective 2 and its policies: ~~Improve the efficiency of the Town's road system by establishing improvement programs that ensure roads can handle existing and expected traffic volumes. Provide for new development areas by planning street and road design, connection, and extension; coordinate safety, access, and circulation with WisDOT and Adams County.~~

Objective 2 — Roads Serving Growth Areas

Objective 2: ~~Ensure that adequate roads are provided within growing portions of the Town to serve existing and expected vehicle traffic. Ensure that adequate roads serve existing and expected traffic in growth areas. Accept road dedications only for roads built to the standards and requirements of the Town road ordinance.~~

Policy 1. Consider an official map ordinance to reserve future street and nonmotorized transportation corridors where a demonstrated public need exists.

Policy 2. Plan the design, connection, and extension of streets in development areas identified by the Future Land Use Map.

Policy 3. Use context-sensitive street and highway design that respects natural features and complements surrounding land uses.

Objective 3 — Seasonal and Through-Traffic Movement

Improve local and through-traffic movement, particularly on routes heavily traveled during summer and peak visitor periods.

Policy 1. ~~Establish zoning requirements that regulate setbacks, landscaping, and signage along STH 13 and CTH D/Alpine Drive. Establish context-appropriate setback, landscaping, access, and signage standards within the Gateway District along STH 13 and CTH D/Alpine Drive.~~

Former Policy 2. ~~Work with WisDOT and Adams County on safety, access, and traffic circulation issues on STH 13, CTH D, Alpine Drive, and 14th and 15th Avenues.~~

Objective 4 — Access, Connectivity, and Growth-Area Safety

Objective 4: ~~Ensure appropriate access points and road connectivity through coordination with the state and county and through Town zoning and land division. Improve traffic flow and safety in growth areas through roadway, traffic control, and engineering improvements. Coordinate with WisDOT, Adams County, and the Town's zoning and land-division processes to locate access points appropriately, maintain network connectivity, and provide needed roadway, traffic-control, and engineering improvements in growth areas.~~

Policy 1. Work with WisDOT, Adams County, surrounding towns, developers, and owners on needed improvements. Give special attention to residential speeds and cross-traffic volumes.

Policy 2. Design the transportation system to support efficient connections between communities and major traffic generators.

Policy 3. Coordinate with the Rome Police Department, Adams County Sheriff's Office, and Wisconsin State Patrol to identify enforcement concerns and candidate safety improvements for future capital projects.

Objective 5 — Road Condition and Capacity

Objective 5: ~~Ensure that Town roads can handle existing and expected traffic by continuing to assess and improve roads and participating in maintenance and future needs assessments. Ensure Town roads can safely handle existing and expected traffic through active maintenance, recurring condition and safety assessment, capital planning, and evaluation of future transportation-service needs.~~

Policy 1. ~~Use PASER annually to assess pavement condition and future improvement needs. Use PASER at least biennially, supplemented by safety, drainage, loading, and lifecycle considerations, to assess pavement and improvement needs.~~

Policy 2. Develop and implement an annual capital improvement program for the road network and other transportation needs.

Policy 3. Pursue applicable state and federal transportation and community-development funding, recognizing that program names and eligibility change.

Policy 4. Plan street and road design, connection, and extension for development areas identified by the Future Land Use Map.

Policy 5. Coordinate with WisDOT and Adams County on safety, access, and circulation on STH 13, CTH D, Alpine Drive, Apache Avenue, Archer Avenue, and 14th and 15th Avenues.

Goal 2 — Mobility for All Residents

Goal 2: ~~Provide an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens. Provide an integrated, efficient, accessible, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety and meets the needs of all residents, including people with disabilities and people who do not drive.~~

Objective 6 — Specialized and Shared Transportation

Encourage additional transportation services for older adults, people with disabilities, and other residents with limited mobility.

Policy 1. Work with Adams County and other organizations on specialized transportation, private services, volunteer-driver programs, demand-response options, and potential regional shuttle service.

Goal 3 — Active Transportation and Connected Neighborhoods

Encourage neighborhood and corridor designs that support a range of transportation choices, with particular attention to walking, bicycling, accessibility, and other nonmotorized travel.

Objective 7 — Nonmotorized Transportation

Expand safe pedestrian and bicycle connections among parks, commercial areas, neighborhoods, natural areas, and the countywide network.

Policy 1. Consider an official map ordinance reserving future nonmotorized corridors where needed.

Policy 2. Continue phased development of a multiuse trail system serving the Tri-Lakes area.

Policy 3. ~~Collaborate with Adams County, neighboring municipalities, and the regional planning commission to fund, design, and construct interconnected bicycle and pedestrian routes. Work with WisDOT to create an underpass north of Apache Avenue under STH 13. Collaborate with Adams County, neighboring municipalities, NCWRPC, and WisDOT to fund, design, and construct interconnected bicycle and pedestrian routes and a safe STH 13 crossing consistent with engineering, environmental, and funding feasibility.~~

Policy 4. ~~Encourage pedestrian-friendly development and continue the Link the Lakes tunnel under STH 13. Require or encourage pedestrian-friendly site design appropriate to project context, and continue development of the Link-the-Lakes connection across STH 13.~~

Policy 5. Maintain a safe, accessible pedestrian environment in Rome Town Center.

Former Policy 6: ~~Apply for nonmotorized transportation funding through WisDOT Transportation Alternatives, Wisconsin DNR Stewardship, and federal programs. Pursue applicable state, federal, regional, and private funding for active-transportation planning and projects.~~

Former Objective 9 and Policy 1: ~~Avoid transportation development that would negatively affect natural resources, and require street and highway design compatible with natural features and surrounding uses.~~

4.10 Implementation and Monitoring

Table 4-7. Priority Transportation Actions

Action	Lead / Partners	Timing	Measure
Update the transportation map and reconcile road ownership, functional classification, mileage, bridges, culverts, trails, and planned facilities.	Town; WisDOT; Adams County; NCWRPC	1–2 years	Current GIS inventory adopted
Complete recurring condition and safety reviews; integrate findings into the capital program.	Town; law enforcement; County	Biennial / annual	PASER, safety priorities, funded projects
Evaluate priority intersections and corridors using current counts, speeds, crashes, turning movements, and seasonal conditions.	Town; WisDOT; County	1–3 years	Studies and improvements completed
Advance a phased Link-the-Lakes / active-transportation network and safe STH 13 crossing strategy.	Town; WisDOT; County; NCWRPC	1–5 years	Feasibility, design, grants, segments built
Coordinate and publicize mobility options for older adults and people with disabilities.	Town; Adams County; providers	Annual	Current information; use and unmet needs
Maintain access-management and connectivity standards for development review.	Town; WisDOT; County	Ongoing	Access permits, connections, fair-share improvements
Integrate drainage, climate resilience, emergency access, EV readiness, and multimodal opportunities into capital projects.	Town; utilities; emergency services	Ongoing	Project checklists and coordinated improvements

Timing begins at plan adoption. Measures may be refined as data systems and partnerships develop.

Data Notes and Sources

Traffic counts are from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation TCMAP / Traffic Counts GIS dataset. Count years vary because short-duration sites operate on multi-year cycles. AADT is an annualized measure and may not represent Rome's highest seasonal or event-period traffic.

Journey-to-work and vehicle-access estimates are from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, released January 2026. ACS small-area estimates have margins of error and should be used with local observations and administrative data.

Road-maintenance information and the 2025–2028 improvement program are from the Town of Rome Public Works & Roads webpage, accessed September 2026. Planning context is from WisDOT Connect 2050 and related modal plans; specialized transportation information is from Adams County. Passenger-rail stations were checked against Amtrak schedules. Verify all program, schedule, cost, and timing details before implementation.

CHAPTER 5

Utilities and Community Facilities

Town of Rome Comprehensive Plan Amendment

WORKING DRAFT | SEPTEMBER 2026

*This chapter intentionally omits photographs and maps.
Graphics will be added during plan assembly.*

Policy review note: The Town-supplied edits are preserved as tracked changes in Section 5.10.

5.1 Purpose and Planning Context

Utilities and community facilities support public health, safety, economic activity, recreation, education, communication, and quality of life. In Rome, service planning must account for a dispersed rural settlement pattern, concentrated lake neighborhoods, Rome Town Center, major recreation destinations, a large seasonal population, and an aging year-round population.

The Town's approach should pair reliable service with fiscal responsibility. New infrastructure should respond to demonstrated need, protect groundwater and surface water, avoid unnecessary lifecycle obligations, support compact and compatible development where appropriate, and be designed for changing climate, technology, workforce, and emergency conditions.

Current Issues and Planning Themes

- Protecting drinking-water sources and private wells from septic, agricultural, stormwater, chemical, and land-use impacts.
- Maintaining POWTS and evaluating shared or public wastewater solutions where density, soils, groundwater, or economic-development needs justify study.
- Managing stormwater as an interconnected system of roadside drainage, culverts, development facilities, natural drainageways, infiltration, and lake protection.
- Maintaining sustainable staffing, equipment, facilities, mutual aid, communications, and response capacity for police, fire, EMS, public works, and emergency management.
- Providing accessible facilities and services for an older population and people with disabilities.
- Closing remaining broadband reliability, affordability, device, and digital-literacy gaps.
- Improving energy efficiency, distributed-energy readiness, backup power, and continuity of operations for critical facilities.
- Balancing year-round recreation access, visitor demand, environmental capacity, maintenance, safety, and user conflicts.

5.2 Utility and Facility Framework

Table 5-1. Utility and Community-Facility Systems

System	Current Context	Primary Planning Direction
Public water	Rome Water Utility serves portions of the community, including established service areas; two active groundwater wells are identified in the 2025 CCR.	Protect sources; maintain treatment, distribution, storage, hydrants, service lines, rates, and emergency capacity; evaluate extensions using capacity and lifecycle cost.
Private water	Private wells serve areas outside the public-water system.	Promote testing, wellhead protection, proper abandonment, and land-use practices that protect groundwater.
Wastewater	Properties rely on private onsite wastewater treatment systems (POWTS); no municipal sanitary sewer is identified in the source inventory.	Maintain inspection/maintenance compliance; evaluate clustered or sewer solutions where density, soils, water quality, or redevelopment warrant.
Stormwater	Roadside drainage, culverts, private and development facilities, and natural systems convey and infiltrate runoff.	Use watershed-based maintenance and design; reduce peak flows, erosion, pollutants, and localized flooding; preserve infiltration.
Solid waste	Town transfer site at 1371 Apache Avenue serves garbage, recycling, reuse, and other accepted-material functions.	Maintain safe, convenient, compliant operations; reduce waste; adapt capacity and hours to seasonal demand.
Energy	Electricity, natural gas where available, propane, and other fuels serve homes and businesses.	Coordinate service capacity, efficiency, outage response, renewable-energy and storage readiness, and compatible siting.
Communications	Fixed and wireless providers serve Rome; quality and technology vary by location.	Support reliable high-speed service, redundancy, affordability, public-safety communications, and digital inclusion.

Service boundaries, capacities, ownership, and infrastructure locations should be reconciled with providers and current GIS data when the utilities map is updated.

5.3 Drinking Water and Groundwater

Rome's drinking water comes from groundwater. The Rome Water Utility operates a regulated public system, while private wells serve other properties. The Utility's 2025 Consumer Confidence Report identifies active Wells 3 and 4 and provides current monitoring information. The report's detected-contaminant tables list no violations; individual results and health guidance should be read directly from the current report.

Table 5-2. Rome Water Utility — 2025 Consumer Confidence Report Snapshot

Indicator	Reported Information
Public Water System ID	70101086
Active sources	Well 3 — groundwater, 83 feet; Well 4 — groundwater, 84 feet
Lead sample result	90th percentile: 1.10 ppb; 0 of 10 results above the action level; sample date June 14, 2023
Copper sample result	90th percentile: 0.880 ppm; 0 of 10 results above the action level; sample date November 8, 2023
Selected PFAS detections	PFOS 0.49 ppt; PFOA 0.56 ppt; combined PFOA + PFOS 1.05 ppt; sample date May 4, 2023
Reported violations	No violations shown in the report's detected-contaminant tables

Source: Rome Water Utility, 2025 Consumer Confidence Report, published 2026. Monitoring cycles vary; some listed results are from 2023. Health standards and advisory levels can change, so the current Utility, DNR, DHS, and EPA guidance controls.

- Maintain source-water protection and utility emergency-response planning, including backup power, interconnections or stored supply where feasible, cyber and physical security, and operator succession.
- Use current water-quality testing and public communication for regulated contaminants, lead and copper, nitrate, PFAS, and locally relevant concerns.
- Encourage routine private-well testing and proper well abandonment; connect owners with County, DNR, DHS, and laboratory resources.

- Before extending public water, document demand, hydraulic and fire-flow capacity, capital cost, financing, rate impacts, service-area logic, and long-term maintenance.

5.4 Wastewater and Stormwater

Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems

POWTS remain the Town’s primary wastewater system. Their performance depends on suitable soils and groundwater separation, correct design and installation, routine pumping and inspection, responsible use, and timely repair. Adams County maintains sanitary permitting and maintenance functions. Housing density, short-term-rental occupancy, commercial use, and seasonal peaks can affect wastewater loading and should be considered during review.

A sewer or clustered-treatment feasibility study may be appropriate for Rome Town Center or another concentrated area, but a plan policy does not commit the Town to construction. Any study should define the problem, service area, flows, treatment and discharge options, environmental benefits, regulatory path, governance, capital and operating costs, assessments or rates, phasing, and alternatives.

Stormwater and Drainage

Stormwater management extends beyond roadside ditches. The system includes culverts, swales, infiltration areas, ponds and other development facilities, natural drainageways, wetlands, shoreland buffers, and privately maintained practices. The Town should use green infrastructure and low-impact development where practical; inspect and maintain public assets; require durable private maintenance arrangements; and coordinate improvements at a watershed scale.

5.5 Energy and Telecommunications

ACS estimates describe how occupied homes are heated and whether households subscribe to internet service. These are useful indicators, but they do not define utility territories, system capacity, broadband speed, reliability, price, or coverage at a particular parcel.

Table 5-3. Household Internet Access, 2020–2024

Geography	Internet subscription	Broadband, any type	Cellular only	No internet access
Rome	96.9%	96.3%	7.3%	2.1%
Adams County	84.8%	84.2%	12.2%	12.9%
Wisconsin	90.6%	90.3%	11.0%	6.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 ACS 5-year estimates, Table B28002. “Broadband, any type” may include fixed, cellular, satellite, or other subscription types and does not establish service speed or quality.

Table 5-4. Housing Energy and Plumbing Indicators, 2020–2024

Geography	Utility gas	Propane	Electricity	Wood	Complete plumbing
Rome	65.3%	22.0%	10.4%	1.3%	99.5%
Adams County	27.5%	54.1%	9.5%	6.5%	96.6%
Wisconsin	64.8%	11.8%	17.8%	2.7%	98.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 ACS 5-year estimates, Tables B25040 and B25047. Percentages are estimates for occupied housing (heating) and all housing units (plumbing).

- Coordinate planned growth with electric, gas, telecommunications, and broadband providers early enough to identify capacity, easement, timing, and cost issues.
- Encourage energy-efficient construction and retrofits, demand management, weatherization, heat-pump readiness, and building systems that improve comfort and reduce lifecycle cost.
- Allow renewable energy, storage, microgrids, and backup generation at appropriate scales and locations while addressing land use, glare, noise, screening, decommissioning, emergency access, and natural-resource impacts.
- Use current broadband mapping, provider data, speed testing, resident/business experience, and affordability indicators to target remaining gaps.
- Maintain resilient public-safety radio, alerting, dispatch, 911 location, cybersecurity, and continuity-of-government systems.

5.6 Solid Waste and Resource Recovery

The Town Transfer Site at 1371 Apache Avenue provides seasonal operating hours and requires current placards. Planning should address safe circulation, queuing, staffing, fire prevention, household hazardous materials, recycling-market changes, brush and yard waste, illegal dumping, reuse, and demand peaks associated with seasonal occupancy. Public information should list current accepted materials and preparation requirements rather than embedding details likely to change in the comprehensive plan.

5.7 Public Safety, Emergency Services, and Resilience

The Rome Municipal Complex at STH 13 and Alpine Drive houses Town administration and the principal police and fire functions. The Police Department reports seven full-time officers plus part-time and boat-patrol personnel, provides service throughout approximately 56 square miles, and uses Adams County dispatch. The Fire Department is headquartered at the municipal complex and is led by a firefighter/paramedic chief. Mutual and automatic aid, staffing, training, equipment, water supply, communications, and response-time conditions should be reviewed together.

Table 5-5. Public and Emergency Service Framework

Service	Current Context	Planning Focus
Police	Town department; municipal-complex location; Adams County dispatch; patrol and seasonal/visitor demands.	Staffing, training, technology, marine and event coverage, facility/equipment lifecycle, interagency coordination.
Fire and EMS	Town fire service headquartered at municipal complex; paramedic capability identified; mutual/automatic aid and regional medical transport remain important.	Recruitment/retention, response coverage, apparatus, water supply, stations, training, MABAS/mutual aid, medical protocols.
Emergency management	County supports preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation; Town departments and facilities are local partners.	Hazard mitigation, EOC/continuity, alerts, shelters, evacuation, backup power, exercises, vulnerable populations.
Public works	Maintains 151 miles of roads and oversees the transfer site, parks, Dyracuse, cemeteries, and Rome Town Center functions.	Asset management, staffing, fleet/facilities, drainage, winter operations, debris management, continuity.
Health care	Local clinic/therapy services and regional hospitals in Friendship and Wisconsin Rapids support residents and visitors.	Emergency access, aging population, telehealth, workforce, regional coordination; verify providers and services periodically.

Staffing and service arrangements can change and should be confirmed during annual budgeting and emergency-services planning.

Resilience planning should address severe storms, flooding, extreme heat and cold, wildfire and smoke, drought, power and communications outages, hazardous materials, public-health emergencies, cyber incidents, and high-demand visitor events. Critical-facility assessments should identify backup power, fuel, communications, water, access, staffing, and redundant-service needs.

5.8 Education, Library, Health, and Civic Facilities

Table 5-6. Community Facilities and Partner Institutions

Facility / Partner	Current Role and Planning Considerations
Town Hall / Municipal Complex	Administration, meetings, public safety, public access, records, and community functions; maintain accessibility, security, technology, energy performance, and continuity.
Lester Public Library of Rome	Books, digital resources, public computers and Wi-Fi, programs, gathering space, and digital-literacy support; coordinate evolving space and technology needs.
Nekoosa School District	Primary K–12 district serving Rome; coordinate enrollment trends, transportation, shared recreation, emergency planning, and community programming.
Mid-State Technical College	Regional career and technical education; support workforce training and employer partnerships.
Health and human services	Local providers, Gundersen Moundview Hospital in Friendship, Aspirus facilities in Wisconsin Rapids, Adams County, and other partners.
Cemeteries	Spring Branch and New Rome cemeteries; plan records, access, maintenance, capacity, cultural resources, and long-term stewardship.

Institution names and services were updated where current information was available. The final facilities inventory should confirm ownership, capacity, accessibility, and planned capital needs.

5.9 Parks, Recreation, and Public Access

Rome's parks, trails, lakes, and specialized recreation facilities serve residents and support the visitor economy. The system includes Town, County, association, nonprofit, and private facilities. The Town should manage recreation as an interconnected system, balancing year-round access, safety, accessibility, environmental capacity, operations, user conflicts, and sustainable funding.

Table 5-7. Selected Recreation and Public-Access Assets

Asset	Current Information / Planning Direction
Dyracuse Recreational Park	Town facility reported at 700.44 acres with 11.78 miles of multiuse trails and multiple off-highway tracks; manage safety, habitat, events, maintenance, and user capacity.
Rome Town Center Park / Splash Pad	Splash pad and playground in Rome Town Center; supports family recreation, gathering, and walkable Town Center activity.
Tri-Lakes and Petenwell access	County parks, boat landings, and other access points serve water recreation; coordinate with DNR, Adams County, Fourteenmile Watershed Alliance, and Tri-Lakes Management District.
Trails and routes	Snowmobile and designated ATV/UTV routes connect recreation and businesses; follow current signed routes and manage crossings and conflicts.
Golf and destination recreation	Lake Arrowhead, Sand Valley, Wisconsin Trapshooting Association, and other destinations generate economic activity and seasonal service demand.
Other parks and natural areas	Town, County, nonprofit, and state resources provide neighborhood, nature-based, and regional recreation; update the inventory through CORP planning.

Facility acreage, routes, hours, and amenities change. The Town's current Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and official facility information should control project eligibility and public guidance.

5.10 Goals, Objectives, and Policies — Review Redline

This section incorporates the Town-supplied markup as tracked changes. Insertions and deletions remain review items and should be accepted, rejected, or further revised through the plan-amendment process.

Goal 1 — Infrastructure and Public Services

Provide quality infrastructure and public services to meet the existing and future needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

Objective 1 — Maintain and Improve Town Services

Policy 1. ~~Continue to provide law enforcement, ambulance, volunteer fire, and first responder services to residents.~~ Continue to provide law enforcement, ambulance coordination, volunteer fire, and paramedic services to residents and visitors.

Policy 2. ~~Work with adjoining towns, Adams County, and the State to monitor infrastructure and public service needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.~~ Monitor the infrastructure and public-service needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

Former Policy 3. ~~Work with adjoining towns, Adams County, the State, and others to address identified infrastructure and service needs.~~

Policy 3. ~~Seek state and federal grants and other assistance when available.~~ Seek state and federal grants and other assistance when available, in coordination with the Town grants committee.

Policy 4. Provide the safest and most efficient fire protection feasible by monitoring service performance, evaluating equipment and facility needs, and supporting firefighter and emergency-medical recruitment and retention.

Objective 2 — An Aging and Accessible Community

Objective 2: ~~Provide infrastructure and public services that respond to the needs of a diverse population, including accessibility.~~ Provide infrastructure and public services that respond to the needs of an aging population and people with disabilities, including accessibility.

Policy 1. Work with Adams County and community organizations to identify and address service gaps, accessibility needs, caregiver needs, transportation barriers, digital access, and emergency-preparedness concerns.

Objective 3 — Coordinated Water and Wastewater

Objective 3: Promote efficient and coordinated public water and wastewater planning and expansion where supported by need, feasibility, environmental benefit, and lifecycle cost.

Policy 1. Through land-use planning and zoning, direct higher-intensity development toward locations that can be served safely and efficiently by appropriate water and wastewater systems; allow lower-density development where soils, groundwater, wells, and POWTS can sustainably support it.

Policy 2. Evaluate sanitary-sewer or clustered-treatment feasibility for commercial and mixed-use development in Rome Town Center before committing to a service area, system type, financing, or construction.

Goal 2 — Year-Round Recreation

Goal 2: ~~Enhance and develop year-round recreational opportunities in the Town.~~ Enhance and develop year-round recreational opportunities in the Town.

Objective 1 — Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Provide sufficient outdoor recreation facilities for residents and visitors while minimizing user conflicts and protecting natural resources.

Policy 1. Maximize opportunities to enjoy natural resources through the development, maintenance, and stewardship of parks, trails, wildlife areas, and public access.

Former Policy 2. ~~Encourage a regional trail system with facilities for hikers, bicyclists, ATVs, snowmobiles, older adults, and people with disabilities.~~

Policy 2. ~~Consider developing a Town-level Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan that connects attractions, parks, and natural and cultural resources.~~ Maintain a current Town Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan connecting attractions, parks, trails, and natural and cultural resources so projects remain eligible for applicable local, state, federal, and private funding.

Former Policy 4. ~~Work with WisDOT, Wisconsin DNR, Adams County, and motorized and nonmotorized groups to develop a multiuse recreation trail along STH 13 between Apache Avenue and Alpine Drive.~~

Objective 2 — Public Water Access

Maintain public access to Rome's surface-water resources.

Policy 1. ~~Work with Wisconsin DNR, Adams County, and Tri-Lakes Management Association to identify future public access options and locations.~~ Work with Wisconsin DNR, Adams County, the Fourteenmile Watershed Alliance, and Tri-Lakes Management District to identify and evaluate future public-access needs, options, and locations.

5.11 Implementation and Monitoring

Table 5-8. Priority Utilities and Community-Facility Actions

Action	Lead / Partners	Timing	Measure
Update the utilities and facilities inventory, map, service areas, capacities, condition, ownership, and planned projects.	Town; providers; County; consultants	1–2 years	Verified GIS and asset inventory
Prepare or update a utility/facility capital and lifecycle plan, including critical-facility resilience.	Town; Water Utility; emergency services	1–3 years; annual update	Capital schedule, costs, reserves, continuity projects
Maintain source-water, private-well, POWTS, and groundwater-protection coordination.	Town; Water Utility; County; DNR/DHS	Ongoing	Testing, maintenance compliance, risk actions
Evaluate wastewater options for Rome Town Center using a formal feasibility and alternatives study.	Town; owners; agencies; consultant	1–5 years	Study and decision framework completed
Complete a drainage and stormwater asset/priority assessment.	Town; County; watershed partners	1–3 years	Inventory, maintenance plan, priority projects

Action	Lead / Partners	Timing	Measure
Assess broadband and communications gaps using parcel-level availability plus resident/business experience.	Town; providers; PSC/FCC partners	1–3 years	Gap map, projects, grants, adoption indicators
Maintain a current CORP and coordinate recreation investment and public access.	Town; County; DNR; community partners	Five-year cycle	Current CORP; grants; projects completed
Review public-safety staffing, facilities, apparatus, water supply, mutual aid, and response performance.	Town; Police/Fire; County; partners	Annual / 2–3 years	Service review and funded priorities

Timing begins at plan adoption. Measures should be refined through budgeting, departmental plans, and intergovernmental coordination.

Data Notes and Sources

Current Town information was drawn from the Town of Rome Water Utility, Public Works & Roads, Police, Fire, Transfer Site, Dyracuse, Splash Pad, budget, and community-service webpages accessed in September 2026. The 2025 Consumer Confidence Report was published in 2026 and includes monitoring results from different sample years. The current report and applicable regulatory guidance control.

Household internet, heating-fuel, and plumbing estimates are from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, released January 2026. ACS estimates have margins of error and should be supplemented with provider, parcel, permit, inspection, and operational data.

Other planning context includes Adams County emergency management, planning and zoning, sanitary-system and transportation resources; Wisconsin DNR, DHS, DSPS, PSC, and broadband resources; current provider and institutional information; and the prior comprehensive plan. Before adoption, Town staff should verify service boundaries, providers, facility conditions, staffing, capacities, agreements, project status, and official names.

CHAPTER 6

Economic Development

Town of Rome Comprehensive Plan Amendment

DRAFT | SEPTEMBER 2026

This chapter intentionally omits photographs and maps. Graphics may be added during plan assembly.

Policy edits supplied by the Town remain as tracked changes in Section 6.10.

6.1 Purpose and Planning Context

The Economic Development Element establishes a framework for retaining local businesses, supporting year-round employment, guiding new investment, and protecting the natural and community assets that underpin Rome's economy. The Town's economic base combines recreation and tourism, resident-serving businesses, construction and real estate activity, public services, home-based work, and access to jobs elsewhere in central Wisconsin.

Rome's economic strategy should be coordinated with the 2026 Adams County Economic Development Strategy, the North Central Wisconsin regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, the Rome Town Center plans, the Town's Community Development Authority, Adams County Economic Development, the Chambers of Commerce, and Visit Rome Wisconsin as the Town's designated marketing organization.

Current Economic Development Issues

- Expanding year-round business activity while managing seasonal peaks in customers, traffic, staffing, and public services.
- Retaining existing businesses through regular outreach, practical problem solving, and clear information about permits, sites, financing, and workforce resources.
- Supporting an aging workforce and expanding housing, childcare, transportation, training, and recruitment options for year-round employees.
- Using reliable broadband and digital tools to support home-based businesses, remote work, entrepreneurship, telehealth, and online commerce.
- Directing higher-intensity commercial and mixed-use development to locations with suitable access, utilities, emergency services, and compatible surrounding land uses.
- Protecting lakes, groundwater, forests, rural character, and recreation capacity because these assets support property values, tourism, and resident quality of life.
- Preparing businesses and public facilities for extreme weather, power and communications disruptions, cyber risk, and changing insurance and operating costs.

6.2 Local Economic Profile

Rome's current profile reflects a relatively prosperous but retirement-oriented community. The Town's median household income and educational attainment exceed Adams County levels, while labor-force participation is lower because nearly half of residents are age 65 or older. Economic development should therefore focus on retaining working-age households, supporting local workers and entrepreneurs, and connecting residents and businesses to regional labor markets.

Table 6-1 Current Economic Indicators

Indicator	Town of Rome	Adams County	Wisconsin
Employed residents	1,105	8,493	3,031,042
Labor-force participation age 16+	38.4%	47.6%	65.3%
Civilian unemployment rate	2.2%	4.5%	3.2%
Median household income	\$79,728	\$59,442	\$77,485
Per capita income	\$47,649	\$35,863	\$43,373
Bachelor degree or higher age 25+	37.4%	17.5%	33.4%
Households with broadband subscription	96.3%	84.2%	90.3%
Mean travel time to work	36.6 min.	30.7 min.	22.2 min.
Seasonal housing share	46.6%	38.3%	6.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020–2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. ACS values are estimates; small-area margins of error should be considered.

6.3 Employment and Industry

Employer-based data describe jobs located in Adams County, while ACS data describe employed residents. The distinction matters because many residents commute to jobs outside the County and some workers commute into it. Adams County had 5,626 jobs in 2023, 6.9 percent fewer than in 2013. Trade, transportation, and utilities gained 116 jobs, while natural resources, government, leisure and hospitality, manufacturing, education and health, and other services declined over the decade.

Table 6-2 Adams County Employment by Supersector

Supersector	2013	2023	Change
Natural resources and mining	1,358	1,227	-9.6%
Construction	250	270	8.0%
Manufacturing	327	284	-13.1%
Trade transportation and utilities	745	861	15.6%
Information	11	25	127.3%
Financial activities	110	145	31.8%
Professional and business services	215	232	7.9%
Education and health services	471	424	-10.0%
Leisure and hospitality	1,035	938	-9.4%
Other services	262	210	-19.8%
Government	1,260	1,010	-19.8%
Total	6,044	5,626	-6.9%

Source: Adams County Economic Development Strategy 2026; Lightcast 2025.4 and Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Employment Outlook

The County strategy projects 735 additional jobs between 2023 and 2033. Projections are planning scenarios rather than commitments, but they identify potential demand for construction, health services, leisure and hospitality, professional services, and technology-related skills. Rome should monitor actual job creation, wages, seasonality, and recruitment conditions rather than relying on projected totals alone.

Table 6-3 Adams County Employment Outlook

Supersector	2023	2033 Projection	Projected Change
Natural resources and mining	1,227	1,409	14.8%
Construction	270	323	19.6%
Manufacturing	284	327	15.1%
Trade transportation and utilities	861	973	13.0%
Information	25	45	80.0%
Financial activities	145	188	29.7%
Professional and business services	232	268	15.5%
Education and health services	424	509	20.0%
Leisure and hospitality	938	1,085	15.7%
Other services	210	232	10.5%
Government	1,010	1,002	-0.8%
Total	5,626	6,361	13.1%

Source: Adams County Economic Development Strategy 2026; Lightcast 2025.4 and QCEW. Projections should be refreshed at major plan checkpoints.

6.4 Business Formation and Entrepreneurship

Countywide business formation has strengthened even though total employment remains below 2013. Adams County reported 448 establishments and 195 business startups in 2024. For Rome, this supports a retention-first approach that also helps entrepreneurs move from home-based or seasonal activity into stable year-round operations. Business assistance should include site and permitting guidance, succession planning, financing referrals, broadband, shared work or maker space, and connections to technical education and regional markets.

Table 6-4 Selected Countywide Business Indicators

Indicator	2014	2024	Planning Meaning
Business establishments	334	448	Net increase of 114 establishments

Indicator	2014	2024	Planning Meaning
Employer identification applications used as startup indicator	109	195	Higher entrepreneurial activity; not all applications become operating firms
Average annual wage	—	\$56,795 (2023)	Below the Wisconsin average of \$75,404
Workers age 55 or older	—	36% (2023)	Succession and recruitment needs are material

Source: Adams County Economic Development Strategy 2026; U.S. Census Bureau Business Formation Statistics; Lightcast and QCEW. A dash means the source did not provide a comparable 2014 value.

6.5 Visitor Economy and Year-Round Activity

Tourism and seasonal residency bring outside spending into Rome and support lodging, food and beverage, retail, recreation, construction, real estate, and personal services. Countywide visitor activity produced \$267.3 million in total economic impact and supported 1,661 jobs in 2024. Direct visitor spending remained below its 2019 level, so the Town's strategy should focus on longer stays, year-round visitation, local purchasing, workforce stability, and the environmental capacity of lakes, trails, parks, roads, and public-safety services.

Table 6-5 Adams County Visitor Economy

Indicator	2019	2023	2024	2023–24 Change
Total economic impact	\$275.3M	\$250.2M	\$267.3M	6.8%
Direct visitor spending	\$213.3M	\$183.9M	\$196.8M	7.1%
Jobs supported by tourism	—	—	1,661	—
Visitor-supported labor income	—	—	More than \$61M	—

Source: Wisconsin Department of Tourism and Tourism Economics, as reported in the Adams County Economic Development Strategy 2026. County figures are not Town-only estimates.

Visitor Economy Priorities

- Coordinate tourism promotion and product development with Visit Rome Wisconsin and community-based organizations.
- Use room-tax and grant resources for eligible projects that generate overnight stays and measurable visitor activity.
- Expand shoulder-season and winter programming without exceeding operational, environmental, or neighborhood capacity.
- Track lodging supply, room-tax receipts, event attendance, visitor spending, emergency calls, traffic, and natural-resource indicators together.
- Encourage businesses to source goods and services locally and develop offerings useful to both residents and visitors.

6.6 Rome Town Center and Development Locations

Rome Town Center is the Town's primary location for a walkable mix of civic, commercial, residential, entertainment, and public-space uses. The 25-Year Vision and 2025 design update provide the controlling framework for its development. Economic policy should concentrate appropriate mixed-use investment there, coordinate buildings with streets and public spaces, provide safe walking and bicycling connections, and avoid excess land devoted to surface parking.

Other commercial and employment locations should be evaluated according to road access, water and wastewater capacity, broadband and power service, emergency response, parcel configuration, nearby land uses, groundwater and stormwater conditions, and the cost of extending public infrastructure. Overlay districts, design standards, setbacks, landscaping, and buffers can address location-specific conditions while keeping development requirements predictable.

Table 6-6 Economic Development Assets and Directions

Asset or Partner	Current Role	Planning Direction
Rome Community Development Authority	Town economic-development organization	Lead business outreach, site information, redevelopment, and investment coordination
Adams County Economic Development	Countywide business and workforce assistance	Coordinate retention visits, financing, entrepreneurship, sites, housing, and regional projects
Visit Rome Wisconsin	Designated marketing organization and tourism grant partner	Coordinate promotion, product development, room-tax reporting, and performance measures
Rome Town Center	Mixed-use civic and commercial focus	Implement the integrated vision and design plan; prioritize walkability, infill, and year-round uses

Asset or Partner	Current Role	Planning Direction
State Highway 13 and other corridors	Regional access and visibility	Use access management, compatible zoning, wayfinding, buffering, and corridor design standards
Lakes forests parks and recreation facilities	Core visitor and quality-of-life assets	Protect resource quality and manage capacity as economic infrastructure
Broadband education and workforce partners	Business productivity and worker connections	Address service gaps, training, remote work, digital commerce, and succession needs

6.7 Workforce and Community Capacity

Employers need access to workers as much as they need sites and utilities. Rome should coordinate economic policy with housing, transportation, childcare, health care, education, and community facilities. The Town can support workforce attraction by allowing housing types suited to employees and smaller households, improving connections to regional job centers, supporting accessible services, and maintaining the community amenities that influence relocation decisions.

The Town should also plan for business ownership transitions and retirements. Regular contact with employers can identify succession needs, vacant or underused property, skill gaps, permit barriers, and infrastructure concerns before they become emergencies.

6.8 Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development

Economic development should strengthen the Town's fiscal position without shifting avoidable costs to taxpayers or degrading the resources that support Rome's economy. Project review should consider lifecycle infrastructure cost, public-safety demand, water and wastewater needs, stormwater, energy reliability, emergency access, compatibility, tax-base effects, and the ability to adapt buildings or sites over time.

Business continuity planning is increasingly relevant for severe storms, wildfire and smoke, heat, drought, supply interruptions, cyber incidents, and communications outages. The Town can share preparedness resources, identify critical service dependencies, and coordinate recovery planning with businesses, utilities, Adams County, and emergency-service partners.

6.9 Economic Development Approach

- Retain first. Use regular business visits and a documented referral process to resolve local issues and connect firms with assistance.
- Target compatible activity. Recruit uses that fit Rome's workforce, infrastructure, visitor market, environmental setting, and development locations.
- Improve readiness. Maintain current site, building, utility, broadband, zoning, and contact information in a usable digital format.
- Measure results. Track contacts, expansions, new firms, jobs, wages, occupancy, visitor indicators, housing, infrastructure commitments, and public costs.
- Review incentives. Tie public assistance to defined community benefits, performance terms, legal authority, and transparent approval.

6.10 Goals Objectives and Policies Review Redline

The Town's proposed revisions are shown as tracked insertions and deletions. The changes remain subject to review through the comprehensive plan amendment process.

Goal 1 Maintain Expand and Diversify the Local Economy

Maintain, expand and diversify the local economy.

Objective 1 Retain and Expand Existing Businesses

Promote the retention and expansion of the current economic base.

Policy 1. ~~Work with chamber and county to conduct a business retention survey bi-annually.~~ Work with Adams County Economic Development (ACED) and Rome Community Development Authority (CDA) to conduct a business retention survey.

Policy 2. ~~Work with chamber and county to establish a Business Retention Committee to address business needs and recognize local businesses.~~ Work with ACED and Rome CDA to address business needs and recognize local businesses.

Policy 3. Cooperate in countywide economic development initiatives.

Policy 4. Pursue opportunities for financial and other incentives to assist current businesses.

Policy 5. Continuously communicate with existing businesses to assure their needs are being met and assist in removing obstacles to growth.

Objective 2 Attract Compatible New Businesses

Encourage new businesses to locate in the Town of Rome.

Policy 1. Focus economic development marketing on tourism-oriented businesses, service, retail, and light industrial businesses.

Policy 2. ~~Continue to support the chambers, Adams County's, and all other economic development entities' efforts.~~ Continue to support ACED and the Wood and Adams County Chambers of Commerce to promote economic development activities.

Policy 3. Promote community activities and events that benefit local businesses and merchants.

Policy 4. ~~Pursue opportunities for financial and other incentives to attract and promote new businesses, including infrastructure Policy.~~ Pursue opportunities for financial and other incentives to attract and promote new businesses, including infrastructure.

Policy 5. ~~Market available sites and buildings to targeted firms.~~ Use existing electronic resources to market available sites and buildings, including Rome Town Center.

Objective 3 Coordinate Tourism Development

Objective 3. ~~Promote compatibility between economic development and quality of life.~~ Encourage and promote the tourism industry through support to community-based organizations working closely with the Town's Designated Marketing Organization (DMO).

Former Policy 1. ~~Encourage and promote the tourism industry.~~

Former Policy 2. ~~Development should not degrade the natural environment or quality of life issues, such as odor, noise, and dust.~~

Former Policy 3. ~~Update zoning regulations to provide appropriate commercial and industrial zoning districts.~~

Objective 4 Support a Strong Plan Commission

Objective 4. Support a strong Plan Commission.

Policy 1. Recommend development and non-development districts.

Policy 2. Recommend overlay districts that will enhance local economic interests where appropriate.

Policy 3. Development should not degrade the natural environment or quality-of-life issues, such as odor, noise, and dust.

Policy 4. Update zoning regulations to provide appropriate commercial and industrial zoning districts.

Policy 5. Ensure the rural atmosphere by adopting setbacks and buffers for development.

6.11 Implementation and Monitoring

Table 6-7 Priority Economic Development Actions

Action	Lead and Partners	Timing	Performance Measure
Establish a recurring business retention and expansion program with documented follow-up.	CDA; Town; ACED; Chambers	Annual cycle	Contacts, issues resolved, expansions, jobs retained
Maintain a digital inventory of sites, buildings, utilities, broadband, zoning, and contacts.	CDA; Town; ACED; owners	1–2 years; quarterly update	Current inventory and response time
Implement priority Rome Town Center actions and coordinate public and private investment.	Town; CDA; owners; Visit Rome	1–5 years	Projects, occupancy, housing, public-space improvements
Create a coordinated year-round visitor-economy work program.	Visit Rome; Town; CDA; organizations	Annual	Room tax, overnight stays, events, grants, seasonal distribution
Prepare a workforce action agenda addressing housing, childcare, training, transportation, and succession.	Town; ACED; employers; schools; County	1–3 years	Partner actions, vacancies, housing and childcare indicators
Review commercial and employment zoning, overlays, design standards, setbacks, and buffers.	Plan Commission; Town; CDA	1–3 years	Updated regulations and clearer review standards
Adopt an incentive evaluation and monitoring procedure.	Town Board; CDA; counsel	1–2 years	Written criteria, agreements, annual compliance
Publish an annual economic development summary.	CDA; Town; partners	Annual	Public dashboard or report with consistent measures

Data Notes and Sources

Town, county, and state comparisons use the U.S. Census Bureau 2020–2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. ACS figures describe residents and households and include sampling error. Employer employment, wage, projection, business-formation, and tourism figures are drawn from the Adams County Economic Development Strategy 2026, which cites Lightcast, the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, U.S. Census business datasets, Wisconsin Department of Tourism, and Tourism Economics. County figures should not be interpreted as Town-only values.

The Town should update the economic indicators at major plan checkpoints and confirm active organizations, program names, site readiness, utility capacity, development status, and adopted regulations before final adoption.

- Adams County Economic Development Strategy 2026 www.ncwrpc.org/wp-content/uploads/Adams-County-Economic-Development-Strategy.pdf
- U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data.census.gov
- Wisconsin Department of Tourism industry research industry.travelwisconsin.com
- Town of Rome Community Development Authority and Rome Town Center romewi.gov
- Visit Rome Wisconsin tourism and grant information visitromewi.com