

Preface

I. Introduction

State of Wisconsin Statute 66.1001, *Comprehensive Planning*, mandates local governmental units prepare and adopt comprehensive plans to guide planning and development through the year 2035. Per State of Wisconsin Statute 62.23(3)(a), *Master Plan*, a local governmental unit's comprehensive plan is to be made:

“with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the municipality which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity or the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.”

The Town of La Prairie (Town) has developed this Comprehensive Plan (*Plan*) for a 25-year planning horizon, through 2035, per the aforementioned statutes, and as a component of a multi-jurisdictional planning effort undertaken in coordination with Rock County (County) and twelve other Towns, Villages, and Cities within the County.

II. Plan Purpose, Intent, and Use

This *Plan's* purpose and intent is to:

- conform to State of Wisconsin Statute 66.1001, *Comprehensive Planning*, promoting coordinated and consistent planning across governmental boundaries and through governmental layers
- state goals, objectives, and policies to guide Town planning and development over the next 25 years, to 2035, and identify tools to implement and/or achieve these goals, objectives, and policies

This Plan should be utilized:

- as a policy document, providing clear and consistent direction to guide the Town's day-to-day planning and development decisions to 2035, including, but not limited to, ordinance development and revision, and rezone and development proposal review
- as a visionary document, providing clear and consistent direction in which to broadly guide the Town's planning and development to 2035
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III. The *Plan* Development Process

In 2005, Rock County, in conjunction with 13 other County municipalities including the Town, was awarded a Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Planning Grant from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) Comprehensive Planning Grant program, subject to State of Wisconsin Statute 16.965, *Planning Grants to Local Governments Units*. The Town contracted with the Rock County Planning, Economic, and Community Development Agency (Agency), the administrator of the Comprehensive Planning Grant, to provide professional planning assistance in *Plan* development. Agency staff determined how the *Plan* was to be developed and presented, compliant with State of Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 and 16.965.

Key elements of the *Plan* development process included the Citizen Participation Plan, Vision Statement, Goal, Objective, and Policy Development, and Tools Identification.

Citizen Participation Plan

The quality and value of a comprehensive plan is dependent on citizen participation and input gathered throughout the plan development process. As a comprehensive plan is a blueprint for a community's development pace and pattern, it is essential that the opinions of its citizens are voiced throughout the plan development process and formulated in the plan document.

This *Plan's* Citizen Participation Plan (*Appendix A*) was developed by the Agency to engender input and participation from Town residents, elected officials, and other interested parties throughout the planning process. This plan consisted of visioning sessions, open discussions, forums, workshops and various other meetings.

Vision Statement Development

A vision statement is vital to any comprehensive plan development activity, providing the effort with focus and direction, and identifying and prioritizing issues and opportunities to be addressed by plan goals, objectives, policies, and tools.

The Agency held public visioning session in January of 2006 at the La Prairie Town Hall to identify and prioritize Town planning issues and opportunities. The input gathered from these sessions established the Town Vision Statement, as stated in Chapter 1, the framework on which this *Plan* is based.

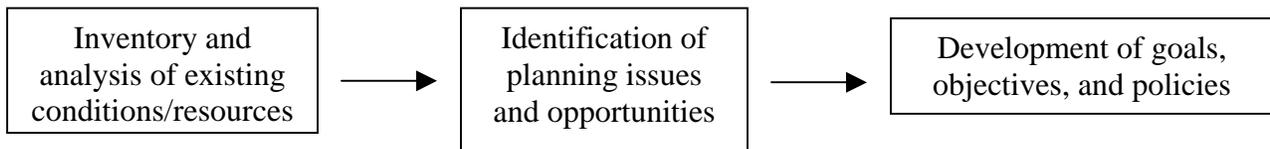
Goal, Objective, and Policy Development

Goals, objectives, and policies provide a comprehensive plan with its ultimate worth, ensuring achievement of the plan's vision statement. Goals address major, essential issues and opportunities, and are ideas and values in the public interest

that provide an end in which to direct the planning process. Objectives are more specific, providing detailed direction towards achievement of goals. Policies consist of rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and accomplishment of goals and objectives.

Figure I displays the process utilized to develop this Plan's goals, objectives, and policies. This process utilized input gathered from Town residents, elected officials, other interested parties, per the Citizen Participation Plan, in addition to the professional expertise of Agency staff.

Figure I: Goal, Objective, and Policy Development



This Plan's goals, objectives, and polices also reflect, in concept, fourteen goals as stated in State of Wisconsin Statute 16.965 *Planning Grants to Local Government Units* (4)(b), listed as follows:

1. *Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructures and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial areas*
2. *Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.*
3. *Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources*
4. *Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests*
5. *Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and low costs*
6. *Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites*
7. *Encouragement of cooperation and coordination among nearby units of government*
8. *Building community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards*
9. *Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels within the community*
10. *Providing infrastructure, services and developable land adequate to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses*
11. *Promoting expansion or stabilization of the economic base and job creation*

12. *Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals*
13. *Planning and developing land uses that create or preserve unique urban and rural communities*
14. *Providing an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that meets the needs of all citizens*

Tools Identification

Tools are the means by which a comprehensive plan's policies can be implemented and/or achieved, so as to ultimately reach the plan's goals and objectives.

This *Plan's* tools were identified by Agency staff based on sound planning principles, as well as from input gathered from Town residents, elected officials, and other interested parties, per the Citizen Participation Plan. These tools, in the form of existing programs and strategies, and innovative new ideas and concepts, were so identified as they provide the surest means to implement and/or achieve this *Plan's* policies.

III. Plan Organization and Structure

State of Wisconsin Statute 66.1001, *Comprehensive Planning*, mandates that nine Elements, as listed below 1.- 9., must be identified and addressed in a community's comprehensive plan.

1. *Issues and opportunities*
2. *Housing*
3. *Agricultural, natural, and cultural resources*
4. *Transportation*
5. *Utilities and Community Facilities*
6. *Land Use*
7. *Economic Development*
8. *Intergovernmental cooperation*
9. *Implementation*

This *Plan* is organized per Statute 66.1001, with Chapters 1-9 each focusing on a specific Element and integrating relevant, existing plans. Each Chapter contains the following components (if applicable) presented in the following order:

1. Introduction to Chapter content
2. Inventory and analysis of existing conditions/resources
3. Identification of planning issues and opportunities
4. Goals, objectives, policies, and tools
5. Maps displaying Chapter information

V. Future Directions

Completion of this initial *Plan* is not the end of the Town planning process. This *Plan* will be reviewed and updated within five years of completion, and thereafter at a minimum of once every ten years. This periodic review ensures that Town planning will continue to evolve and adapt to unforeseen issues and opportunities, and new trends and concepts.