

## Chapter I

# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## INTRODUCTION

In 1999 the Wisconsin Legislature enacted a new comprehensive planning law, set forth in Section 66.1001 of the *Wisconsin Statutes*. The new requirements supplement earlier provisions in the *Statutes* for the preparation of county development plans (Section 59.69(3) of the *Statutes*) and local master plans (Section 62.23 of the *Statutes*). The new requirements, which are often referred to as the “Smart Growth” law, provide a new framework for the development, adoption, and implementation of comprehensive plans in Wisconsin. The law includes a “consistency” requirement, whereby zoning, subdivision, and official mapping ordinances adopted and enforced by counties, cities, villages, and towns must be consistent with the comprehensive plan adopted by the county or local unit of government. Under the comprehensive planning law (Section 66.1001 (3) of the *Statutes*), the consistency requirement will take effect on January 1, 2010.

To address the State comprehensive planning requirements, a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning process was undertaken by Washington County, 11 local government partners, UW-Extension, and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC). As a result of the multi-jurisdictional process, comprehensive plans that satisfy the planning requirements set forth in Section 66.1001 of the *Statutes* have been developed for the County and each local government partner. The 11 local government partners are shown on Map 1 and listed below:

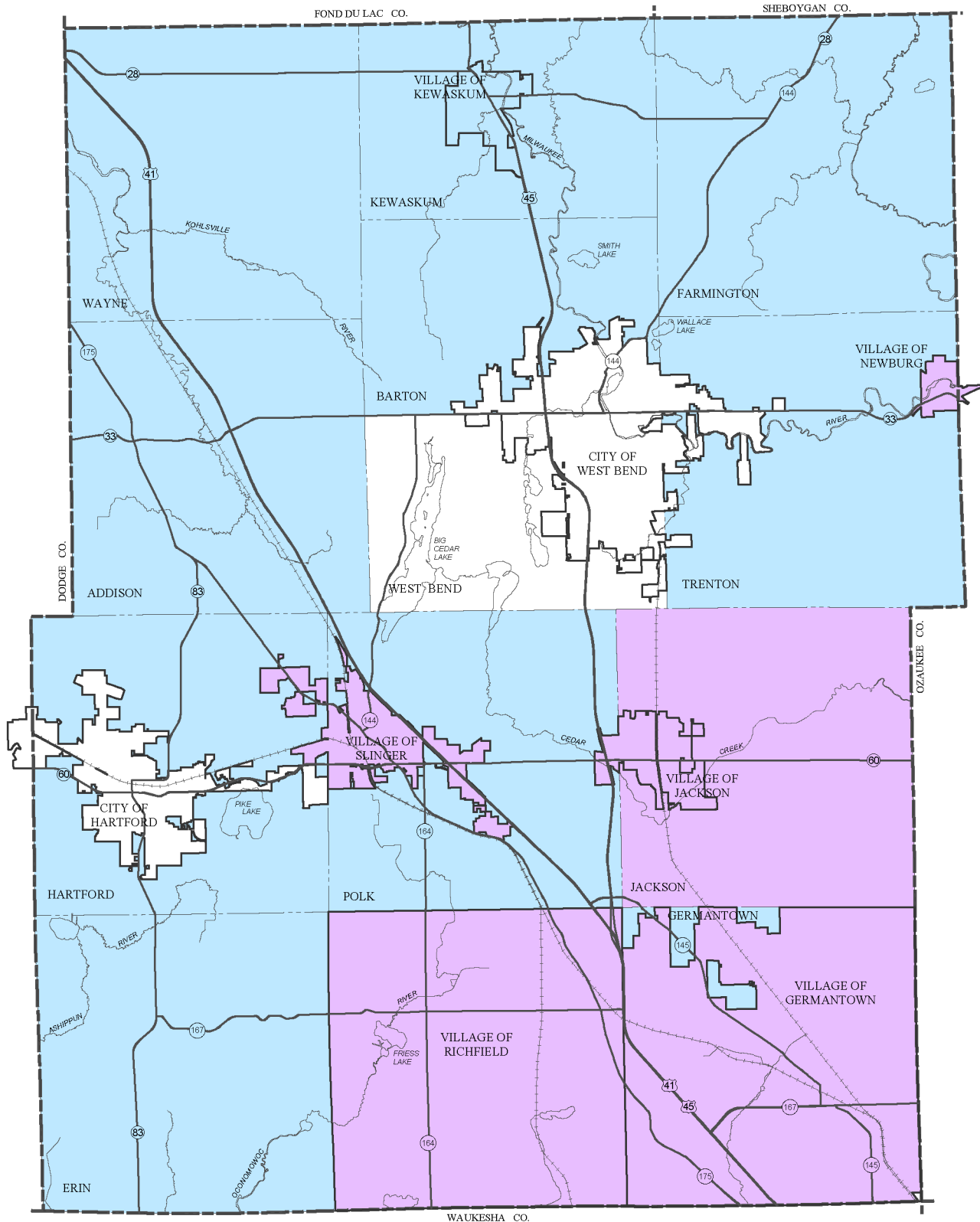
- Town of Addison
- Town of Barton
- Town of Erin
- Town of Farmington
- Town of Germantown
- Town of Hartford
- Town of Kewaskum
- Town of Polk
- Town of Trenton
- Town of Wayne
- Village of Kewaskum

Although not all local governments partnered with Washington County to prepare a comprehensive plan, several local governments agreed to participate in the planning process by attending a series of regular intergovernmental meetings to discuss countywide issues of mutual concern. In addition, the Villages of Germantown, Newburg, and Slinger, and the Town of Richfield<sup>1</sup> acknowledged, through adoption of a resolution, that it is in their best interest to participate in the intergovernmental meetings for the general purpose of accomplishing coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development within Washington County. The Village of Jackson and Town of Jackson also agreed to participate in intergovernmental meetings. The Village of Newburg, which is located partially in Ozaukee County, partnered with

---

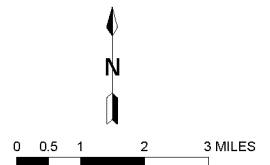
<sup>1</sup>The Town of Richfield incorporated as a Village on February 13, 2008.

**Map 1**  
**PLANNING PARTNERS FOR THE**  
**WASHINGTON COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



- PARTNERING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
- SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Source: Washington County and SEWRPC.



Ozaukee County in applying for a grant to prepare its local comprehensive plan, but participated in the development of the Washington County plan by serving on the plan Advisory Committee. Local governments that are not full partners, but who have agreed to cooperate in the planning process, are designated as “supporting local governments” on Map 1.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

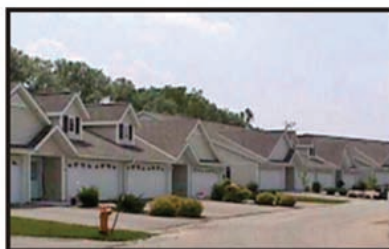
The multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan presented in this report provides a long-range guide for Washington County officials, staff, and citizens to effectively address future development and natural resource protection in the County through the year 2035, and sets forth County planning goals and objectives. The County Board and affected committees of the County Board should refer to the comprehensive plan as a matter of course in their deliberations on planning issues and give the plan due weight when making decisions on such matters, particularly with regard to the Statutory requirement for consistency between the County comprehensive plan and the County shoreland and floodplain zoning ordinance and County subdivision ordinance. In addition, the comprehensive plan is intended to increase intergovernmental cooperation and the general awareness and understanding of County and local government planning goals and objectives by residents, landowners, developers, the business community, and other private interests, and among the many units, levels, and agencies of government with land use related responsibilities within the County.

Local government comprehensive plans developed as a result of this multi-jurisdictional planning process also provide long-range guides for local government officials and citizens to address future development and natural resource protection in their respective communities. Local plan commission members and members of local governing bodies should refer to local comprehensive plans in the course of deliberations on local planning issues, particularly with regard to the Statutory requirement for consistency between the local comprehensive plan and local zoning, subdivision, and official mapping ordinances. As the County comprehensive plan is intended to increase intergovernmental cooperation, local comprehensive plans address areas of mutual concern with the County and with adjacent local governments. Local comprehensive plans also set forth local planning goals and objectives.

### Nine Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

The multi-jurisdictional plan documented in this report as well as each local comprehensive plan resulting from the multi-jurisdictional planning process contains the nine elements required by Section 66.1001(2) of the *Statutes*:

1. Issues and opportunities element
2. Land use element
3. Housing element
4. Transportation element
5. Utilities and community facilities element
6. Agricultural, natural, and cultural resources element
7. Economic development element
8. Intergovernmental cooperation element; and
9. Implementation element



### **Comprehensive Plan and Ordinance Consistency**

To comply with the consistency requirements in Section 66.1001 (3) of the comprehensive planning law, Washington County will make the changes needed, if any, to bring County shoreland and floodplain zoning regulations and its subdivision ordinance into compliance with the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan prior to January 1, 2010. Although not required by Section 66.1001 (3), other County land-use related ordinances, such as non-metallic mining ordinances and stormwater management ordinances, will also be revised, if necessary, to be consistent with and help implement the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan.

Each participating town and village will amend its zoning, subdivision, and official mapping ordinances, if needed, to bring those ordinances into compliance with the comprehensive plan adopted by the Town or Village Board. Under Section 66.1001 (3), zoning, subdivision, and official mapping ordinances adopted by a city, village, or town must be consistent with the comprehensive plan adopted by that city, village, or town beginning on January 1, 2010.

### **Fourteen State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Goals**

The multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan and local comprehensive plans also address the 14 planning goals set forth in Section 16.965(4)(b) of the *Wisconsin Statutes*. The 14 planning goals are:

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
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 relatively low municipal, state government, and utility costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic, and archeological sites.
7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local level.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependant and disabled citizens.



It is a goal of Washington County to protect economically productive areas including farmland and forests.



Park and ride lots are becoming increasingly popular as they promote convenience and safety.

The multi-jurisdictional planning process is also intended to meet County and local government planning goals and objectives, as well as to carry related elements of existing regional plans into greater depth and detail. The multi-jurisdictional planning process has provided an excellent opportunity for integrating local, county, and regional planning goals and objectives with the 14 planning goals established in the *Statutes*.

### **Public Participation Plan**

Section 66.1001(4) of the *Statutes* requires that the governing body of any County or local government preparing a comprehensive plan adopt written procedures that are “designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan.” Proposed plan elements must be widely distributed, and opportunities must be provided for written comments to be submitted by the public to the governing body. A procedure for the governing body to respond to those comments must also be identified.

The comprehensive planning workgroup, with assistance from County and UW-Extension staff, developed a recommended public participation plan for the multi-jurisdictional plan and each local government plan. The public participation plan was adopted by the County Board and the Board of each local government partner in fall 2004, prior to submittal of the grant application on November 1, 2004. The public participation plan seeks to enhance public awareness of the planning effort and its importance; educate citizens about current and past growth trends that have occurred in Washington County; and provides opportunities for citizens to help identify key community issues and develop a vision of what Washington County and its local communities should look like in 30 years. Opportunities for extensive public input during the draft plan review and plan adoption process are also included in the public participation plan.



S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analyses were one technique used to engage the public and gather their opinions.

Techniques to secure public participation include news releases, fact sheets, newsletters, a County website, display exhibits, advisory committees, a countywide public opinion telephone survey, focus groups, public open houses and other meetings to convey information and promote an exchange of ideas, and public hearings. A summary of the public participation plan is included in Appendix A. The full public participation plan is available for review in the office of the Washington County Planning and Parks Department, the Washington County UW-Extension office, and the comprehensive planning website ([www.co.washington.wi.us/smartgrowth](http://www.co.washington.wi.us/smartgrowth)).

### **Plan Review and Adoption**

Section 66.1001 (4) of the *Statutes* requires that a comprehensive plan or plan amendment be adopted by an ordinance enacted by the County Board, for adoption of the multi-jurisdictional County comprehensive plan, or by an ordinance of the Village or Town Board for individual

village and town comprehensive plans. The law further requires that all nine elements be adopted simultaneously, and that at least one public hearing be held prior to adopting the County and local comprehensive plans. The *Statutes* require that an adopted comprehensive plan, or an amendment to a plan, be sent to all governmental units within and adjacent to the county or local government preparing a plan; the Wisconsin Department of Administration; the regional planning commission (SEWRPC); and the public library that serves the area in which the county or local government is located.

## **MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PARTNERSHIP**

A community workshop was sponsored by the Washington County Planning, Conservation, and Parks Committee on October 15, 2003, to discuss comprehensive planning efforts at the regional, county, and local levels. The concept of

preparing a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan as a cooperative effort among all interested local governments, Washington County, and SEWRPC was discussed at that meeting as a way to meet the State comprehensive planning requirements in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Local governments interested in working with the County and SEWRPC were asked to notify the County by the end of 2003. Ten towns and three villages indicated a willingness to cooperate with Washington County in preparing a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan. As previously noted, ten towns and one village adopted resolutions formally agreeing to partner with the County in obtaining a grant.

A comprehensive planning workgroup made up of local government representatives, County officials, and County, UW-Extension, and SEWRPC staff was formed to establish a framework for preparation of the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan. Through a series of nine monthly meetings held between February and October 2004, the workgroup developed a work program, public participation plan, and an application for a comprehensive planning grant. The workgroup also developed the framework for a conflict resolution process for resolving multi-jurisdictional disputes pertaining to adopted comprehensive plans, including future plan amendments, which was approved by the County Board. In 2007, the Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee completed the procedures and bylaws for the Multi-Jurisdictional Dispute Resolution Panel, which are described in Chapter XIV.

In the fall of 2004, the Washington County Board, the Kewaskum Village Board, and the Town Boards of the Towns of Addison, Barton, Erin, Farmington, Germantown, Hartford, Kewaskum, Polk, Trenton, and Wayne each adopted a resolution agreeing to participate in a multi-jurisdictional planning process and agreeing to submit an application to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) for a comprehensive planning grant to help fund preparation of the plan. The Washington County Board and the Board of each participating town and village also adopted by resolution the public participation plan prior to submittal of the grant application.

County and local resolutions to participate in the Washington County multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning process are included in Appendix B. A grant was awarded in March 2005, and a grant agreement between Washington County and the DOA was signed on June 7, 2005. Prior to accepting the grant, Washington County and SEWRPC signed a three-party Cooperative Agreement with each of the 11 local government partners. Each Agreement is a formal commitment among the local government, Washington County, and SEWRPC to participate in a coordinated, multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning effort. The agreements are available for review in the office of the Washington County Planning and Parks Department.

This multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning effort is built upon the master and comprehensive plans adopted by cities, villages, and towns in Washington County prior to the start of this comprehensive planning process. A list of plans adopted by local governments as of December 2005 is presented in Chapter VI. Existing plans were updated to reflect new inventory data and development conditions and supplemented as needed to include all of the nine elements required under the State comprehensive planning law. The preparation and adoption of the County and local comprehensive plans also met the procedural requirements set forth in State law, which require adoption and implementation of a public participation plan, adoption of a County or local comprehensive plan by an ordinance of the governing body, a public hearing prior to adoption, and distribution of the draft and final plan to adjacent communities, State and regional agencies, and the local public library.

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COUNTY AND LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS**

In conducting the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning effort, it is the intent of Washington County to build on the land use, master, and comprehensive plans and official maps which have already been prepared and adopted by cities, villages, and towns in Washington County. Sections 59.69 (3) and 62.23 (2) of the *Wisconsin Statutes* explicitly require Washington County to “incorporate” into the County plan such plans and maps within municipal boundaries that have been formally adopted by cities and villages. It is the County’s intent to also “incorporate” such plans and maps that have been adopted by towns, provided the land use element of the town comprehensive plan has been developed in accordance with the objectives, principles, and standards set forth in Chapter IV of the Regional Land Use Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2020. If a Town’s Land Use Element is in substantial agreement with the regional plan’s objectives, principles, and standards, based on review by the Washington County Planning, Conservation and Parks Committee, Washington County shall incorporate the Town’s Land Use Element into the Land Use Element of the Washington County comprehensive plan for that Town.

The County shall also incorporate planned city and village extraterritorial areas into the Land Use Element of the Washington County comprehensive plan if it meets **both** of the following:

1. A comprehensive plan has been developed for the extraterritorial area and both the Town Board and the Common Council/Village Board of the respective Town and City or Village have approved that **one** plan.
2. That the one plan is in substantial agreement with Chapter IV of the Regional Land Use Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2020.

While all such plans—cities, villages, and towns—will be “incorporated” into the Washington County plan document to the extent practicable, it is recognized that Washington County, in preparing its plan and readying that plan for adoption by the County Board, may choose to disagree with one or more proposals included in a city, village, or town plan, with such disagreements relating to, for example, State mandated shoreland zoning requirements. Every effort was made to discuss and resolve issues between Washington County and the cities, villages, and towns in the County.

Where conflicts cannot be resolved, they were documented in the intergovernmental cooperation element of this report. Washington County explicitly recognizes that cities, villages, and towns may choose, on certain matters and issues, to disagree with a position that the County may take. The County respects the rights of cities, villages, and towns to adopt plans that may differ from the County plan.

## COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The committee structure for developing and overseeing preparation of the multi-jurisdictional County comprehensive plan is set forth in Figure 1. The County’s comprehensive planning effort was coordinated through the Washington County Planning, Conservation, and Parks Committee (PCPC) of the County Board. The PCPC provided oversight of the County planning effort and approved a recommended comprehensive plan for consideration for adoption by the full County Board.



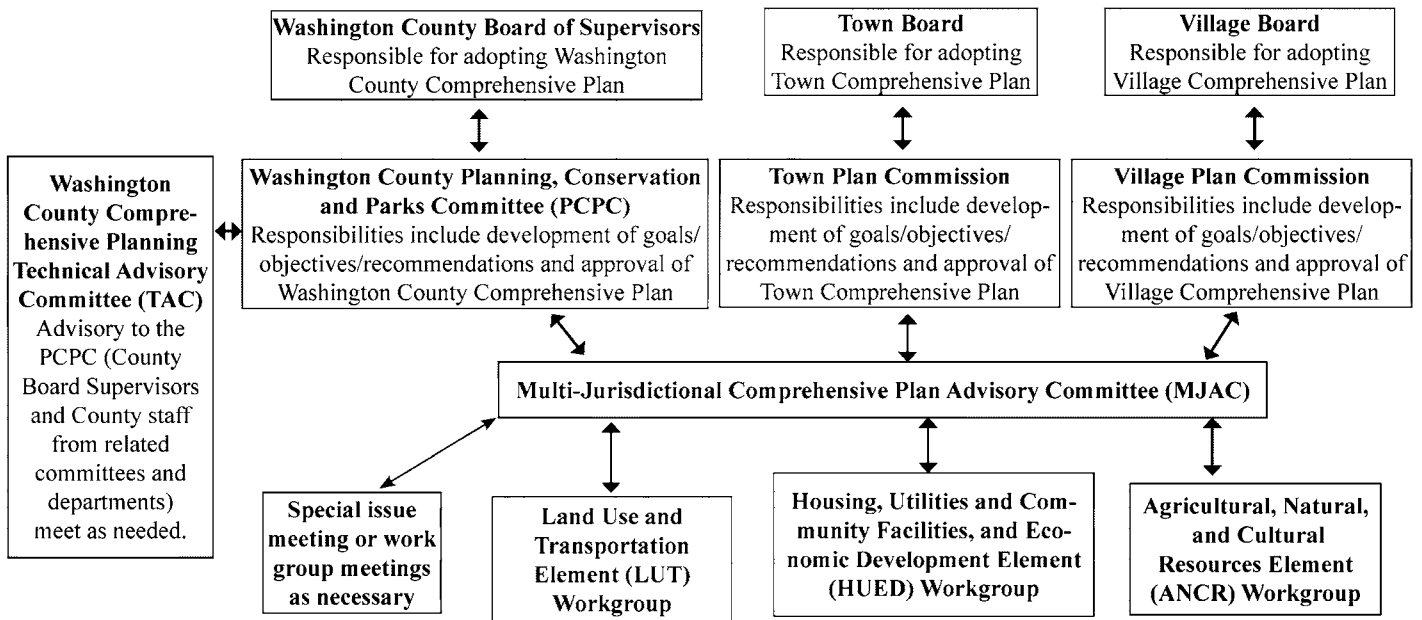
A meeting of the Multi-Jurisdictional Advisory Committee.

A Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee was established by the PCPC to guide preparation of the County plan, including development of planning goals and objectives and a vision for the future, review of draft plan chapters and other plan materials, and development of a recommended plan for consideration by the PCPC and the Plan Commissions of local government partners. The Advisory Committee is comprised of one representative from each local government partner, two members of the County Board, interest group representatives, and three citizen members. The Advisory Committee held its first meeting on July 27, 2005. Three workgroups, organized around the nine required elements of a comprehensive plan, were also established to assist in preparing specific plan elements and to make preliminary recommendations to the Advisory Committee on specific planning issues: 1) agricultural, natural, and cultural resources workgroup; 2) land use and transportation workgroup; and 3) housing, utilities and community facilities, and economic development workgroup.

A Technical Advisory Committee comprised of County Board members and staff from several County departments was formed to develop plan chapters and other materials for review by the element workgroups and the Advisory Committee. A list of committee members is provided on the inside front cover of this report. Members of the element workgroups are listed in Figure 2.

Figure 1

WASHINGTON COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION



Advisory Committee and Workgroups Roles and Responsibilities

**Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (MJAC)**  
 The purpose of this committee is to oversee activities necessary to develop and implement a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan as defined in Section 66.1001 of the *Wisconsin Statutes*. MJAC is responsible for:

- Development of multi-jurisdictional plan
- Implementation of the public participation plan
- Implementation of the work program
- Oversee the work of the three element workgroups
- Monitor the plan for consistency

**ANCR Workgroup**  
 The purpose of this work group is to focus on the development of the agriculture, natural, and cultural resources element. This workgroup is advisory to the MJAC. Responsibilities include:

- Analyze and review trends, inventories, and forecasts pertaining to agriculture, natural, and cultural resource issues
- Develop preliminary recommendations regarding agriculture, natural resource, and cultural resource elements

**LUT Workgroup**  
 The purpose of this work group is to focus on the development of the land use and transportation elements. This workgroup is advisory to the MJAC. Responsibilities include:

- Analyze and review trends, inventories, and forecasts pertaining to land use and transportation issues
- Develop preliminary recommendations regarding land use and transportation elements

**HUED Workgroup**  
 The purpose of this workgroup is to focus on the development of the utilities, community facilities, economic development, and housing elements. This work group is advisory to the MJAC. Responsibilities include:

- Analyze and review trends, inventories, and forecasts pertaining to utilities, community facilities, economic development, and housing issues
- Develop preliminary recommendations regarding utilities, community facilities, economic development, and housing elements

Source: Washington County.



Figure 2

WASHINGTON COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORKGROUP MEMBERS: 2008

<b>Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element Workgroup</b>	
David Baldus, Chairperson - Town of Polk Citizen	Kieth Kriewaldt - Town of Wayne
Rod Bartlow - Ice Age Trail Foundation	Mary Krumbiegel – County Board Supervisor
Richard Beine - Town of Hartford	Sue Millin – Land Conservation Partnership
Robert Bingen - Town of Addison	Andy Pesch - Village of Kewaskum
Ross Bishop - Agribusiness Cluster Council	Joe Peters - Town of Barton
Norbert Dettmann - Landmarks Committee	Ike Roell - Town of Farmington
Dale Dhein - Town of Germantown	Daniel Schmidt - Town of Kewaskum
Kevin Dittmar - Metropolitan Builders Association	Albert Schulteis - Town of Polk
Melvin Ewert - County Board Supervisor, Planning, Conservation, and Parks Committee	Helmut Wagner - Town of Erin
Michael Heili - Village of Newburg	Roger Walsh - Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District
Marilyn John - Town of Trenton Citizen	
<b>Land Use and Transportation Elements Workgroup</b>	
Jerry Priesgen, Chairperson - West Bend Area Builders Association	Mike Heili - Village of Newburg
John Stern, Vice-Chairperson - County Board Supervisor; Planning, Conservation and Parks Committee	Barb Kohler - Town of Erin
Frank Beesten - Village of Kewaskum	Paul Metz - Town of Germantown
Charlene Brady - County Board Supervisor; Planning, Conservation and Parks Committee	Tom Nelson - West Bend Trailblazers
Margaret Burlingham - Rock River Coalition	Mark Pamperin - Town of Wayne
Tom Calenberg - Applied Manufacturing Cluster Council	Dennis Panicucci - Town of Hartford
Dan DeThorne - City of West Bend Citizen	Mark Peters - Town of Polk
Ed Doerr - Town of Trenton	Art Seyfert - Town of Farmington
Mike Dricken - Town of Barton	Susan Touchett - Town of Richfield Citizen
Eric Gilbert – Nonmetallic Mining Representative	Jeff Walters - Board of Realtors
Vicki Heideman - Town of Kewaskum	Dan Wolf - Town of Addison
<b>Housing, Utilities and Community Facilities, and Economic Development (HUED) Elements Workgroup</b>	
Chris Kuehn, Chairperson - Town of Wayne	Allen Hron - Town of Kewaskum
Joseph Gonnering, Vice-Chairperson - County Board Supervisor - Town of Trenton	David Kainz - Town of Hartford
James Arens Jr. - Town of Germantown	Gary Karnitz - Town of Addison
Brad Bautz - Town of Erin	Mike Komro - Town of Trenton
Richard Bertram - County Board Supervisor - Town of Barton	Theodore Merten - Town of Polk
Carol Biersach - Director, Slinger Housing Authority	James Nowakowski - Village of Germantown Citizen
Jack Caldwell - Washington County Economic Development Corporation	Kori Schneider - Fair Housing Council
Brian Dasher - School District Representative	Gary Schreiber - Town of Farmington
Claire Fowler - Town of Erin Citizen	Kris Turner - Town of Barton
Jerry Gilles - Village of Kewaskum	Bruce Wilk - Workforce Development Board
Andy Gumm – Utility Representative	Citizen Representative, City of West Bend - vacant
Michael Heili - Village of Newburg	Moraine Park Technical College Representative - vacant
Kenneth Heins - Applied Manufacturing Cluster Council Representative	
<b>Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Subcommittee</b>	
Mary Krumbiegel, Chairperson - County Board Supervisor	
Robert Bingen, Vice-Chairperson - Town of Addison	
Helmut Wagner - Town of Erin	
Kieth Kriewaldt - Town of Wayne	
Roger Walsh - Big Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District	
Sue Millin - Land Conservation Partnership	
Kevin Dittmar - Metropolitan Builders Association	
<b>Dispute Resolution Forum Subcommittee</b>	
Mathew Heiser, Chairperson – Village of Kewaskum	Chris Kuehn – HUED Chairperson
Brian Bausch – County Board Supervisor	David Nixon – UW-Washington County
Jim Bennett - Town of Hartford	Barb Renkas – Town of West Bend Citizen
Ron Hefter - Town of Addison	Justin Drew – City of Hartford
Leander Herriges - Town of Wayne	Mary Schanning – City of West Bend
Daniel Knodl – County Board Supervisor	Mark Piotrowicz – City of West Bend (alternate)

Source: Washington County.

Local government partners relied on local plan commissions to provide guidance during the planning process. With one exception, each local plan commission took the primary role in developing the local comprehensive plan and in reviewing and providing input to the multi-jurisdictional plan. The Town of Erin established a Smart Growth Committee to take the lead role in developing the Town plan and reviewing the multi-jurisdictional plan, with oversight provided by the Town Plan Commission and Town Board.

## **THE PLANNING AREA**

The planning area includes all of Washington County and those portions of the City of Hartford and Village of Newburg that extend outside Washington County. Washington County encompasses a total of 278,756 acres, or about 436 square miles. About 56 acres of the Village of Newburg extend into Ozaukee County, and about 308 acres of the City of Hartford extend into Dodge County.

The Village of Kewaskum owns about 60 acres in the Town of Auburn in Fond du Lac County, which is considered part of the Village. The site is a former landfill and is leased to Wings over Wisconsin as a bird sanctuary. The site will not be developed.

The County is bordered on the north by Fond du Lac and Sheboygan Counties, on the west by Dodge County, on the south by Waukesha County, and on the east by Ozaukee County. Milwaukee County is located to the southeast.

## **REPORT FORMAT**

This planning report consists of 16 chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapters II through VI present inventory data. Inventory chapters include: Population and Employment Trends and Projections; Agricultural, Cultural, and Natural Resources; Existing Land Uses and Transportation Facilities and Services; Utilities and Community Facilities; and Existing County and Local Plans and Ordinances. Chapters VII through XV constitute the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan. Comprehensive plan key planning element chapters include: Issues and Opportunities (VII); Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources (VIII); Land Use (IX); Housing (X); Transportation (XI); Utilities and Community Facilities (XII); and Economic Development (XIII). Chapters XIV and XV include the Intergovernmental Cooperation and Implementation elements, respectively. The multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan is summarized in Chapter XVI.

In addition to this multi-jurisdictional County comprehensive plan report, an individual comprehensive plan was adopted by each local government partner, with the exception of the Town of Germantown. The Town of Germantown adopted the multi-jurisdictional plan as the Town comprehensive plan. This plan includes data and recommendations for the County as a whole, and for each of the local government partners. Information specific to each local government partner is also documented in the plan for each community. Appendix K provides information specific to the Town of Germantown.

## **REGIONAL CONTEXT**

Washington County is one of the seven counties that together make up the Southeastern Wisconsin Region. Several significant urban centers are within 100 miles of the Region including the Chicago area; Madison area; Fox Cities-Green Bay area; and the Janesville, Beloit, and Rockford area. The Region itself encompasses 2,689 square miles; includes the Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha urbanized areas; and in 2000 had a population of over 1.9 million. Washington County is in the northwest portion of the Region, and contains a mix of urban areas, small villages, and extensive areas of farmland and natural resources. Washington County is part of the Milwaukee metropolitan area.

Pursuant to Statutory requirements, SEWRPC has prepared and adopted a series of regional plan elements, including a regional land use plan, regional transportation system plan, regional water quality and water supply plans, a regional natural area plan, and a regional park and open space plan (comprised of the seven individual park and open space plans for each County), which provided a framework for development of the County plan. The regional plan elements were refined and detailed through the preparation of the County and local comprehensive plans.



The need for comprehensive planning has been sparked by many things, including the demand to construct and expand transportation facilities and the rate and location of new urban development.

## NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Washington County has experienced growth and increased urbanization in recent decades, which has been accompanied by a variety of development issues. Some of the development issues that have surfaced during past decades include: the rate and location of new urban development; the need to construct and expand utilities, public facilities, transportation facilities, and other essential urban services and, in some cases, to coordinate efforts in multiple jurisdictions; the availability of affordable housing; protection of the natural resource base, including surface and groundwater quality and quantity; the preservation of farmland and open space, and conflicts between towns and adjacent cities and villages relating to annexations and exercise of extraterritorial authorities. These development issues, coupled with Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law, a projected increase in County population and employment, a projected increase in the age of the County population, and the continued trend of planning and development issues crossing jurisdictional boundaries, resulted in the County, participating local governments, and SEWRPC joining together to develop this multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan.

## BENEFITS OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

In addition to development, timing, and growth issues specific to Washington County, there are general positive results of thoughtful comprehensive planning from which Washington County, and each community participating in the multi-jurisdictional planning process, may benefit, including the following:

- ***Planning Helps Define the Future Character of a Community***  
The physical design, setting, and arrangement of land uses can make it possible for people to carry out their daily lives and activities in an attractive and safe community environment. Land use planning and design can foster a distinctive sense of place. Planning allows a community to identify, preserve, and build upon the defining features of the community.
- ***Planning Helps Protect Natural and Cultural Resources***  
Planning can help protect environmental features like wetlands, woodlands, and stream corridors which provide important public benefits, such as stormwater storage and groundwater recharge areas and recreational opportunities. Such resources would be difficult and expensive to replace if lost or damaged. Planning can also help identify and preserve prime agricultural soils, non-metallic mining resources, and historic, archeological, and other important cultural structures and sites.



Planning can help protect environmental features like wetlands, woodlands, and stream corridors which provide important public benefits, such as stormwater storage and groundwater recharge areas and recreational opportunities.

- ***Planning Can Provide a Rational Basis for Local Decisions***

Plans provide a factual and objective guide that can be used by public officials and citizens to make informed decisions about land use and development. Planning is a process that can help a community prepare for change rather than react to it.

- ***Planning Can Provide Certainty Regarding Future Development***

Plans and related maps show land-owners and developers the location and type of development desired by the community, which can save them time and money in developing plans for future land uses. Planning can help increase the consistency and fairness of the development review and approval process while protecting the established property interests of existing residents.

- ***Planning Can Save Money***

Well-planned, orderly, and phased development patterns are less expensive for a community to provide public services and infrastructure than low density and scattered development patterns.

- ***Planning Can Promote Economic Development***

Planning can provide information about existing businesses and industries and help determine desirable types of new businesses. Planning can also help determine if the existing work force is sufficient to staff particular employment sectors and whether local services and housing are adequate to handle the impacts of new economic development.

- ***Planning Can Promote Public Health***

Finally, well planned development patterns and transportation options can make recreational, educational, and commercial facilities accessible to pedestrians. The ability to safely walk or bike to these facilities promotes physical health and community interaction.



Well-planned, orderly, and phased development patterns are less expensive for a community to provide with public services and infrastructure than low density and scattered development patterns.



Planning can help determine if the existing work force is sufficient to staff particular employment sectors and whether local services and housing are adequate to handle the impacts of new economic development.



The ability to safely walk or bike to recreational, educational, and commercial facilities promotes physical health and community interaction.

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

While planning provides many important public benefits, it is important to recognize that an adopted plan is not an “end result,” but rather provides recommendations for future action. Plan recommendations will be fulfilled over time in generally small, incremental steps. A comprehensive plan provides a foundation and guide for many implementing tools, which may include community zoning ordinances and maps, subdivision ordinances, capital improvements programming, detailed facilities planning, and other County and local ordinances, programs, and policies. The implementation of new programs identified in the plan will require the review and approval of appropriate County Board liaison committees and the County Board of Supervisors through the annual budget process.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS**

The comprehensive plan presented in this report was developed through a three-year planning process consisting of the following steps: 1) start up tasks, 2) inventory, 3) issue identification, 4) preparation of forecasts and analysis, 5) preparation of key planning elements, 6) preparation of implementation elements, and 7) plan review, refinement, and adoption. Another key step in the comprehensive planning process will be the implementation of the plan by Washington County and implementation of each local comprehensive plan by the local government concerned. Throughout the planning process, the active participation of citizens, landowners, County and local government officials, and interest groups was essential for identifying important issues and preparing a plan with realistic goals for the County and local government partners.

(This page intentionally left blank)