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Comprehensive Planning Newsletter

This newsletter is intended to keep Washington County citizens, elected officials and other interested persons current on the Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Planning process in Washington County.

In this issue:

- Learn why the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning proposal will benefit local municipalities and citizens of Washington County.
- Understand why planning is important for the future of Washington County.
- Learn about the Comprehensive Planning Law and the nine planning elements.



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Debora Sielski
 Assistant Administrator for
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“There will never be any more land than there is right now. There will, however, always be more people, with more needs for housing, transportation, schools, emergency services and recreation. Planning is the only way to meet those needs for generations to come.”

Washington County Multi-Jurisdictional

Comprehensive Planning Newsletter

This newsletter provides an opportunity for Washington County residents to gain insight into the process of planning the future of our County.

The Purpose of this Newsletter

The aim of this quarterly newsletter is to keep Washington County citizens, elected officials and other interested persons current on the Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Planning (Smart Growth) process in Washington County. This newsletter will have information on upcoming meetings and contain articles and statistics related to planning issues.

The newsletter is also available on the Washington County Planning and Parks Department web site. To add a name to this mailing list, please write or contact the Department.

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Why Should We Plan?

The purpose of planning for development in the County is to help officials make informed and thoughtful decisions. Good information, which is the basis of good planning, helps officials predict what might happen in certain situations. The planning process involves asking the question “What do you want your community to look like and how should it function?” Ultimately, planning helps people take responsibility for their community, molding it into the kind of place in which they want to live, work, and play.



- Planning can promote development that will meet local needs, and improve the community’s economic strength, physical appearance and environmental quality while discouraging development that does not meet these local goals.
- Planning helps a community work toward their goals in a step-by-step fashion.
- Planning can help allocate scarce resources.
- Planning can be described as the process of preparing recommendations for policies and courses of action to achieve generally accepted community objectives, with careful attention to the probable effects of those recommended policies.
- Planning encourages pro-active thinking.

Everybody Plans!

People make financial plans, vacation plans, work plans, and even grocery lists to help them achieve goals as effectively and efficiently as possible. Planning helps us to work toward goals in an orderly step-by-step process and helps to avoid costly errors. Planning allows us to look before we leap! Without routine planning, accomplishing our goals would be more difficult.

Similarly, local government planning promotes common sense and intelligent community development. Change is inevitable. Planning allows us to take a look at where we’ve been, where we are now, and identify where we would like to be in the future. A good plan allows citizens to have a say in shaping changes. Without a clear picture of citizen goals and desires, decision makers often address changes in a manner that may not be in the interest of local residents.

Planning is a worthwhile and useful process. Unfortunately, this process is not an easy one. Before it is attempted, the concept, purpose, and process of planning must be clearly understood.

Benefits of Multi-Jurisdictional Planning

Multi-jurisdictional planning related to municipal boundaries, transportation, municipal services, economic development and affordable housing cross jurisdictional boundaries. Municipalities can benefit from cooperative and coordinated joint planning. Planning together:

- Protects natural and agricultural resources
- Improves the cost and quality of services
- Improve Intergovernmental relationships
- Is an efficient use of planning resources



Comprehensive Planning (Smart Growth) Law

The Comprehensive Plan - What Is It?

All municipalities and Washington County are required to adopt a comprehensive plan (Smart Growth Plan) by January 1, 2010. The plan requires that all local land use related actions, programs, ordinances, and official maps be consistent with the nine elements of the comprehensive plan. (listed below)

Every community must meet the law requirements or could be subject to legal action for any land use related decision that is not backed by a valid comprehensive plan. The law does not provide any new regulatory authority to local units of government.

The law has no provision that specifies how to prepare a comprehensive plan and how each element or goal is addressed. The law only states that each element must be addressed. Local governments can address each element and goal in any way it deems appropriate. For more information on the Comprehensive Planning Law, please visit the Department of Administration office of land information www.doa.state.wi.us/dhir/.

9 Elements of Comprehensive Planning

1. **Issues and Opportunities**—This element contains background information which includes population, household and employment forecasts, demographic trends, age distribution, education levels, income levels and employment.
2. **Housing**—This element shall assess the age, structural value and occupancy characteristics of the local housing stock.
3. **Transportation**—This element evaluates routes for highways, transit, bicycles, pedestrians, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation.
4. **Utilities and Community Facilities**—This element assesses future sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, parks, power generation, police, fire and schools.
5. **Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources**—This element looks at natural resources, groundwater, wetland and wildlife habitat along with prime agriculture land and historic and cultural resources.
6. **Economic Development**—This element involves analysis of the labor force, local economic base, business retention and expansion and other issues related to economic development.
7. **Intergovernmental Cooperation**—This element includes joint planning and decision making opportunities with other jurisdictions, including school districts and adjacent local government units.
8. **Land Use**—This element involves comprising a plan for the amount, intensity and density of existing uses of land in the local government unit such as agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and others.
9. **Implementation**—This element describes how all the elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan.



Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Planning Process

On October 15, 2003, Washington County officially kicked off its multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning process with a meeting of local officials from throughout Washington County. A presentation by Debora M. Sielski, Assistant Administrator for Planning in the Planning and Parks Department outlined a proposal for Washington County to partner with municipalities interested in working together to complete a comprehensive plan. For more information regarding this planning opportunity, please contact Debora M. Sielski at 262-335-4445.

Overview

- All participating communities will work together through each step of the planning process beginning with the development of the work plan, committee structure, all planning elements and public participation.
- Washington County will take the lead in the coordination of the planning process.
- Contract with the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission for planning services.
- There will be numerous public participation opportunities for residents from throughout Washington County during each phase of the planning process.

Cost

- Washington County and all partners will apply for the State Comprehensive Planning Grant in November 2004.
- SEWRPC will charge the County an amount equal to the base funding level that the County is eligible for through the grant.
- No other funds from the County are necessary except on-going planning tax-levy contributions.
- Grant match will be satisfied through SEWRPC and County in-kind professional planning services.

Type of Plan

As part of the multi-jurisdictional planning process, participating municipalities will take part in a single planning effort to produce either a single plan that can be adopted by all communities or a separate plan for each community.

Single planning effort, single plan: Local governments participating in this approach would not be asked for any direct financial contribution to complete the plan. Local costs would be limited to gathering and providing any local information, local review of planning materials, travel to and attendance at meetings, notice and related cost associated with any meetings at the local level and cost for any requested supplementary information.

Single planning effort, multiple plan documents: Local governments will receive a separate plan. The cost will be borne by the local community and would range from \$5,000 to \$10,000 (depending on number of maps-based on time and materials)

Timeline

- **Any municipality interested in the multi-jurisdictional planning process is asked to provide a letter of intent from their Town Board, Village Board or City Council to the Washington County Planning and Parks Department by December 30, 2003 stating their intent to participate in the multi-jurisdictional planning process.**
- Thursday, January 15, 2004 at 7:00 PM - First meeting of the multi-jurisdictional planning partners.
- January through November 2004 - all partnering municipalities and the County will work together to complete a work program, sample agreement, resolution, public participation plan and grant application.
- 2005 - All partners will work together to complete issues identification, visioning, goals & objectives development, data gathering & development, public participation and element plan mapping.
- 2006-2008 - All partners will work together to complete planning of each element, public participation and plan adoption.
- 2008-2009 - County and local municipalities to prepare or amend implementing ordinances, maps and policies to be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Example of Cost of Completing Comprehensive Plan Based on State Grant

(This example assumes participation by all Cities, Villages, and Towns except the City of West Bend; Villages of Germantown and Slinger)

Amount eligible for grant:

County	\$200,000
13 Towns	\$395,000
V/Kewaskum	30,000
V/Jackson	40,000
V/Newburg	20,000
C/Hartford	60,000
Subtotal	\$745,000

(Total Base Amount)

Grant Award

50% Base Amount	\$372,500
10% Incentive for Each Local Government	54,500
10% County Incentive for Full Town Participation	<u>\$20,000</u>

Maximum Grant Award \$447,000

State Grant:	\$447,000
Required Match:	\$372,500 (Fulfilled by in-kind planning services of County and SEWRPC)

The Cost of Planning

Typical costs for a community to hire a consultant to complete their Comprehensive Plan:
 *Town avg. \$25,000-\$35,000
 *Village/City avg. \$50,000-\$70,000

The Washington County Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan process could potentially save each community \$20,000—\$60,000 in planning costs.