

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

FOR THE WALWORTH COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This public participation plan for the multi-jurisdictional Walworth County comprehensive plan is intended to serve two purposes. First, it will provide opportunities for public input throughout the comprehensive planning process. Second, adoption of a public participation plan is a requirement of the Wisconsin comprehensive planning law. Section 66.1001 (4) (a) of the *Wisconsin Statutes* requires that:

“The governing body of a local governmental unit shall 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. The written procedures shall provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative, or amended elements of a comprehensive plan and shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments. The written procedures shall describe the methods the governing body of a local governmental unit will use to distribute proposed, alternative, or amended elements of a comprehensive plan to owners of property, or to persons who have a leasehold interest in property pursuant to which the persons may extract nonmetallic mineral resources in or on property, in which the allowable use or intensity of use of the property is changed by the comprehensive plan.”

METHODS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There are many methods of public participation available to the Walworth County comprehensive plan Technical Advisory Committee to provide for meaningful public involvement, while meeting the requirements of Section 66.1001 (4) (a) of the *Wisconsin Statutes*. A description of the methods approved by the Technical Advisory Committee is given below.

Technical Advisory Committee and Ad Hoc Work Groups

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed by the Walworth County Board of Supervisors at the outset of the comprehensive planning process. The TAC is comprised of one elected member and one alternate appointed by each of the participating local governments, three elected members of the County Zoning Agency, and three elected members of the County Land Conservation Committee. The TAC is advisory to the planning process and may make recommendations to the County Zoning Agency, including a recommended multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan for Walworth County. The TAC provides a formal role for participating local governments to work with County officials to shape the recommended comprehensive plan.

The TAC will hold regular meetings during the planning process. All meetings will be open to the public, and an opportunity for public comment will be provided during all meetings. Meeting minutes are available on the Walworth County Smart Growth website at <http://www.sewrpc.org/smartgrowth/walworthcounty/> or at the Walworth County Land Use and Resource Management Department.

The TAC may establish ad hoc work groups, as necessary, on various elements of the comprehensive plan. The ad hoc work groups will allow citizens, interest groups, and persons with expertise on a particular topic an opportunity to share their interests and talents and to help identify trends, issues, and strategies for the future of Walworth County.

Public Meetings

Meetings will be held throughout the comprehensive planning process to provide opportunities for open discussion of the issues at hand. All meetings on the comprehensive plan shall be open to the public. For all meetings, attendance sign-in sheets will be made part of the record. In addition to regular TAC meetings, a series of public meetings will be held, which will include:

- A Walworth County Comprehensive Plan “Kickoff Meeting” will be held in Spring 2006. The purpose of this meeting will be to provide background on the comprehensive planning law and planning process.
- Four meetings, one in each quadrant of the County, will be held to present the results of inventories, analysis of inventories, and survey results conducted in support of the comprehensive planning process and to obtain public input regarding the planning process and information gathered. Inventories and analysis will include: population and employment, natural resources, existing land uses, housing, transportation facilities, utilities, and community facilities. A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) identification workshop will also be conducted at each of these meetings. The SWOT workshops will help identify the public’s perception of Walworth County. The meetings will be widely advertised, and notice of the meetings will be sent to participating and non-participating local governments and to County and local governments adjacent to the County.
- Meetings will be held with each participating town to present the results of the inventories and analysis noted above and to develop a local vision and goals and objectives.
- Meetings will be held with participating cities and villages to review the results of their inventories and analysis, goals and objectives, and comprehensive plan recommendations, which will be prepared by the Cities and Villages with the assistance of private consultants. Pertinent city and village plan recommendations will be incorporated into the Walworth County multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan. Meetings will also be held with non-participating local governments upon request.
- Four open house meetings, one in each quadrant of the county, will be held upon the completion of drafts of the seven key planning elements. The seven key planning elements include: issues and opportunities; housing; transportation; utilities and community facilities; agricultural, natural, and cultural resources; economic development; and land use. The open houses will be widely advertised, and notice of the meetings will be sent to participating and non-participating local governments and to County and local governments adjacent to the County.
- An open house to present and receive public comment on the draft comprehensive plan, containing all nine planning elements, will be held in each participating town upon completion of a draft document. Citizens will have an opportunity to review the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan and the recommendations specific to their Town, and to ask questions and provide input in an informal setting. Each participating city and village will also schedule an open house for public review and comment on its draft plan.
- Consistent with the requirements established in Section 66.1001 of the *Wisconsin Statutes*, a public hearing on the recommended comprehensive plan will be held in each participating town, village, and city. The public hearings shall be noticed pursuant to Chapter 985.02 (1) of the *Wisconsin Statutes*. The public hearing will consist of a presentation summarizing the planning process and the recommended comprehensive plan. Citizens will have the opportunity to provide formal comments. An official public record including all comments received will be created for each public hearing and

included in the final draft of the comprehensive plan. Copies of the recommended comprehensive plan will be available for viewing prior to the public hearings.

Citizen Survey

A countywide, return-mail, public opinion survey regarding comprehensive planning will be prepared and administered to a random sample of Walworth County residents. The survey will be developed by the Walworth County Technical Advisory Committee assisted by University of Wisconsin-Extension staff assigned to SEWRPC. The survey questions will encompass issues from all nine planning elements. Participating communities may administer their own survey or provide County and SEWRPC staff the results of surveys completed in the past five years. The results of these supplemental local surveys will be compared by staff to the results of the countywide survey and will assist County and local officials in developing plan goals and objectives.

On-Going Efforts

Ongoing public participation efforts are proposed to take place throughout the comprehensive planning process. These efforts are informative or policy oriented in nature. Ongoing public participation efforts will provide Walworth County citizens with general education about the comprehensive planning process, provide information about upcoming participation sessions, and update the public on plan progress. On-going public participation efforts include the following:

- A Walworth County “smart growth” website will be maintained by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission at <http://www.sewrpc.org/smartgrowth/walworthcounty/>. Updates regarding the comprehensive plan progress, upcoming public participation sessions, Technical Advisory Committee agendas and minutes, PowerPoint presentations from public meetings, public notices, fact sheets, news releases, schedules, and surveys will be posted on the website. Public access to the Internet is available at each of the public libraries throughout the County for residents without other Internet access.
- Periodic fact sheets will be generated regarding the Walworth County comprehensive plan. The fact sheets will be distributed at area libraries, municipal halls, and the Walworth County Courthouse and posted on the “smart growth” website. The fact sheets will serve as information sources to the general public about planning requirements and development issues. Fact sheets will be produced as needed.
- News releases regarding the comprehensive planning process and plan progress will be provided to local newspapers, local government, the Walworth County Technical Advisory Committee, and major organizations, as well as posted on the “smart growth” website.
- Upon request, Walworth County and SEWRPC staff will make presentations about the comprehensive plan to Walworth County community groups, business or professional organizations, nonprofit agencies, and local government groups. Presentations will be made to County government and the Technical Advisory Committee throughout the planning process. Several presentations have been made to date regarding comprehensive planning, and such efforts will continue throughout the planning process.
- A Walworth County comprehensive planning display will be set up at the Walworth County Farm Breakfast for the length of the planning process. The display will contain comprehensive planning information, comprehensive planning fact sheets, and updates on the comprehensive planning process. The Farm Breakfast display will increase awareness of the comprehensive planning process through a visible presence at an event attended by farmers and those with an interest in agriculture, as well as a cross section of Walworth County residents.
- Fact sheets, meeting notices, draft plan chapters, and other materials will be available at each of Walworth County’s public libraries.

- The Walworth County Technical Advisory Committee and Walworth County and SEWRPC staff will actively solicit comments and suggestions at appropriate stages in the development of the comprehensive plan from County residents, local business and civic organizations, the Farm Bureau, Realtors Association, Builders Association, Walworth County unit of the Wisconsin Towns Association, conservancy and environmental organizations, non-metallic mining interests and organizations, State and Federal Agencies, school districts, utility companies, participating and non-participating local governments, lake, sanitary, and utility districts, community development authorities, and adjacent County and local governments.

ADOPTION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

This public participation plan was approved by the Walworth County Smart Growth Technical Advisory Committee on July 20, 2005, and was amended on September 21, 2005. Following announcement of the comprehensive planning grant awards in February 2006 the public participation plan will be forwarded to the Walworth County Zoning Agency and Walworth County Board for review and adoption, and to the governing bodies of participating local governments for review and adoption.

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